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NEW ERA FOR DELAWARE AFRO-AMERICAN SPORTS HALL OF FAME ***HOMEGROWN SPORTS EXECUTIVE MARK SILLS TO TAKE THE HELM***

WILMINGTON—If you don't know the names "Doc" Hill, "Slew" Jackson, "Gator" Lewis and John Oates, you are probably not from Delaware or much of a Delaware sports fan. These men are athletic legends in the Delaware Sports world and were the heroes and mentors to hundreds of young African-American athletes in the First State. They were also the founders of the Delaware Afro-American Sports Hall of Fame more than 20 years ago. And it was to add these great achievers in history's memory to inspire future generations that this organization was created.

Upon its inception, DAASHOF was committed to recognizing outstanding, Delaware-born athletes. This included high school, college and professional athletes, coaches and sports professionals, regardless of race. 221 people to date have been inducted into the Hall of Fame.

Today one of those "Hall of Famers" has been selected to lead the organization into the next season of its work. "We have given out hundreds of awards and scholarships, and recognized just as many deserving individuals since our start in 1996," said newly elected President Mark Sills. Sills is only the seventh president in the organization's history.

"DAASHOF has done a lot of great work. Noteworthy individuals and their contributions have been memorialized in history. Young people whom are deserving have been given the financial assistance to go further with their education and their athletic gifts. But this is only the beginning," Sills added.

The president elect listed the following things to be enhanced:

- We want to increase the number of women that are honored and inducted into the Hall of Fame;
- We want to augment our enrollment of younger members to support the good work of our organization;
- We want to expand our giving to reach more student recipients;
- We want to grow our scholarship funds in order that we can help more students realize their dreams.

Since 1997, Mark P. Sills, has lead Urban Youth Incorporated (UYI), a youth sports organization in which he is the Founder and President. In so doing, he has garnered a national reputation as an advocate, organizer and supporter of youth development programs.



UYI annually hosts 60-70 weekend basketball tournaments for youth (ages 10-17) in 20 cities across the United States, Canada and the Caribbean. Additionally, Sills has organized basketball events with National Basketball Association (NBA) professional teams including The Atlanta Hawks, The Philadelphia 76ERS and The Washington Wizards.

Sills and UYI have received numerous state and local awards from Governmental entities, academic institutions and civic groups for work with area youth, inclusive of helping many (how many? Need #) get into college and receive academic and athletic scholarships.

Prior the launch of UYI, Mark's early career was devoted to youth development. He served in the following roles: Youth Development Specialist with the Wilmington Housing Authority; Youth Program Director for the Delaware Girls Club; Assistant Basketball Coach with Wilmington's Howard High School. At Howard, he was instrumental in helping the team win the 1996 Delaware State Boys High School Basketball Championship.

Mark attended Delaware State University where he studied business administration and recreation studies.

For more information, please contact Mark Sills or Gail Stallings Minor at the numbers listed above.

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