



Hardin-Houston Wall of Honor



John Willoughby



Mr. John Willoughby is a proud graduate of Willard High School, class of 1980, and a distinguished alum of Miami University, where he not only earned his degree but also showcased his talent as a basketball player. After completing his college career, he returned to his roots in education and athletics, where his impact would only grow stronger with each passing year. For 31 years, John was a mainstay of Houston High School, serving as a business and accounting teacher. His passion for teaching went beyond the classroom, as he instilled valuable life lessons in his students, preparing them for the world beyond high school.

His role at Houston High School extended far beyond the classroom. For three years, he served as the athletic director, overseeing the school's athletic programs. But it was on the basketball court that Coach Willoughby truly became a household name. As the varsity boys' basketball coach for an incredible 30 years, Coach Willoughby became the winningest coach in the school's history with 342 career wins. His longevity in the game earned him the distinction of being second in longevity among all Shelby County coaches. Under his leadership, the team captured two county titles, were runners-up six times, and earned six district championships. But perhaps most notably, in 2011, he led the team to a regional title and their sole state tournament appearance, a testament to his exceptional coaching ability and the resilience of his players. Throughout his career, Coach Willoughby's teams repeatedly competed at the highest levels, with three of those teams losing to the eventual state champions.

In addition to his time at Houston High School, Mr. Willoughby continues to serve the broader educational community. Currently, he works for the Midwest Regional Educational Service Center, still committed to helping students and schools across the county. But his passion for coaching remains strong, as he continues to guide the varsity boys' basketball team at Sidney High School.

Tonight, as we honor Mr. Willoughby, we recognize not only his coaching and teaching achievements but his legacy of mentorship, discipline, and perseverance. His contributions to the lives of countless Wildcat students and athletes are immeasurable, and his influence will be felt for many years to come. It is with great pride and respect that we induct Mr. John Willoughby into the Wall of Honor, an acknowledgment of his outstanding service to this school district and his ability to pass on his love of basketball to his players.



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John Willoughby was inducted on December 14, 2024



John Willoughby and family on the night of his induction.