

Miami Lakes Sports Hall of Fame Committee
Selection Report
May 2019

TO: Honorable Mayor and Councilmembers

FROM: Sports Hall of Fame Committee

DATE: May 14, 2019

SUBJECT: Recommendations for third 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 third class for the Miami Lakes Sports Hall of Fame: former North Carolina State and Hialeah-Miami Lakes basketball star Chris Corchiani, Community Activist David Oliver, Community Pioneer George Deming, and Community Activist Javier Zapata.

The committee believes that each of these four 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 1, 2019 induction ceremony.

Background

The committee met on three 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 third 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 Helen Roldan, secretary Marcos Gutierrez and committee members Jim Hamilton and Karyna Cid.

Selection Process

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

Chris Corchiani was a star basketball player at Hialeah-Miami Lakes High School earning the title Florida “Mr. Basketball”, an award given to the best basketball player in the state, in 1986 and 1987, which included a State Championship. From there he received a scholarship to North Carolina State University, where he was a four-year starter and he became the first player in NCAA history to record 1,000 career assists. He led the Wolfpack to the NCAA tournament in three of his four years at the school and was the first college player to record 20 assists in a game. He would have a successful professional career of 14 years including three stops in the NBA – Orlando, Boston and Washington – followed by stops internationally playing for teams in Italy, Turkey, Spain and Germany.

David Oliver has been a community activist in Miami Lakes for over 20 years. Prior to his time here, he was a four-year letter winner in baseball for Versailles High School in Ohio and played football, which the team had a perfect record. His athletic prowess included basketball, track & field, and wrestling. He is a member of numerous committees in the town including Elderly Affairs and Loch Isle Homeowners association. He is also the founder and coordinator of the Miami Lakes Senior softball program, co-founder of the Miami Lakes Senior basketball program and coordinator of the Miami Lakes Senior games. He has also been the President of the Miami Lakes Duplicate Bridge Club for over 30 years.

George Deming is one of the visionaries that can be credited with founding the solidarity, growing institution known as the Miami Lakes Optimist in the 1960s. As the program evolved, he continued to play a key role as he was involved in the implementation of building the first clubhouse, which was a great feat and would become the second home to so many kids in the town. In the early 1970s, he was the Youth Work Director, and responsible to coordinate all coaches and he was instrumental in establishing the baseball, basketball and soccer programs and spearheaded the creation of the Opti-Mrs., a group of women who organized the cheerleading programs. His contributions continued in helping to organize the Special Olympics, for youths with special needs.

Javier Zapata was born and raised in the town and attended Miami Lakes Elementary, Miami Lakes Middle and Barbara Goleman High School, earning valedictorian honors. He participated in multiple youth sports programs as a child. After high school, he attended Brown University and while away found out the programs that he loved in his town were diminishing; in part because they rely on volunteers to administer them. That is when he applied for and was awarded the Royce Fellowship for Sports and Society through Brown and he partnered with Miami Lakes Optimist to create the Flag Football program, that to this day is one of if not the largest Flag Football program in the state with over 400 participants. He served as commissioner for the first several years. Upon graduating from Brown, he was accepted into Yale Law School. During this time, he thought the program would succeed, but this was not the case. After graduating from Yale, he returned to South Florida, where he serves as an Assistant County Attorney for Miami Dade and returned to the program again. He worked to grow the program back and it is now at new heights which includes a successful travel program.