

Mike Sorrells '59

2012 Distinguished Alumni Award



Mike Sorrells '59 was born in Sweetwater, Texas and moved 16 times before he came to HPIISD. He graduated from HPHS in 1959 and earned a business degree from Austin College in 1965 and a Master of Liberal Arts degree from SMU in 1973. Coach Sorrells might be best known for his 33 years as Highland Park High School's swim coach. He served in that capacity from 1965 until his retirement in 2002, and he also served as an assistant coach under Pat Patterson at the University of Texas from 1971-1972. Coach Sorrells was part of the driving force to separate the state meet into 5A and 4A-and-under divisions, giving more athletes the chance to compete at the highest level. He was instrumental in the establishment of the senior circuit, and he was voted TISCA Coach of the Year 2001. His girls' teams won state titles in 2001 and 2002, while his boys' team won in 2000. Last month, he was inducted into the Texas Swimming and Diving Hall of Fame. Perhaps Mike's greatest accomplishment and important success is the lasting impact he has had on the lives of those he has coached. Time and again, the words, "fair, authentic, encouraging and motivating" have been written about him. He helped his students grow up by teaching them the value of hard work and perseverance and inspired so many of them to become stronger, better people than they thought they could be. Because of his positive influence on so many young lives, we are pleased to honor Mike Sorrells with the 2012 Distinguished Alumni Award.