

44th Annual Louisiana Association of Basketball Coaches Awards Banquet

May 5, 2018
Embassy Suites Hotel
Baton Rouge, Louisiana

BATON ROUGE --- Two championship-winning coaches and the player who broke racial barriers at Nicholls State University in the late 1960s were the major honorees at Saturday's 44th Annual Louisiana Association of Basketball Coaches Awards Banquet.

Inducted into the Louisiana Basketball Hall of Fame posthumously were former McNeese State University and Southeastern Louisiana University coach E.W. Foy and former Louisiana Tech University coach Tommy Joe Eagles.

The other major honoree was former Nicholls State star Cleveland Hill, who received the LABC's Mr. Louisiana Basketball award. This award is given annually to someone who has made a significant, long-term contribution to the game of basketball at any level in the State of Louisiana.

Also honored at the banquet were Louisiana's major college, small college, junior college and high school basketball players and coaches of the year, along with the top pro player from the state.

Foy coached at Southeastern Louisiana, then McNeese State, between 1969 and 1977, where he won 117 games and had a 56.5% career winning percentage. He was the Gulf South Conference Coach of the Year in 1973, won two conference championships and posted two 20-win seasons, including an NCAA Division II Tournament regional final appearance.

Eagles coached at Louisiana Tech from 1985 to 1989, where he won 87 games and lost only 40, for a 68.5% career winning percentage. He was a Southland Conference, American South Conference and Louisiana Coach of the Year and had four straight 20-win seasons.

Eagles led the Bulldogs to two conference regular season championships and three conference tournament championships, to go along with two NCAA Tournament appearances and two NIT appearances, including a third place finish in the NIT in 1986.

Hill broke the color barrier in athletics at Nicholls State in 1968, 50 years ago this year. His quiet, unassuming manner and his exceptional play on the basketball court made him immediately one of the most respected students on campus. He went on to become the school's all-time leading scorer and rebounder, garnering all-conference and honorable mention All-American honors and becoming the first Colonels player drafted into professional basketball.

After college he joined the U.S. Army and played on the All-Army and Armed Forces basketball teams, before returning to Nicholls State as an assistant coach. After earning his

doctorate in education, he later became the school's first African-American administrator when he was named the Dean of the College of Education.

The LABC also presented the Pete Maravich Memorial Award, honoring Louisiana's Major College Player of the Year, to senior guard Frank Bartley of UL-Lafayette. This season Bartley was a first team All-Sun Belt Conference, NABC All-District and USBWA All-District selection. He averaged 17.8 points and 3.6 rebounds and had a SBC-leading 86.0% free throw percentage. He scored in double figures in 32 of 33 games and had single game highs of 26 points, 6 steals and 5 three-point field goals made.

Coach Bob Marlin of UL-Lafayette received the Tommy Joe Eagles Memorial Award as Louisiana's Major College Coach of the Year. He led the Cajuns to the Sun Belt Conference regular season championship and to the NIT with a 27-7 record. This was UL-Lafayette's first regular season conference title since 2004 and its most wins in school history. Marlin was the SBC and a NABC District Coach of the Year.

The Bob Pettit Award, which is given to Louisiana's Professional Player of the Year, was presented to guard-forward Ben Simmons of the Philadelphia 76ers. In his rookie year in the NBA, the former LSU star averaged 15.8 points, 8.2 assists, 8.1 rebounds and 1.7 steals. Simmons had 12 triple-double games and 38 double-double games, along with single game highs of 32 points, 18 rebounds, 15 assists, 6 steals and 4 blocked shots. He is a leading candidate for NBA Rookie of the Year.

Senior guard Stevie Clark of LSU-Shreveport received the Louisiana Small College Player of the Year award after being named a first team NAIA All-American and the Red River Athletic Conference Player of the Year and Newcomer of the Year, while averaging an RRAC-leading 21.5 points and 2.21 steals and finishing fourth in the nation with an 89.2% free throw percentage.

Coach Larry Cordaro of LSU-Alexandria, who was named the Louisiana Small College Coach of the Year, directed the Generals to a second place finish in the Red River Athletic Conference, to the RRAC Tournament championship and to the finals of the NAIA National Tournament with a 29-8 record. LSU-Alexandria became the first Louisiana men's college basketball team to play for a national championship since 1975, falling in overtime on a buzzer-beater.

Mubarak Muhammed and Coach Chris Lovell of Bossier Parish were honored as the Louisiana Junior College Player and Coach of the Year, respectively. Muhammed, a sophomore forward, averaged 14.2 points, 9.1 rebounds and 1.5 blocks and was a second team NJCAA Region XIV All-Region selection. Lovell led Bossier Parish to a No. 8 seed in the NJCAA Region 14 Tournament with a 17-14 record, which represented an improvement of 7 wins over 2017 and was the school's best record since 2007 and most wins since 2008.

2018 LABC Honorees:

Louisiana Basketball Hall of Fame Inductees: E.W. Foy, McNeese St./Southeastern La.;
Tommy Joe Eagles, Louisiana Tech

Mr. Louisiana Basketball: Cleveland Hill, Nicholls State University

Bob Pettit Award for the Louisiana Professional Player of the Year: Ben Simmons, Philadelphia
76ers

Pete Maravich Memorial Award for the Louisiana Major College Player of the Year: Frank
Bartley, UL-Lafayette

Tommy Joe Eagles Memorial Award for the Louisiana Major College Coach of the Year: Bob
Marlin, UL-Lafayette

Louisiana Small College Player of the Year: Stevie Clark, LSU-Shreveport

Louisiana Small College Coach of the Year: Larry Cordaro, LSU-Alexandria

Louisiana Junior College Player of the Year: Mubarak Muhammed, Bossier Parish

Louisiana Junior College Coach of the Year: Chris Lovell, Bossier Parish

Louisiana High School Players of the Year:

- Class AAAAA:* Ja’Vonte Smart, Scotlandville
- Class AAAA:* Jonathan Cisse, St. Thomas More
- Class AAA:* Kobe Julien, Madison Prep
- Class AA:* Mylik Wilson, Rayville
- Class A:* Greg Williams, Lafayette Christian
- Class B:* Dee Levingston, Simsboro
- Class C:* John Buggs, Summerfield

Louisiana High School Coaches of the Year:

- Class AAAAA:* Anthony Schiro, Walker
- Class AAAA:* Christopher Kovatch, Carencro
- Class AAA:* Charles Smith, Peabody
- Class AA:* Damon West, Rayville
- Class A:* Troy Green, White Castle
- Class B:* Shaun Dumas, Crescent City
- Class C:* Dirk Ricks, Jehovah-Jireh