

# CONNECTICUT

## LACROSSE HALL OF FAME

### CLASS OF 2016

#### **Mission**

The Connecticut Lacrosse Hall of Fame was established to honor men and women, past and present, who by their deeds as players, coaches, officials, or administrators have contributed to the growth of lacrosse in Connecticut and the stature of Connecticut lacrosse nationally, and who by the example of their lives, personify the great contribution of lacrosse to our way of life.

#### **Graham Harden**

Graham Harden began his high school career at New Canaan High School, making the varsity team as a freshman and starting at defense as a sophomore. Graham finished his high school career at Deerfield Academy, leading his lacrosse team to a Western New England Prep School League Championship during his senior season. Graham received All-Western New England honors in 1986 and 1987 and high school All-America honors in 1987.

Graham went on to play collegiately for the University of North Carolina where his teams won four straight ACC championships from 1988-1991. Graham was a captain on the 1991 team which had one of the finest seasons in college lacrosse history recording a 16-0 record and capturing the NCAA Division I National Championship. As a byproduct of his team's success, Graham received several individual honors. He was named First Team All-ACC and First Team All-America. Additionally, he was named ACC Player of the Year and received The William F. Schmeisser Award as the NCAA Division I Outstanding Defensemen of the Year. In 2002, Graham was one of 57 players selected to the ACC 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Men's Lacrosse Team.

After college, Graham played lacrosse in the United States Club Lacrosse Association with the Greenwich-based Shearson Bulls in 1992 and with the New York Athletic Club in 1993. He was named First Team All-Club both years. He and his brothers, Boyd and Holmes, were a part of the MAB Paints team that won the 1993 Vail Shootout.

Graham began his coaching career in 1992 at Wilton High School, helping the Warriors to a CT State championship. He again coached in 1998 at the University of North Carolina as the defensive coordinator. In 2005, Graham returned to coaching at the high school level and has not stopped since. While coaching at The Lovett School in Atlanta, he helped lead the team to a state title in 2005 and a state runner-up finish in 2006. Later in 2006, Graham and his family moved to Cincinnati,

Ohio where he joined the Mariemont High School coaching staff. In ten years, the Mariemont boys team has played in five state title games, winning three (2007, 2013, 2014). In 2014, Graham was named the US Lacrosse Assistant Coach of the Year for the Southern Ohio region. In addition to his coaching duties for the boys, he has also been a part of the girls varsity coaching staff at Mariemont since 2014.

Graham and his wife Dawn live in Terrace Park, Ohio and have three children, Kendall, Lindsay and Cole.

### **Tyler Hardy**

New Canaan's Tyler Hardy was a highly decorated defensive specialist who excelled at both the high school and collegiate levels. Tyler played four years of varsity lacrosse at New Canaan High School from 1990-1993 under CT Hall of Fame coach Howard Benedict. In his freshman year in 1990 the team recorded a perfect 18-0 record while capturing both the FCIAC and CT State Championships. Tyler received First Team All-FCIAC and First Team All-State honors in each of his junior and senior years. In his senior year in 1993 he also served as a team captain and helped lead New Canaan to another FCIAC Championship. That same year he received high school All-America honors and played in the High School North-South Senior All-Star game at Johns Hopkins University.

Tyler then moved on to Duke University where he played four years of varsity lacrosse from 1994-1997 for CT Hall of Fame coach Mike Pressler. Tyler helped lead Duke to its first ever ACC Tournament Championship in 1995 and its first ever NCAA Division I National Tournament Semi-Final appearance in 1997 when he also served as a team captain. He was a three time First Team All-ACC selection and three time All-America selection from 1995-1997 including First Team All-America honors in 1996 when he also received The William F. Schmeisser Award as the Outstanding Defensemen in Division I. As a senior Tyler played in the 1997 North-South Senior All-Star game and also received Scholar All-America honors. In 2002, Tyler was one of 57 players selected to the ACC 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Men's Lacrosse Team.

Tyler has also been highly successful in the coaching ranks. He first served as an assistant at Duke from 1998-1999 before becoming the head lacrosse coach at the Taft School in Watertown, CT in 2001 where he compiled a record of 37-4 over three seasons. In 2004, Tyler moved west to help establish the Jackson Hole Community School and shortly thereafter created a youth lacrosse program in Jackson, the first of its kind in the state of Wyoming. The program is now the Jackson Hole Lacrosse Club and competes with teams in Wyoming, Idaho, Utah, Montana and Colorado. More recently, in 2015, Tyler moved to Tallahassee, Florida to serve as the head lacrosse coach at the Maclay School where he has compiled a record of 35-8 in his first two seasons.

### **Tim Knowles**

Wilton's Tim Knowles excelled as a defenseman during a highly successful career at each of the high school, collegiate, club and international levels of lacrosse. Tim was a four year varsity lacrosse player for Wilton High School from 1992-1995 under CT Hall of Fame coach Guy Whitten, where he helped lead Wilton to four straight CT State Championships. During Tim's senior year in 1995, Wilton completed its finest season ever, compiling a 23-0 record while also winning the FCIAC Championship and achieving a No. 2 final national ranking. Tim received First Team All-FCIAC and First Team All-State honors in each of his junior and senior years and further received high school All-America honors in his senior year when he was also a team captain. That same year, Tim was selected to play for the U.S. Men's Under-19 National Team, which went on to win the Gold Medal at the 1996 ILF Under-19 Men's World Championships in Tokyo, Japan.

After high school, Tim attended Duke University where he was a four year varsity lacrosse player from 1996-1999 for CT Hall of Fame coach Mike Pressler. Tim helped lead Duke to ACC Tournament runner-up finishes in 1997 and 1999 and to three straight NCAA Division I National Tournament appearances from 1997-1999, including Duke's first ever Semi-Final appearance in 1997. Tim was selected Honorable Mention All-America as a junior in 1998 and served as a team captain as a senior in 1999 when he was also selected First Team All-ACC and Third Team All-America and played in the North-South Senior All-Star game.

Following graduation from Duke, Tim played lacrosse in the United States Club Lacrosse Association for the Duke-TOBAY Lacrosse Club from 2000-2008, earning all club honors. Tim also spent time with the Bridgeport/Philadelphia Barrage and Boston Cannons of the MLL during this period. Tim returned to international competition in being selected to play for the U.S. Men's National Team, which went on to win the Gold Medal at the 2002 ILF Men's World Championships in Perth, Australia. Tim currently plays locally with the O'Neill's lacrosse club.

Tim and his wife Jessica live in New Canaan with their three children, Kaitlyn, Alexandra and Griffin.

### **Jenn Ward Meres**

Jenn Ward played field hockey and lacrosse for the Wilton High School Warriors. A four-year varsity lacrosse player, she earned the Wilton Lacrosse Association's Outstanding Girl Senior Award in 1992.

Her efforts on the field and in the classroom earned her acceptance to Johns Hopkins University, where she became one of the truly explosive players in the history of the women's lacrosse program. A three-time All-America and All-Centennial Conference player, she enjoyed a career matched by few in the history of the women's team. Her individual accomplishments helped the Blue Jays establish themselves as a player on the national level, advancing to the NCAA Semifinals for three straight years. As one of the most prolific scorers of the time, she set school records at Hopkins of 209 career goals and 290 career points and also became the first player in school history to record three separate 50-goal seasons. A two-time Team Captain, she helped lead the Blue Jays to a pair of Centennial Conference Championships and a four year record of 55-12. The 55 wins amassed during her career remain the most in any four-year period in school history. She was inducted into the Johns Hopkins Athletic Hall of Fame in 2009.

Having grown up in a lacrosse family, Jenn's two younger brothers also enjoyed storied lacrosse careers. At Wilton High School, they each earned All-America, All-State and All-FCIAC honors and both played for FCIAC and Connecticut State Championship teams. John went on to play at the University of Pennsylvania where he still holds the school record for total career goals. Steve moved on to Bucknell University where he was honored with the Bison Club Award in his senior year.

For the past several years, Jenn has enjoyed coaching her daughter's youth lacrosse team in Ridgefield, CT where she lives with her husband, Brian (a Georgetown Lacrosse Alum), and their three children.

### **Lisa Parsons**

Lisa Parsons was a two sport athlete at Middlebury College where she played both lacrosse and soccer and graduated in 1988. She played for fellow Hall of Fame coach Missy Foote while at Middlebury.

Lisa went on to coach at the Loomis Chaffee School from 1993 to 2014 and during her tenure, Lisa led the team to a 183-37-7 overall record, three undefeated seasons (2001, 2002, 2010), 10 Founders

League championships, seven Western New England championships, and three New England championships.

Lisa won the prestigious Founder's League Nadal Award in 2014: presented by the Founders League to honor an outstanding coach who has "demonstrated sportsmanship as defined in the statement, 'Play by the rules, accept victory or defeat graciously, respect all who assemble and participate.'"

Lisa has been active in all areas of lacrosse, including serving as the Lower New England National Tournament team coach from 1999 to 2014; Under Armour New England coach in 2009, 2014 and 2015. She also served Connecticut chairperson for the U.S. Lacrosse All-American Committee from 2005-2007 and then again from 2010-2013. Lisa has coached numerous All American's over her tenure and has a number of former players who are currently coaching their own programs.

Lisa, who left Loomis in 2014 when her husband was named head of the Rivers School, a day school outside of Boston, continues to be involved in the sport of lacrosse. She is coaching for Mass Elite, a club lacrosse program outside of Boston and is also coaching at Rivers.

"Lisa was an extraordinary coach for our girls lacrosse program," said Loomis faculty member Webb Trenchard during his 2014 farewell tribute to Lisa. "Lisa helped to redefine what it means to be a great coach in the modern era. ... She managed and organized a great program."

## **Bob Russell**

Bob Russell first played lacrosse at Cheshire Academy, then at Upper Arlington HS (Ohio), Ohio University, and the Philadelphia and Pittsburgh Lacrosse Clubs, before moving to Madison, CT in 1983. He has been coaching in Madison Youth Lacrosse ever since. He was by far the longest-serving president of CONNY and is now CONNY President Emeritus. Madison was one of sixteen CONNY-founder towns in 1990; twenty-six years later CONNY is the largest coed youth league in US Lacrosse, with 16,000 USL members. In 2007, Bob was named both Connecticut High School Lacrosse Coaches Association Man of the Year and Connecticut Sports Writer's Alliance Volunteer of the Year.

Bob has been Special Counsel to the Intercollegiate Men's Lacrosse Coaches Association since its inception. He oversees the IMLCA's finances, bylaw activities, and sponsor relationships. IMLCA membership now spans programs in all NCAA divisions, the Men's Collegiate Lacrosse Association, and the post-college American Lacrosse League.

Bob has been active in Lacrosse Scotland as a coach and fundraiser. He coached the Scotland National Team at the 2006 World Games in London, Ontario, while simultaneously playing for the Scottish Senior Team.

In 2010 Russell was tapped to serve on the US Lacrosse Executive Committee and Board of Directors as Chair of the Men's Game Committee. He still serves on the Men's Game Committee as Past Chair while leading the Post Collegiate Game Subcommittee.

He serves on several charity boards, most notably the lacrosse-related Wounded Warrior Project Lacrosse and Brendan Looney Foundation. Bob's service in his many capacities honors his wife Katy who died in June. Katy was the longtime President of Madison Youth Lacrosse and mother of three highly accomplished lacrosse-playing sons. Bob's mantra of service is something Katy said every day, "HAVE FUN, PLAY LACROSSE". Bob Russell is being inducted into the Connecticut Lacrosse Hall of Fame as a truly great contributor to the game.

## **Carl Taylor**

Judge Carl Taylor has been a fixture in the West Hartford Lacrosse League since the early 1980s. It is likely that thousands of young men have been the beneficiary of Carl's hard work and dedication, as well as his seemingly endless stockpile of lacrosse equipment housed in his garage.

Carl, a native of Washington, DC played high school lacrosse at Taft and the Bullis School in Potomac, MD. Carl then played lacrosse and football at Wesleyan University, graduating in 1978 with a B.A. in American History and Sociology. Post-Collegiate experience included playing for the New Haven Lacrosse Club, Connecticut Valley Lacrosse Association and the Farmington Valley Lacrosse Association.

Carl attended the University of Connecticut School of Law, earning his J.D. in 1981. From there he embarked in a career in the Connecticut State Attorney's office from 1982 through 2001. In 2001 Carl was appointed to the bench of the Connecticut Superior Court where he continues to serve today. He has presided in Juvenile, Family and Criminal Courts in Hartford, Rockville, New Britain, Manchester and Middletown. He has served as a faculty member of the Connecticut Judge's Institute and on the Superior Court Rules Committee.

Carl's contributions to the West Hartford Youth Lacrosse League (WHYLL) are immeasurable. He has served as a coach, Senior Division Vice President, a member of the Board of Directors and on the Executive Committee of the board. Carl's unselfish dedication to the boys in West Hartford is unique. He isn't there just simply to help his own child, he is there for all the boys! To give that much of himself for so many years speaks to the person he is.

However, his ultimate contribution may be continued service as the Equipment Manager for WHYLL. Any new player in need of equipment, from helmet to stick can, borrow it from Carl. Many lacrosse careers have been launched because Carl had the right size helmet, shoulder pads, arm pads or gloves to allow a new player to take the field. Anyone who wanted to try lacrosse in West Hartford, but was not yet ready to make, or could not afford, the financial commitment, was able to get all of the equipment needed from Carl's garage.

Throughout the spring, when not coaching the Senior Red 1 (aka The Unforgiven), Carl can be found on the sidelines of the local high schools and college programs watching his former players and photographing the action. Due to the unique demographic of West Hartford that serves so many schools, Carl has always supported all the boys, regardless of where their playing careers ended up taking them. Carl has also served as a mentor to many who have gone on to coach in the youth, high school and college ranks. Carl's love for the game of lacrosse and his dedication to the growth of the game of lacrosse for the last 40 years make him one of the driving forces in the northern part of the state. For Carl it has always been about the game, regardless of the teams playing. Thousands of West Hartford lacrosse players owe a debt of gratitude for Carl's commitment to grow the sport of lacrosse and his friendship. He is truly a great contributor.

Carl resides in West Hartford with his wife, Shari J. Cantor and his son John who is an alumnus of the WHYLL.