



Dr. Ed. Hightower
Superintendent

100
BLACK MEN
OF AMERICA, INC.

On television Ed Hightower wears the black-and-white "zebra" shirt of a Division I basketball referee and officiated seven (7) consecutive NCAA Final Four tournaments from 1988 through 1994. He returned to the NCAA Final Four in 1996 and 2002. Offered a contract to referee professional basketball for the National Basketball Association, he declined, preferring the contract he already had as educator and school administrator.

"While Ed is among the top college basketball referees in the country, his officiating pursuits take a back seat to his job as Superintendent of the Edwardsville Community Unit School District #7, where he is absolutely committed to the students and teachers."

Ed is recognized both locally and nationally for his achievements in the field of education, and for his civic contributions. He was the recipient of the 1989 Illinois Distinguished Principals Award, the 1992 Who's Who Among American Educators, 1993 Illinois Principal of the Year Award, and was honored with the national Distinguished Principal's award in Washington, D.C. in 1993.

Ed's civic recognition includes the 1990 Elijah Lovejoy Human Rights Award, Illinois Jaycees Ten Outstanding Young Persons Award, 1993 Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville Distinguished Alumnus, 1993 Belleville News-Democrat Carol Kimmel Community Service Award, and the 1994 Alton Boys and Girls Club Outstanding Award to young people.

Ed began officiating intramural basketball during his junior year in college. Presently, he officiates Division I basketball in the Big 10, Big 12, and Conference USA. In 1992, he was voted the Naismith Division I Men's College Basketball Official of the Year. In 1995 he received the coveted Gold Whistle Award from the National Association of Sports Officials. Ed represented the United States in 1990 at the World Championship of Basketball, and as the "Neutral" basketball official for the European Basketball championship. During the summer, he has represented the U.S. at the Goodwill Games in Russia and the Gold Medal Basketball Game. He was also inducted in the Illinois Basketball Coaches Association Hall of Fame.

Ed received Bachelor, Master, and Specialist degrees from Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville and he have a Doctorate in Education Administration from St. Louis University. He is involved in numerous civic and professional organizations, serving on several boards of trustees.

Even with his busy schedule, Ed's priorities remain family, church, work and officiating. He lives in Edwardsville, IL with his wife, Barbara, and they have two daughters, Julie and Jennifer.