

Meet the 2017 HOF Inductees

Jack Bennett– Player

Jack was a star pitcher for Cambridge High School that did not escape the notice of Fred Lucas, business manager of the minor league Cambridge Dodgers. Lucas had played in a previous version of the Class D Eastern Shore League, and had a good eye for talent as the young right hander posted a 31 and 5 record in high school, and then further distinguished himself in Junior Legion baseball and the Marydel League. A slight 6 foot 1 inch right hander, Bennett started his four year professional career in his hometown of Cambridge. In addition to Cambridge, Jack spent time playing for Oak Ridge/Hazard, and Big Stone Gap of the Mountain State League, and Smithfield-Selma of the Tobacco State League. He compiled a record of 36 wins and 46 losses in 103 games during that time.

Stanley A. “Lee” Daniels, Jr. - Player

At an early age, this Deal Island native learned how to confuse his opponents pitching with either hand, a tactic he employed at every level throughout his career.

After making the All Bayside South All Star team in 1984-85, he played for Coach Dick Brockell in 1985. Lee started his career in the Eastern Shore Baseball League under Charlie Muir at the age of 16 in 1983. Over a 14 year span he played for Peakey’s and Virginia Shores. But he was more than an ambidextrous pitcher, playing both outfield and first base. At one point in 1985, he was leading the league in hitting with a robust .492 average.

After hanging up his spikes in 1997, Lee continued to contribute to Eastern Shore baseball, coaching Little League from 2003-2011; at the Washington High School Academy for 2 years, as assistant to Brian Laird in American Legion from 2010-13; and as a manager of American Legion Baseball 2013-2016.

James Lloyd “Jimmy” Gates – Player

A four sport star at Washington High School, the fifteen year old Jimmy Gates was recruited to play for the Princess Anne Legionnaires of the Central Shore League. Despite his age, Jimmy became a regular at second base and the outfield for two years for one of the better teams in the circuit, playing alongside team mates who had played high minor league ball. Jimmy was often cited in newspaper accounts for his fielding and speed. Before his final year of school his family moved to southern Maryland. There he caught the attention of Detroit scout Fred Haney, and had a tryout with Washington in 1954. He was required to run a forty yard dash with another hopeful in which the speedy Bates was barely edged out. That fellow recruit was future National League star, Maury Wills.

Jimmy then entered the Navy where he became Senior Enlisted Advisor to Admiral Zumwault of the United Submarine Service, the second highest ranking enlisted sailor in the Navy. He then served as Senior Master Chief instructor at Orlando Naval Training Base before he retired.

Jimmy never let baseball stand in the way of his love for baseball. In posting from Rhode Island to Florida, he continued to coach youth teams. James Gates died December 25, 2014 and is buried at Arlington National Cemetery.

Edward M. “Butch” Greene – Player

After working through local youth leagues, the “Fruitland Fireballer” starred for the 1961 Wicomico High School baseball team and the Wicomico Post Junior American Legion team. It was at this time that Butch caught the attention of scouts John Russell of the Milwaukee Braves, and John Ogden of the Philadelphia Phillies, with which he had tryouts. In communication with Chick Genovese of the San Francisco Giants, he signed a professional contract with that National League organization. He played one year for Decatur of the Class D Midwest League before being released. Determined to realize his dream of major league baseball, he remained in contact with John Ogden of the Phillies, who encouraged him to continue his pursuit.

Butch married in 1964 and soon a family was in the offing. Butch then gave up on the uncertainty of his baseball future he dedicated his life to providing for his family.

Nathaniel “Bucky” Speaks – Player

Bucky is considered one of the finest players to play in the Delaware Negro Leagues. He covered a lot of territory from his centerfield position and possessed a great arm. He combined his noted defensive skills with speed and the ability to hit for average with pop, accumulating an estimated batting average of well over .325 in a highly competitive circuit.

Bucky played mostly with the Frankford Hawks and the Lewes Cardinals in Delaware. Bucky has never really retired, and remains competitively active in over 65 leagues in more than one sport.

Tyler Townsend – Player

Tyler’s baseball abilities were recognized early. From Lewes, De Tyler was a high school All American at Cape Henlopen. Recruited by Florida International, he again earned honors as collegiate All American where he was drafted in the third round by the Baltimore Orioles in 2009.

Tyler worked his way through the Oriole system, which included stops with the Rookie Gold Coast League, Aberdeen of the New York-Penn League, Delmarva of the South Atlantic, Frederick of the Carolina League, and Bowie of the Eastern League. He posted solid offensive numbers at each level he played before injury cut his professional career short. Tyler was not only a great player, but an excellent example of what a player should be, as well as for his family and community.