

Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with Dorothy Gaters

Part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library
Sports Stories - IHSA Oral History project

Interview # SIH-A-L-2017-028

Dorothy Gaters, the long-time girls' basketball coach at Chicago's Marshall High School, with over 1,000 victories, was interviewed on the date listed below as part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library's *Illinois High School Association* Oral History project.

Interview dates & location:

Date: May 11, 2017 Location: John Marshall High School, Chicago, IL

Interview Format: Digital audio

Interviewer: Philip Pogue, ALPL volunteer

Transcription by: _____

Edited by: _____

Total Pages: _____ Total Time: 1:10 / 1.17 hrs.

Accessioned into the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Archives on July 6, 2017.

The interview is archived at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library in Springfield, Illinois.

Transcript
being processed

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Abstract

Dorothy Gaters, Sports Stories-IHSA, SIH-A-L-2017-028

Biographical Information Overview of Interview: Dorothy Gaters was born in Beulah, Mississippi in January, 1946. The family moved to Chicago when she graduated from Chicago's Marshall High School, near Garfield Park, in 1964 and then attended Crane Jr. College (now Malcolm X) and later DePaul University, where she earned an education degree in physical education in 1969. Dorothy returned to Marshall as a physical education teacher. Girls at that time competed on Girl's Athletic Association (GAA) teams rather than in competitive high school sports. When Congress passed Title IX legislation, she agreed to coach girls' basketball in 1973, which began as a small time program with about four games a year. Coach Gaters built the program to where it qualified for the IHSA State Championship in 1979, and thereafter winning Marshall's first of eight state championships in 1982. Overall, Coach Gaters has won 1,084 games, making her one of the winningest basketball coaches nationwide. Coach Gaters also was selected to be a Coach for the Jr. Olympics team and has been selected for many coaching awards, including the 2009 Naismith Hall of Fame and the 2000 Women's Basketball Hall of Fame. She also has been selected as one of the 100 Most Influential Women in Chicago. Three of her players have been selected as Ms. Illinois Girls Basketball since 1986. She also has been named over seven times as Coach of the Year for the Illinois Basketball Coaches Association.

This interview covers Gaters' experiences as a Chicago Public League girls' basketball coach of over forty years. She discusses the start of girls' basketball in Chicago following Title IX, and how a small program became a state power. Gaters talks about her offensive and defensive strategy, practice schedules, game scheduling, and competing at the State Championships. She also discusses Chicago Public League structure, her coaching philosophy, student participation, cooperation with the boys' team, school funding and school and community support. She reminisces about girls who moved on to college and professional basketball, and about rules changes that impacted the game such as the three point shot and the smaller sized basketball. Gaters stresses the importance of developing responsibility, team work, self confidence in the girls, and the success she's had helping girls obtain scholarships.

Subject Headings/Key Words: Marshall High School girls' basketball program; Chicago Public League; impact of Title IX legislation; building an athletic program from scratch; Illinois High School Association; division affiliation in Chicago Public Schools; girls' state basketball championships

Note to the Reader: Readers of the oral history memoir should bear in mind that this is a transcript of the spoken word, and that the interviewer, interviewee and editor sought to preserve the informal, conversational style that is inherent in such historical sources. The Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library is not responsible for the factual accuracy of the memoir, nor for the views expressed therein. We leave these for the reader to judge.

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