



Mars Hill College

Athletics Hall of Fame Inductees



John Arkansas - Inducted 1991

Tackle on Lion's 1958-59 football team ... Junior College All American 1959 ... Active in Youth League coaching ... Deceased in 1985.

Mack Arnette - Inducted 1995

Inducted into Mars Hill Hall of Fame in 1995 at the age of 93. Mars Hill's Mr. Baseball excelled at shortstop for the Lions in 1921. After leaving Mars Hill, Mack spent twenty years in professional baseball both as a player and manager. Spent thirty-seven years as a commissioned baseball scout for the Baltimore Orioles.

Majid Bakhtiari - Inducted 2002

Four-year letter winner in men's soccer. Still holds many of the school's current records. At induction Bakhtiari was the Mars Hill leader for goals in a single game (4), points scored in a single game (10), career points scored (170), best goal per match average in a single season (19), career goals scored (65), single season points scored (48) and career assists (40). Garnered NAIA All-District honors, led NAIA District in scoring in 1986. Also played tennis and football and was a member of the International Club. Was named Mars Hill College's Intramural Athlete of the Year.

Kevin Barnette - Inducted 1998

Inducted into the Hall of Fame in 1998. At the time of his induction, Barnette is the senior member of the MHC football coaching staff with 10 years service and is a member of the physical education department faculty. A four-year letter winner for the Lions, Barnette was twice named to the All-South Atlantic Conference team and was selected as a second team All-American by the NAIA in 1984. A two-time All-District 26 selection, Barnette holds the school record for most interceptions in a season (8) and most in a game (3). He also received All-Conference academic honors in 1984.

Carl Befield - Inducted 1988

Served 10 years as President of the Golden "M" Club at Mars Hill College. Directed the Boosters club to its highest membership and largest fundraising efforts. Successful fundraiser and successful businessman.

Dr. Fred B. Bentley - Inducted 2001

President of Mars Hill College 1966- 1996. In 1966, at age 30, he was the youngest college president in America. Instrumental in the foundation South Atlantic Conference. As college president oversaw expansion of athletic program from five sports to thirteen sports which included the addition of six female intercollegiate teams. In 1991 spearheaded Mars Hill's move from NAIA to NACAA membership. Recipient of many prestigious accolades including Who's Who in the South, Outstanding Young Men of America and the National Register of Prominent Americans. Involved in church and community. Since retirement has served as general contractor for Habitat for Humanity.

Susan Blakely - Inducted 1989

Three-sport performer in volleyball, basketball, and tennis 1972-76. Team captain and assist leader in volleyball and basketball. Successful teacher, published author, and coach for 11 years. Active in several professional church and community organizations.

Maurice Blankenbeckler - Inducted 1991

Loyal supporter of Mars Hill College athletics ... Tireless worker as fundraiser for Golden "M" Club ... Active volunteer for all areas of athletics and campus life ... Active member of the Board of Advisors ... Successful businessman and church leader.

Todd Blondin - Inducted 2002

Four-year letter winner in men's basketball 1983-86. Upon graduation became the second player in the history of the men's basketball program to have his jersey retired. He is the second all-time leading scorer with 2,130 points. He established school records for most free throws in a single season (179), best single season scoring average (24.7), and best scoring average for a career (18.8). He led district 26 in scoring his junior year (24.7) and ranked 15th in the nation in scoring that season. He was All-District 1985 and 1986 and honorable mention All-American those same sessions. He was a member of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes.

Joe Bridges - Inducted 2001

After transferring to Mars Hill College in 1972, established scoring records that are unparalleled in the school's basketball history. In only two seasons of play, Bridges scored 1,417 points, which at the time put him in second place on career scoring at Mars Hill College. His 20.2 average still stands as a school record, as does his 379 field goals in one season. Selected as All-Conference and NAIA All District. Upon graduation from Mars Hill College, signed a professional contract with the Belgian National Team. Serves as a teacher in the New York City school system.

Steve Campbell - Inducted 1992

Inducted into the Mars Hill College Athletic Hall of Fame 1992. Outstanding four-year letterman in football as a defensive back. Holds career interception record at Mars Hill. Selected to the All-South Atlantic Conference team three straight years. NAIA All American second team selection in 1979. Successful high school football coach in South Carolina.

David L. Cappiello, M.D. – Inducted 2004

A Harvard University graduate, where he competed in football and lacrosse...Received his medical degree from Cornell University in New York...Served as team physician for Mars Hill College's athletic teams for 25 years (1973 – 1998)...He has provided orthopedic services to the residents of Western North Carolina since 1971...Dr. Cappiello was inducted into the Western North Carolina Athletic Hall of Fame in 2002.

Ronnie Capps - Inducted 1990

Three-time all-conference selection at split-end. Team MVP in 1975 and a NAIA all star. Holds virtually all Mars Hill receiving records including passes caught, yards receiving, and touchdown receptions. Named to Best Athletes in America as a senior.

Dr. W. L. "Ikey" Carr - Inducted 1988

Four-sport letterman at Mars Hill College. Successful college teacher for 33 years. Professional leader in Physical Education and President of SDAHPERD. Had a positive influence on lives of students, colleagues, church and community members.

Scott Conner - Inducted 1992

Inducted into Mars Hill College Athletic Hall of Fame in 1992. Outstanding two sport athlete who excelled in both football and basketball at Mars Hill. Selected as team captain in both sports in his junior and senior years. Named outstanding defensive back in football two seasons and most valuable player his senior year in basketball. Outstanding two sport high school coach in NC, SC, and GA since his graduation in 1964. Second highest winning percentage in football among coaches in Western North Carolina. In 1991, A.C. Reynolds High School honored Scott by naming their football field "Scott Conner Field" in recognition of his positive influence on the young people of their community.

James M. Cowan - Inducted 1994

Standout performer in football, basketball, and tennis from 1935-37. Coach at Mars Hill in football, basketball and track 1941-43 and 1946. After graduation from Mars Hill was All State football and All Southern Conference basketball player at Davidson College. Basketball and track coach at Mercer University from 1946-57 where he led his team to the NAIA National Tournament twice. Named to Mercer Athletic Hall of Fame in 1971. Retired from coaching in 1957 and enjoyed a successful career in the insurance business until 1989.

James R. Cox - Inducted 1999

Served Mars Hill College for over 30 years as Director of Alumni/Development. Played football and basketball '41-'43. Has been a key figure in the development of Mars Hill College Athletics. His fund raising efforts were instrumental in the development of Meares' Stadium, the refurbishing of the Hart Tennis Center, the restoration of Stanford Arena. He founded the Golden "M" Club, which for years served as the athletics department fundraising vehicle and secured the donation of Ponder Field for athletics use. He was also responsible for the first endowed scholarships for athletics. He initiated the Grayson Scholarship Fund which was the largest gift in Mars Hill College history.

Jeff Davis - Inducted 1988

1973 NFL Draft choice of the Washington Redskins. Played in the World League for two years, Two-time MVP, Two-time All-Carolina Conference, and Honorable Mention All-American. Holds the MHC Track records in 100 yard dash, 120 yard hurdles, and in football for the longest punt. MHC Athlete of the Year in 1973 and Who's Who selection in 1972.

Bob Edwards - Inducted 1991

Three sport letterman during junior college career 1940-41 ... Assistant football coach 12 years ... Head basketball and track coach ... Former president of the North Carolina Athletic Association ... Recipient of the Distinguished Service Award of the North Carolina High School Athletic Association.

Lee Ann Enix Gatton - Inducted 2000

Four year letter winner (1983-1987). Upon graduation held school record for career assists (442) and was fifth all-time leading scorer (1,124 points). Team captain, selected all-district (1986-87) and AWSF All-American (1986-87). Selected to Who's Who Among American Colleges and Universities.

James W. "Jimmy" Graves - Inducted 1987

Inducted into Mars Hill College Hall of Fame 1987, charter member. Mars Hill College's all-time leading scorer in basketball. Three-time All-District selection, Honorable Mention All-American in 1977, Mars Hill Athlete of the Year in 1976. His #22 jersey was retired in 1977, the first jersey to be retired in basketball at Mars Hill. Started all 133 games in his career at Mars Hill.

John Gullede - Inducted 1992

Inducted into the Mars Hill College Athletic Hall of Fame in 1992. Four year letterman in football from 1977 to 1980. Outstanding linebacker who was selected All-District 26, All South Atlantic Conference and Conference Defensive Player of the Year in 1980. NAIA first team All-American selection. Scholar athlete who maintained a 4.0 GPA during his senior year. Successful high school football coach and athletic director in the state of Georgia.

Virginia Hart - Inducted 1987

Inducted into Mars Hill College Athletic Hall of Fame 1987, charter member. Successful coach in basketball, volleyball, men's and women's tennis. 40 years of dedicated service to Mars Hill College. Founder of most women's sports at Mars Hill College. Winner of first Mars Hill Excellence in Teaching Award.

Norma Cowan Hawes - Inducted 2001

Played softball 1981-84. Career batting average of .502 including a .635 mark in 1983. Combined offensive firepower and superb defensive skills as indicated by her .907 career fielding percentage. Member of the Golden Pride and Black Students in Action. Served as a class officer. Active in church and community. Elementary school teacher.

Jerry Hayes - Inducted 1999

Participated in Men's Basketball from 1970-74. As a four-year starter at Mars Hill College, Jerry was a highly decorated athlete which included being named to the NAIA District All-Star Team. At the time of his graduation, he was the school's all time leading scorer (1,845 points) and rebounds (954 rebounds).

Don Henderson - Inducted 1987

Inducted into Mars Hill College Athletic Hall of Fame 1987, charter member. 35 years faithful and dedicated service to Mars Hill College. Successful coach, teacher, and administrator at Mars Hill College. Head football coach, head basketball coach, chairman of PE Department, athletic director.

Barbara Hollingsworth - Inducted 1993

Head coach of first women's basketball team at Florida State Univ. Successful women's basketball coach at Mars Hill from 1972 to 1980. Led Lady Lions to six winning seasons in eight years. Career record at Mars Hill 85 wins and 72 losses. Has highest winning percentage among Mars Hill basketball coaches. Served as Mars Hill's first women's Athletic Director.

Larry Honeycutt - Inducted 1991

Four-year starter in football 1960-64 ... All-Conference performer in football 1962 ... Most Valuable Player 1962 ... Junior College All-American 1962 ... Successful high school coach in North Carolina.

Holly Hough - Inducted 1994

Versatile basketball and softball standout for the Lady Lions from 1980-84. Ended basketball career as third on the All-time scoring list with 1,244 points and second in career rebounds with 680. Played in 101 games during her collegiate career. Three-time team captain. Selected Honorable Mention All American in 1984. Finished softball career with .325 career batting average in 95 games. Named Who's Who in American Colleges and Universities in 1984.

Dr. John Hough - Inducted 2000

Played basketball 1953-54. Successful high school coach. Served as faculty representative for Mars Hill College and for the South Atlantic Conference. Statistician for Mars Hill basketball (1962-1984). Lifelong supporter of Golden M and The Pride. Along with wife Beverly established a Golden M scholarship for athletics.

D.J. Hughes - Inducted 2003

Four year starter in basketball. Started every game throughout his career. Leading scorer in 1964 with 19+ ppg. Member of the 1,000 point club. Captain of the basketball team for two years. President of first four year class in MHC history – 1964. Who's Who in American Colleges and Universities. M-Club member for four years. Member of student government. Student National Education Association member. Dean's list '63 & '64.

Angela Johnson - Inducted 1991

Four-year letterman in women's basketball ... 1,200 Career Points ... Holds school record for highest single season scoring average- 21.3 ... Hold season and single game assist points.

Rodney Johnson - Inducted 1989

One of the top basketball players at Mars Hill, 1968-72. 1000-point career scorer and one of the top scorers in school history. Successful high school and college basketball coach. Highly respected assistant college basketball coach and recruiter.

Paula Corbin Kahn - Inducted 1990

First freshman female to receive an athletic scholarship at Mars Hill. One of the school's all-time leading scorers with 1,466 points and a three-time All-State pick. Shares two school records for points scored . Successful high school coach, assistant principal, and administrator.

Lamont Jones – Inducted 2004

Men's Basketball (1992 – 95)...All-SAC for four seasons...Named SAC Freshmen of the Year (1992)...Upon completion of his career he was SAC career scoring leader (1,835 points) and was third in career rebounds (694)...At induction was SAC career leader in 3-point field goal percentage (.485)...Led the Lions to a SAC Championship and NCAA berth (1994)...Named CAA All-District (1994, 1995) and All-Region (1995)...Inducted into the SAC Hall of Fame (2001).

Gary Lawing - Inducted 1989

Two-sport performer, football and track at Mars Hill. Most Valuable track award for four years. Holds several school track records. Successful school counselor, active in community affairs, and a 1982 World Triathlon participant.

Bill Loven - Inducted 1988

Four-year starter on Mars Hill College basketball team. Two-time Most Valuable Player om outstanding Mars Hill College teams. Holds three school records including 50 points in one game. Successful Bussinessman.

Jack Lytton - Inducted 2003

Lytton was the head Men's Basketball coach at Mars Hill for 11 years spanning from 1970- 81. He left Mars Hill as the winningest men's basketball coach in school history. His 1973-74 squad also held the school record for the most wins in a single season with 21. Prior to induction, three of his former players had already been inducted in the MHC Athletic Hall of Fame. Lytton coached ten players that are members of the 1,000 point club, three All-District 6 players, three All-Carolina Conference players, and one All-American. Lytton was named the NAIA District 6 Coach of the Year in 1974.

Cedric Mansell - Inducted 2003

Mansell is one of the most decorated athletes in Mars Hill College history. As a captain of the 1994 SAC championship basketball team, he led the Lions to a national ranking and a NCAA Tournament Bid. He ranks first in SAC record book in career total blocks (153) and career field-goal percentage (58%). He is also fourth in the SAC record book in career offensive rebounds (205). He is a member of the MHC 1,000 point club, two-time ALL-SAC selection (1993 &1994), selected to the NCAA ALL-South Region Team (1994), named the SAC Men's Basketball Player of theYear(1994) and SAC Male Athlete of theYear (1994). Upon graduation was offered a contract to play professionally in Europe.

Lee Marchman - Inducted 2000

Four year letter winner. All-District (1985,1986, 1987) All-SAC (1986, 1987). SAC defensive player of the year in 1986. All-American (1986, 1987). In 1987 he was selected 1st team All-American by AP, Kodak, Football News and NAIA. Selected to Who's Who Among American Colleges and Universities in 1988.

Michael Miller - Inducted 1999

Starred in three sports during the junior college era of Mars Hill. In football, Michael was a 1,000-yard rusher en route to being named all-conference. He also played basketball and ran track. He was named as the top track performer in Western North Carolina in 1955. He was equally active in other areas of campus life, serving as president of the senior class, the M club and the Science club.

John Patterson - Inducted 1995

Inducted into the Mars Hill Hall of Fame in 1995. Outstanding four-year starter for the Lions in basketball. Upon graduation was second leading scorer in Mars Hill history with 2,038 career points. Holds Lion rebounding record with 1,199 career rebounds. Also holds the single season rebounding record with 359. Finished career with school records in field goal percentage both for a single season and a career. Selected team MVP in 1979 and 1980.

Kenny Phillips - Inducted 1993

Four year letterman in football 1977-80, three year baseball letterman 1978-80. All South Atlantic Conference running back in 1979 and 1980. Led Lions in rushing in 1978, 79, 80. At the time of graduation held career and single season rushing records. Still holds record for most rushes in a game –33 and most yards gained in a game – 220. Rushed for 2014 career yards. Member of the 1980 national play-off team.

Otis Pitts - Inducted 1988

Two-time football All-Conference selection at Mars Hill College. Co-Captain and Junior College All-American in 1957. Played a major role in the success of coach Don Henderson's 1957 team which was considered for Junior College Rose Bowl.

Walter Rabb - Inducted 1987

Inducted into Mars Hill College Athletic Hall of Fame 1987, charter member. Played football, basketball, baseball, and tennis at Mars Hill College. Signed professional baseball contract with the New York Yankees organization. 31 years of successful coaching at University of North Carolina in baseball. Compiled 528 wins, four ACC championships, 3 NCAA District championships. Elected President of the American Association of College Baseball Coaches in 1961. Inducted in AACBE Hall of Fame in 1978.

Gene Radford - Inducted 1994

Outstanding defensive player for the Lions from 1969-72. Started every game during his four-year career. Named MVP and All District Performer at defensive end in his freshmen year. Named teams Most Valuable Defensive Player in his junior year. Holds National Collegiate Record for longest fumble recovery for a TD with a 96 yard run against Catawba in his sophomore year. Listed in outstanding College Athletes of America 1971. Served as graduate assistant coach in 1973.

Alan Rice - Inducted 1989

Kodak football All-American, 1978 Two-time All-Conference and All-District and an All-State performer Hilltop Athlete of the Year, 1978-79 and team captain Successful manager and businessman

Oren Roberts - Inducted 1987

Inducted into Mars Hill College Athletic Hall of Fame 1987, charter member. Compiled over 800 career wins in football, basketball, and baseball. Served as coach and athletic director for over 20 years at Mars Hill College. Played professional baseball with the Cincinnati Reds.

Robert J. (Bobby) Robinson - Inducted 2001

Graduated from Mars Hill College in 1956. Three sport athlete, having participated in football, basketball, and baseball. All-Conference performer in football. Averaged 18 points per game in basketball, captain of both football and basketball squads. Starting pitcher for baseball team. Married student whose wife Anne was both Homecoming and May Queen. Active in church and community. Has served on Board of Trustees of Mars Hill College. Attorney and avid tennis player.

Emmett S. Sams - 2000

Mathematics professor at Mars Hill College from 1947 – 1992. Honored for his excellence in teaching by Mars Hill College, state and regional organizations throughout his career. Tennis coach 1950 – 51. Score keeper for basketball 1947 – 1950. Basketball clock keeper from 1950 – 1986. Kept football stats from 1947 – 1952. Served as football and basketball sports information liaison with local newspapers from 1947 – 1970. Served as driver for basketball teams from 1947 – 1970. Has instructed and tutored hundreds of athletes throughout his academic career. He has shown exemplary service to the Department of Athletics and to the student athletes of Mars Hill College for over 50 years.

Derrick J. Sharpe – Inducted 2004

Football – Wide Receiver (1990 – 93)...Named SAC Freshman of the Year (1990)...All-SAC four straight seasons...Upon completion of career, Derrick’s 3,094 career-receiving yards placed him fourth in the SAC... He also held MHC receiving records for most receptions in a season (64), and most receptions in a career (229)...During his career he caught 16 TD passes.

Susie Hopson Shelton – Inducted 2004

Women’s Basketball (1993 – 96)...SAC Freshmen of the Year (1993)...All-SAC four years...Named SAC Player of the Year in 1996 after leading the league in scoring, rebounding, and field goal percentage that season...Led the Lions to SAC Championship and a NCAA Playoff berth (1996)...At the time of her graduation her 19.1 career scoring average was the best in SAC history...Her 1,984 points placed her third in SAC career totals and was a MHC record...She held MHC records for highest field goal percentage in a season and a career (.613 & .564)...As well as records for highest scoring average in a single season (21.6)...Following her senior season, she was named a first team Kodak All-American...Upon graduation she played for the Charlotte Sting of the WNBA...Inducted into the SAC Hall of Fame in 2002.

Keitha Tinsley Sherrill - Inducted 2002

Four-year letter winner in women’s basketball 1989-1992. Posted 1,686 career points (15.3) that placed her second on the all-time leading scoring list in 1992. She currently ranks fourth in all-time scoring at Mars Hill College. Sherrill is still listed in the Lion’s record book for the most free throw attempted in a single season (237) and in a career (706) as well as being the program’s career block leader (146). At one time Sherrill held the school record for the most career free throws made (407). Sherrill was named to the All-SAC team in 1990 and 1992. She was a member of the Sigma Tau Delta, the national English honor society.

Burt Stanford - Inducted 1989

Strong supporter of Mars Hill College athletics for 20 years ... Past Vice-President of Golden “M” Club and a four-term member of the Board of Trustees ... Chairman of Trustee Athletic Committee for 10 years ... Successful businessman, church, civic and community leader for over 35 years.

Marilyn Que Tucker - Inducted 1987

Inducted into the Mars Hill College Athletic Hall of Fame in 1987, charter member. Led the Mars Hill women’s basketball team in scoring for two straight seasons. Outstanding College Athlete in America Award in 1972. Two consecutive selections to Who’s Who. Successful high school coach for over 13 years providing outstanding service to education and athletics.

Lavonda Wagner - Inducted 1998

Inducted into the Hall of Fame in 1998. A 1986 graduate of Mars Hill College. Lavonda was a four-year letterman in both basketball and volleyball. She holds career records for basketball in scoring (2,036pts), field goals made and rebounding and still holds season records for points scored, field goals made and rebounds. She also holds school record for most rebounds in a game. Mars Hill retired her #32 jersey following her career. During her tenure at Mars Hill, Lavonda was All-Region in basketball and volleyball, Player of the Year in both sports and was named NAIA All-American in both sports.

Dr. William Walker - Inducted 1998

Inducted into the Hall of Fame in 1998. Dr. Walker served as chairman of the Department of Physical Education from 1966-1991 and as Athletic Director from 1982-1991. He assisted in the development of the South Atlantic Conference and in the realignment of the conference from NAIA to NCAA Division II. He received the first SAC Athletic Director's Service Award in 1994. Dr. Walker has a long record of contributions to his profession and Mars Hill College and has received numerous honors and awards for contributions to education and the community. He developed the Sports Medicine Program which is one of the best in the SAC. His leadership and direction during a transitional period has brought Mars Hill College Athletics to its present high standard.

Sonia Gahagan Wallace - Inducted 2002

Four-year letter winner in women's basketball 1989-92. At the end of her career, she was the third all-time leading scorer in the history of the women's basketball program. Currently she is the fifth all-time leading scorer with 1,672 career points (16.1). Wallace still holds school records for most points in a single game (42), most field goals in a single contest (18) and best field goal percentage in a single game (91%). At one point she held the best mark for the single season free throw percentage (85%). Wallace was a two-time All SAC member (1991-1992).

Buddy Windle - Inducted 2003

Four year starter in football '59-'63. Captain in '60, '62, & '63. Led Mars Hill College to a conference championship in 1959. All-Conference in '59 & '60. Most valuable back '59-'60-'62-'63. MVP in '60, '62, & '63. Member of the M-Club for four years. Outstanding PE major in 1963. Member of the track team in 1962.

Art Wood - Inducted 1993

Outstanding all-around athlete during junior college career. Lettered in football, basketball, baseball, and tennis for the Lions in 1942-43 and 1946-47. Defensive back on the 1946 football team that posted 4-3-1 record. Helped lead the basketball team to a 17-7 record in 1946-47. Loyal supporter of Mars Hill Athletics. Member of the Mars Hill College Faculty from 1949-91.

Carroll Wright - Inducted 1987

Inducted into the Mars Hill College Athletic Hall of Fame in 1987, charter member. Junior College All-American quarterback at Mars Hill College in 1956. All-Conference baseball at Mars Hill 1957. Over 25 years of successful high school coaching. Led his teams to numerous conference championships and state playoffs.