



# SANTA BARBARA COURT OF CHAMPIONS

## PHIL SHERMAN | 2017 INDUCTEE



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- Born in Monroe Louisiana, but left as an infant for Los Angeles California.
- Attended Banning High School in Wilmington, California. Graduated 1976
- Played Varsity basketball at Banning
- Played 1 year of basketball at Ventura College in Ventura California.
- Transferred to Pacific University in Oregon where I played three years of basketball, making all Northwest Conference as a senior.

After I graduated from Pacific University I decided to take a coaching job and play AAU basketball. My first assistant job was at Southern Oregon State College..I stayed there one year, but my recruiting lasted for three years.

I moved to Los Angeles I was an elementary school teacher and an assistant coach at LA Pierce College.

That year i really learned how to coach. My head coach was Jim Stephens. Incredibly smart and equally intense. We ran one set, but the players really understood it and could counteract any scheme that the opposition had.

I also learned a great deal from one of our opponents, El Camino College and their coach ,Paul Landreaux. Coach Landreaux played 1-2-2 zone defense and never came out of it.

I was hired as a full time teacher at Compton Centennial high school with only one stipulation. I had to coach the girls basketball team which had not won a game in five years. They had finished the season midway, the previous year due to lack of participation. The school district offered to pay for me to earn my teaching credential and pay a full first year teaching salary. At Southern Oregon i was paid 100.00 a month. ( for real) At the private elementary school i took home \$350.00 every two weeks (1983) I had my eye on another job in the same league, the boys job at Leuzinger.

I took the Leuzinger HS position at age 24. We had 7 guys on the team. two were football players who i begged to join and another guy was a 6.6” bean-pole who i saw riding a skateboard to school everyday. I convinced him to play on the team despite not ever playing before. We lost 18 games in a row that year. including two embarrassing losses to powerhouse Morningside high school.

The AD basically said he made a mistake. I talked him into one more year. Everyday as i drove home i saw a giant walking home from middle school. He was 6’4” but looked like he was 6’10”. Every day i saw him i would stop and chat with Frank. Every school within 30 miles was recruiting him. Franks mom liked me and he ended up going to Leuzinger. Franks freshmen year is also my ultimatum year. This is my first full season with the same players plus Frank. Only this time we win 18 games in a row. We beat Morningside at their place, and Inglewood with Harold (baby Jordan) Miner. We won the league championship and I won several coach of the year awards. The next year Big

Frank is on the radar of mid-majors..We win 20 games and upset Saint Anthonys in the playoffs.

Now Leuzinger is on the map. We are playing teams like Crenshaw and Santa Monica in tournaments and beating them. I love it there.

I want more. I decide that i need more freedom as a coach. So i left..I took a job at this private school called Ribet Academy. They have one goal...win a CIF championship. I am the AD, full pay and basketball coach. By now i have a reputation as a solid coach and one who prepares kids for college and gets them there.( I still do) We win CIF and lose in the SoCal state championship.

I took another bad job at Marshall fundamental in Pasadena. The gym has a floor that was Gray with dirt and dust. I bring my right hand man Dave Whittington with me and we stayed up all night stripping the floor and refinishing it so that we could at least practice on it.

Marshall was a simple fix. We win 15 the first year and twenty our second year. We lost in the semifinal round of playoffs. One of my college friends told me that the Santa Barbara HS job was open. I would often visit my friends Jim Manser, Greg Dansby and Larry Lesset. I loved this place. So i interviewed for the job. On my way out of the interview Andrew Butcher told me that DP needed a coach too.

So i drove there and met the AD Scott O’Leary. When i first met the team i was told that this sophomore would be my best player. When i saw him in person i said really???? He was 5’5 at the most and shot the ball from his left hip with a wind up motion. Little did i know i would have a long fruitful relationship with him. Shantay Legans is the best player i have ever coached. A competitive spirit that just can not be held down.We won the Channel league three straight years. The most fierce competition was probably the one on one games that i dominated until he was a senior. I remember the first day after summer and he was waiting for me in the gym. He just said “lets go.” The first time he took me to the basket i knew that my days of competing with him were over. The first team was probably our best team. We had Shantay, Tafari Pipersberg, Dan Hofer, a 6.7” athlete and Dylan Mooney who had transferred to DP from SB the year before i got there. Dylan had not worked well with the former staff.He was pretty stubborn and set in his ways.

He ended up winning the league MVP and County Player of the year. I coached the Boys basketball team for 9 years at DP winning 4 league Championships and coming in second 4 times. I now coach the girls basketball team. Last year we broke thru and finally beat Buena and advanced to the quarter finals. We were ranked number 6 in CIF... We were 17-1 in pre-season. We split with Santa Barbara who had dominated us throughout the Amber Melgoza years. We moved up a division in CIF and lost in the second round to J Sierra from the competitive Trinity league. Next season, 21 years later since meeting with O’Leary, I will be starting from scratch again.

I would like to thank my athletic directors Scott O’Leary and Dan Feldhouse have been very supportive in my stay at Dos Pueblos. I would also like to thank my fellow local channel league coaches who have shown class and dignity throughout the years of competition. The athletic round table who support our athletes, The many area club coaches who work with the kids year round, and lastly the many fine athletes and their families who have allowed me to play a role in their athletic careers. Far too many to mention. Lastly my wife, Ann and my daughter who have tolerated the ups and downs and time commitment that this profession requires.