

**Miami Lakes Sports Hall of Fame Committee
Selection Report
May 2018**

TO: Honorable Mayor and Councilmembers

FROM: Sports Hall of Fame Committee

DATE: May 1, 2018

SUBJECT: Recommendations for second class of inductees for Miami Lakes Sports Hall of Fame

Recommendation

The committee asks that the Town Council to review and accept the following as members of the second class for the Miami Lakes Sports Hall of Fame: former Miami Dolphin Tony Nathan, former University of Miami football player, current assistant coach and former NFL player Joel Rodriguez, Community Activist William Graham, Veteran journalist and former volleyball player Sara Sidner, and Community Pioneer Jim Hamilton.

The committee believes that each of these five individuals epitomizes the basic criteria for selection, that being they have made significant contribution to their sports and that they have substantial connections to the Town of Miami Lakes.

Fiscal Impact

Plaques will be ordered to arrive in time for the planned June 2, 2018 induction ceremony.

Background

The committee met on four occasions to familiarize itself with the recommendation process and ultimately to decide which individuals would be most deserving of being part of the town's second class. The committee has been composed of five individuals for this year's

selection process. All voting and formal debate over our last two meetings. In each case, the recommended names met with the unanimous consent of the committee, including chair Roman Garcia, vice chair Jim Hamilton (except for his nomination), secretary Marcos Gutierrez and committee members Tim Reynolds and Carlos Alvarez.

Selection Process

The committee reviewed approximately six to eight nominations, generated both internally and from the public, before settling on the following recommendations:

Tony Nathan has been a resident of the Town of Miami Lakes and considered a “Hometown Hero.” Nathan attended Woodlawn high school in Birmingham, Ala., where he was one of the first black players at the school, which has since been documented in a movie. He would earn a scholarship to the University of Alabama where he was part of the 1978 National Championship team. He would finish his college career with 3,362 all-purpose yards including 30 touchdowns, before being drafted in the third round of the NFL draft by the Miami Dolphins in 1979. As a member of the Dolphins, he played in two Super Bowls and after nine seasons finished over 7,000 all-purpose yards and 32 touchdowns. He also served as a coach at FIU under former coach Don Strock.

Joel Rodriguez played high school football locally at Monsignor Pace high school before earning a scholarship to the University of Miami. There he was a member of the National Championship team of 2001. He was a two-year starter for the Hurricanes and after a brief stint in the NFL he transitioned into coaching. After spending time at Mississippi as a Graduate Assistant, he would coach at Bryant College and Fordham University, and has been back at the University of Miami since 2015, where he currently serves as Director of Player

Development for the Defense and is the keeper of the famed “Turnover Chain.”

William Graham was known as a pioneer in Miami Lakes in the sports of Golf, Badminton, Horseback Riding and girls’ athletics of all ranges. He was a longtime resident of Miami Lakes and was a member of the 1942 State of Florida Championship basketball team at Miami Senior High. He served in the Pacific during World War II. This is where he picked up the sport of Badminton, and would represent Okinawa (where he was stationed) in the Pacific Olympics. He was one of the behinds the scenes members who is credited with bringing the Senior’s Badminton tournament that is held in Miami Lakes every year. Graham was also credited with promoting golf to youth, high school and college levels and also was responsible for providing the youth of Miami Lakes with the chance to learn how to ride horses early in the inception of the town.

Sara Sidner played volleyball locally at Hialeah-Miami Lakes high school and attended the University of Florida, where she led the Gators to the NCAA Final Four in volleyball. She was a member of regional championship teams in High School and once served out a 15-0 game before the volleyball scoring changed in High School – A very rare feat. Since graduating she has been a valued member of CNN News covering numerous national and international stories including reporting from war zones. Through it all she still identifies Miami Lakes as her hometown.

Jim Hamilton is a longtime resident and member of the Miami Lakes Optimist Club. He has dedicated most of his life to helping kids excel in sports and in the classroom. Since joining the optimist in 1973, he has held every position including president, vice-president, board member, commissioner, and coach. All this while helping the club reach its goals by offering kids a chance to play sports, while their parents and other

spectators cheer for them and improve their academics. His devotion to his volunteer work, and his lifelong dedication has earned him the highest honor in recreation and sports.