



Jesse White

SECRETARY OF STATE

NEWS

ILLINOIS SECRETARY OF STATE

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White Inducted Into Illinois Basketball Hall of Fame

SPRINGFIELD — Secretary of State Jesse White was inducted into the Illinois Basketball Hall of Fame during the 28th Annual Induction Dinner Saturday, April 29, at Illinois State University.

"It's a great honor to be selected to the Illinois Basketball Hall of Fame," said White. "Basketball is the ultimate team sport, and I believe my success in working with a team as a high school student translated into success in my adult life."

As a basketball player for Chicago's Waller High School (now Lincoln Park Academy), White set the school's single game scoring record with 68 points. White was an all-city basketball and baseball player and was inducted into the Chicago Public League Basketball Coaches Association Hall of Fame in 1995.

Jesse White earned his Bachelor of Science degree in 1957 from Alabama State College (now Alabama State University), where he was a two-sport athlete earning all-conference honors in basketball and baseball. He was inducted into the Southwestern Athletic Conference Hall of Fame in 1995. He still holds the scoring record there with more points in four years than anyone else in the school's history.

Dr. Norman Walton, a retired ASU history professor and swimming coach, vividly recalled White's prowess on the court and as a student. "Jesse came along ahead of his time," said Walton. "Jesse, even back in the 1950s, would leap into the air, spin around and shoot the ball like Michael Jordan. If you want to see Michael Jordan before his time, look at Jesse

White."

After college, White played professional baseball with the Chicago Cubs' organization before entering into a 33-year career with the Chicago Public School System as a teacher and administrator. In 1959, he founded the internationally renowned Jesse White Tumbling Team to serve as a positive alternative for children residing in Chicago's Cabrini-Green and Henry Horner public housing communities.

"I was fortunate to be blessed with my athletic ability, but my achievements on the field and court were largely the result of countless hours of practice and hard work," said White. "Because I was dedicated, I was able to earn a scholarship to college and receive my degree.

"All that I am in life, I owe to those who helped me along the way," added White. "I believe strongly that we must give back to the community and I try to inspire our youth and challenge them to be the best they can be, to get a good education and to have love in their heart for their fellow man."