



PRESS RELEASE

Sue Gunter Garners Honor as WBCA's Jostens–Berensen Service Award Recipient

ATLANTA, Ga. (March 10, 2006) -- The Women's Basketball Coaches Association (WBCA) has named the late Sue Gunter as the winner of the 2006 Jostens–Berenson Service Award, recognizing Gunter's lifelong commitment of service to the game of women's basketball.

"Sue Gunter has made so many contributions to enhance women's athletics and is a true pioneer of the game," said WBCA CEO Beth Bass. "We are honored as an association to recognize the late Sue Gunter as the recipient of the 2006 Jostens–Berenson Service Award."

Sue Gunter witnessed the game of women's basketball evolve since the early 1960's until August 4, 2005 when she passed away. Gunter's contributions will never be forgotten as she helped to pave the way for women's basketball and was a true stakeholder for the sport.

She began her coaching career in 1963 at Middle Tennessee State until 1964 when she became head coach for Stephen F. Austin. While coaching three other sports (softball, tennis and track), Gunter posted a 266–87 record in 12 years with the women's basketball team. After 16 seasons she moved to the Director of Women's Athletics position where she served two years before her return to coaching.

In 1983, Gunter began coaching at Louisiana State University (LSU) posting a 442–221 record during her 22–year tenure. She took her teams at LSU to 14 NCAA Tournament appearances, one NCAA® Women's Final Four®, four Elite Eight appearances, eight NCAA Sweet 16 appearances, two SEC Tournament titles and a Women's NIT title. In 1983, she was named Louisiana Coach of the Year, Converse Region IV Coach of the Year and Basketball News National Coach of the Year. In the 1990's, Gunter was named the WBCA Carol Eckman Award recipient (1994), SEC Coach of the Year (1997), WBCA District III Coach of the Year (1999), and SEC and Louisiana Coach of the Year (1999).

Entering the millennium, Gunter was inducted to the Women's Basketball Hall of Fame in 2000 and was awarded yet again with the Louisiana Coach of the Year honor in 2002.

In 2003, she earned Louisiana Coach of the Year once more along with the WBCA Regional Coach of the Year and was inducted into the Mississippi Sports Hall of Fame. After her final year of coaching at LSU, Gunter was inducted into both the Louisiana Sports Hall of Fame and the Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame in 2005.

Outside of the collegiate atmosphere, Gunter had numerous other profound successes. She represented the United States Olympic women's basketball team as the assistant coach in 1976 when they captured the silver medal in Montreal. In 1980, she was selected as the head women's basketball coach for the US Olympic team, but was denied a chance at a gold medal due to the U.S. boycott of the Olympic games in Moscow. Gunter also served as head coach for the U.S. National Team three times in 1976, 1978 and 1980.

Gunter played AAU basketball for Nashville Business College from 1958 to 1962 earning AAU All-America honors and was also a member of the 1960-62 United States teams that competed against the Soviet Union. She earned both her Bachelor and Master degrees in 1962 from Peabody College in Nashville, Tenn., and followed with post-graduate work at Texas Woman's University.

Gunter played in active role in many community service areas throughout Baton Rouge, such as the Baton Rouge Area Lupas Foundation, and served as the honorary chairperson for the Walk for Alzheimer's in Baton Rouge. She was also a finalist for the 1997 YWCA Women of Achievement Award.

"Jostens is pleased to honor such a deserving recipient for her lifelong dedication and loyalty to women's basketball. It is our honor to commemorate Sue's spirit, character and achievement through the Jostens-Berenson Service Award," said Nicole Olson, Jostens Championship Sales and Marketing Manager. "We eagerly commend her lifetime of contributions to further women's athletics."

A vignette will be shown in honor of Coach Gunter and an LSU representative will be formally accepting this award on her behalf. This presentation will take place at the WBCA Awards Luncheon presented by State Farm and Jostens on Sunday, April 2 at 12:30 p.m. (ET) in the Hynes Convention Center Ballroom. The luncheon is part of the WBCA National Convention held in conjunction with the 2006 NCAA Women's Final Four in Boston, Mass. This year the WBCA celebrates it's Silver Anniversary, marking 25 years of existence.

The award, sponsored by Jostens, is named in honor of the late Senda Berenson, who in her role as a physical education instructor at Smith College in Northampton, Mass., introduced "basketball" to her female gym students in 1892. This introduction marked the birth of the women's game, which occurred the year following basketball's invention by Dr. James Naismith in Springfield, Mass.

Sue Gunter joins a distinguished group of recipients which includes: Charles Heatly, Lindsay High School (2005); Louise O'Neal, Wellesley College (2004); Dr. Charlotte West, Southern Illinois University (2003); Dr. Jill Hutchison, Illinois State University (2002); Bob Spencer, Fresno State (2001); the late Dr. Brenda Reilly, Central Connecticut State University (2000); Betty Wiseman, Belmont University (1999); Dr. Rose Marie Battaglia (1998); Lea Plarski, Saint Louis Community College (1997); Carole Baumgarten (1996); Billie Moore, California State - Fullerton (1995); Marcy Weston, Central Michigan University (1994); Patsy Neal (1993); Harley Redin, Wayland Baptist University (1992); Alberta Lee Cox (1991); Bertha Frank Teague (1990); Pat Summitt, University of Tennessee (1989); Hunter Low, Eastman Kodak Company (1988); Cathy Rush, Immaculata College (1987); Mildred Barnes, Central Missouri

State University (1986); the late Carol Eckman, Lock Haven University (1985); and the late Margaret Wade, Delta State University (1984).