

# 2014 Coaches Legacy Award Recipient

*The Legacy Coach Award has been initiated by the Pacific Association's Coaches Committee in recognition of the many influential coaches who have served in our association, and have selflessly strengthened our sport(s) through teaching, mentoring, and promoting our profession. Criterion is weighted heavily on coaches who were not only great coaches, but who also inspired and trained/mentored many of us to become coaches ourselves. Previous recipients are: Jim Hunt (Humboldt State), Jim Santos (Hayward State), Bud Winter (San José State), Margaret Dixon (Oakland PAL), and Walt Lange, (Jesuit HS), Kirk Freitas (Chico State), and Ed Parker (Millbrae Lions TC)*

## Darrell Hampton *(Acorn TC and Berkeley HS)*



In the early 80's the Acorn Apartments in West Oakland were plagued by crime and drugs. Unfortunately for the residents of the sprawling complex, the Acorn Apartments offered the children of the community very little other than the near guarantee that they would continue the cycle of poverty. One day a group of young ladies challenged Hampton to come up with a program for "the girls". They decided on Track and Field.

The Police Activities League and the West Oakland Health Center began summer programs for the children that would conclude with an annual track meet in which all of the teams could compete. All summer the children trained diligently to get ready for the end of the summer meets. At the conclusion of the P.A.L. meet Margaret Dixon put a "challenge relay race" out on Laney College

Track, and to everyone's surprise, the girls beat the boys. That moment galvanized the children in the Acorn Community.

This victory was the catalyst that turned the track and field team into the flagship program of the Acorn Community Center. In order maintain a high standard of quality we imposed very strict academic requirements for the children that participated in the program, as the allure of college scholarships became a goal for the children of the club.

They began competing with the Pacific Association in 1989 and found out that the club already had a large community following that was invested in the success of these girls. This support of community leaders was instrumental in keeping the program operating. People like Bill Patterson, Marsha Corprew, Thomas Broome, Archie Belford, Jerry Colman, James Wynn, Richard Evans, Wornel Simpson, Dave Stewart, and Willie McGee have been instrumental in providing support for the club in many different capacities. Hampton is always proud to report on the academic success of the club members as I am able to stay connected via social media. Stephanie Garcia has attained an MD, while Aisha Wallace has completed her Ph.D. We have many members that have gone on to achieve Masters' degrees and are involved in the community as teachers in their respective communities. Each year I am asked for workouts for the members that are now serving their communities by coaching Track and Field. From the staff at Berkeley High School to Erica King in South Carolina who has started a track team in her community, it is awesome that one program out of the Community Center has a legacy that spans time and distance.