

**El Paso Athletic Hall of Fame Nomination Cover Sheet (2025)**

**Categories (Please circle one)**

Living Athlete Coach/Administrator Media/Supporter of Athletics Official/Trainer Posthumous

Name of Nominee JOHN MARTIN PAPA

Mailing Address 315 FLYNN DRIVE

Home Phone 915-490-5956

Cell Phone 915-490-5956

E-Mail Address COACH.JOHN.PAPAB@GMAIL.COM

Name of Presenter DAVE SPEELMAN

Date of Presentation \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address 4140 RIO BRAVO, EL PASO, TX

Cell Phone (915) 329-7084

E-Mail Address DOOPLEDAVE@KVIA.COM

The candidate will be judged on his or her athletic record, ability, integrity, sportsmanship, character, and contributions. The candidate must have been born in El Paso County or lived in El Paso County for at least 10 years and not consecutively and does not need to be an El Paso County resident at the time of election. They may be elected at any time during or after his or her athletic career and there shall be no restrictions as to race, creed, color, sex, or nationality. The candidate must not have been convicted of a felony.

**I hereby acknowledge this Nominee for El Paso Athletic Hall of Fame has not been convicted of a felony as per my signature below.**

**Signed by Presenter or Nominee:**

JOHN MARTIN PAPA  
Name (Please Print)

John M. Papa  
Name (Signature)

02-24-25  
Date

- Nominee concurs with his/her Nomination.
- 40 copies of the Nominees Resume Packet are Provided. (Actual number decided at 1<sup>st</sup> meeting)
- Cover Letter is filled out with Nominees Information.
- Cover Letter is signed by Nominee or Presenter acknowledging No Felony.
- Nominee will be presented in person or by Zoom (Please note which one)

**• If any of the above info is incomplete, the candidate will not be eligible for Nomination**

**Ruben R. Ramirez, President**  
El Paso Athletic Hall of Fame

# John M. Papa

315 Flynn Drive, El Paso, TX 79932

915-490-5956

## EDUCATION

- 1992 **UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO**  
Mid-Management Certification in Educational Administration
- 1990 *Master of Education*
- 1978 **LUBBOCK CHRISTIAN COLLEGE**  
*Bachelor of Science* – Biology (Secondary Education) –  
Minor Health & Physical Education
- 1975-1976 **NEW MEXICO STATE UNIVERSITY**- Las Cruces, New Mexico  
Undergraduate Studies
- 1973-1975 **NEW MEXICO JUNIOR COLLEGE** – Hobbs, New Mexico  
*Associate of Arts Degree*

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- 2022-2024 **JESUS CHAPEL HIGH SCHOOL** - El Paso, Texas  
Head Boys Basketball Coach
- 2021-2022 **ST. MARK'S MIDDLE SCHOOL** - El Paso, Texas  
Head Boys Basketball Coach
- 2018-2020 **EL PASO CHRISTIAN HOME SCHOOL** - El Paso, Texas  
Head Boys Basketball Coach
- 2017-2018 **EL PASO CHRISTIAN HOME SCHOOL** - El Paso, Texas  
Assistant Boys Basketball Coach
- 2016-2017 **CHAPARRAL HIGH SCHOOL** - Chaparral, New Mexico  
Teacher: Physical Science
- 2014-2016 **CHAPARRAL HIGH SCHOOL**- Chaparral, New Mexico  
Head Boys Basketball Coach  
Teacher: Physical Science
- 2013-2014 **CHAPARRAL HIGH SCHOOL** - Chaparral, New Mexico  
Assistant Varsity Boys Basketball Coach  
Teacher: Physical Science
- 2011-2013 **GADSDEN HIGH SCHOOL** - Anthony, New Mexico  
Coach  
Junior Varsity Boys Basketball Coach / Varsity Assistant Basketball
- 2011-2013 **DESERT PRIDE ACADEMY** - Anthony, New Mexico  
Teacher  
Middle School Science / High School Physical Education
- 2009-2011 **WILLIAM HERRERA ELEMENTARY** - El Paso, Texas  
Coach / Teacher

Physical Education Teacher

2009-2010 **CATHEDRAL HIGH SCHOOL** - El Paso, Texas

Coach

Varsity Boys Basketball Coach

2008-2009 **CATHEDRAL HIGH SCHOOL** - El Paso, Texas

Coach

Junior Varsity Boys Basketball Coach / Varsity Assistant Basketball

2005-2009 **MITZI BOND ELEMENTARY** - El Paso, Texas

Coach /Teacher

Physical Education Teacher

2005-2008 **FRANKLIN HIGH SCHOOL** - El Paso, Texas

Coach

2005-2006 Junior Varsity Boys Basketball Coach / Varsity Assistant Basketball

2006-2008 Freshman Boys Basketball Coach / Varsity Assistant Basketball

2001-2005 **SANTA TERESA HIGH SCHOOL** - Santa Teresa, New Mexico

Coach / Teacher

Head Boys Basketball Coach

Biology Teacher

1979-2001 **YSLETA INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT** - El Paso, Texas

Coach / Teacher

1997-2001 **DELVALLE HIGH SCHOOL** - El Paso, Texas

1997-2001 Assistant Varsity Boys' Basketball Coach

1997-2001 Junior Varsity Boys' Basketball Coach

1999-2001 Explorer Recovery Program

1998-1999 New Directions Program (Teen Parents)

2000-2001 Health Teacher

1998-1999 Science Teacher

1997-1998 Biology Teacher

1984-1997 **RIVERSIDE HIGH SCHOOL** - El Paso, Texas

1994-1997 Biology Teacher

1994-1995 Assistant Varsity Boys Basketball Coach

1984-1986 Junior Varsity Boys Basketball Coach

1984-1986 Physical Education Teacher

1986-1994 **YSLETA HIGH SCHOOL** - El Paso, Texas

Varsity Boys Basketball Head Coach

Health Science Teacher

1980-1984 **J.M. HANKS HIGH SCHOOL** - El Paso, Texas

1982-1984 Biology Teacher

1983-1984 Junior Varsity Boys Track Coach

1980-1984 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Boys Basketball Coach

1981-1982 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Boys Track Coach

1980-1981 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Girls Track Coach

1980-1982 **EDGEMERE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL** - El Paso, Texas

Physical Education Teacher

1979-1980 **EASTWOOD MIDDLE SCHOOL** - El Paso, Texas

8<sup>th</sup> Grade Boys Basketball / Track Coach  
Physical Education Teacher

### **HONORS AND AWARDS**

2008-2009 Varsity Basketball TAPPS State Playoffs – Cathedral High School  
2007-2008 District Championship – Franklin High School 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Boys Basketball  
2005-2006 Varsity Basketball Bi-District Champion and Area Champion –  
Franklin High School  
2001-2002 El Paso Times "Teacher of the Day" – Santa Teresa High School  
1999-2000 Varsity Basketball Bi-District Playoffs – Del Valle High School  
1997-1998 District Championship – Del Valle High School Junior Varsity Boys Basketball  
1994-1995 State of Texas "Final Four" Participant – Riverside High School  
1986-1987 Boys Basketball "Coach of the Year" from El Paso, Texas  
1982-1983 District Championship - J.M. Hanks High School 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Boys Basketball  
1980-1981 District Championship - J.M. Hanks High School 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Girls Track

### **MEMBERSHIP**

2015-2016 Member of New Mexico High School Coaches Association  
2005-2008 Member of Texas Association of Basketball Coaches Association - Franklin High School  
2002-2003 Member of New Mexico High School Coaches Association  
2001-2002 Member of New Mexico High School Coaches Association  
1997-1999 Member of Texas Association of Basketball Coaches Association  
1996-1997 Member of El Paso Collaborative for Performance Standards - Riverside High School  
1995-1996 Member of Appraisal Committee to adopt new appraisal system at Riverside High School

# Proud Papa wins Coach of Year by turning Ysleta into winner

On May 28, 1986, John Papa first laid eyes on his new team. Ysleta had won just three of 25 games that season.

This season, the Indians won 18 games and Papa was named the El Paso Times boys basketball Coach of the Year.

Papa, who had been an assistant at Riverside, said, "At first look, I felt we had pretty good

talent, but the kids didn't appear to be very disciplined."

The rookie coach changed all that, adding new drills, weight training and a different offensive philosophy. Papa also encouraged players — right down to the freshmen — to compete in summer leagues.

"We had 24 or 25 players in the summer leagues, and I

think that was the most of any school in the area," Papa said.

Papa said when pre-season practice began, "the willingness to work was there all the time, but they didn't really believe in themselves. But you can't blame them after what had happened the season before."

"After a couple of wins, they saw they could play with

teams, they believed in themselves again," Papa said.

Papa said the real turning point in the season was beating Lower Valley rival Riverside — and his former mentor, Coach Jim Forbes — to win the Rangers' tournament.

"The biggest thing was that we played very well as a team on offense after that. No individ-

ual standouts. That's the coach. Team ball," Papa said.

"We'll strive for improvement next year and the after."

Also considered for Coach of the Year were Austin's Rick Paulk, Andrews' Pete Lewi and Jefferson's Mike Harper. Riverside's Forbes.

## Ysleta scores 6th victory of season

By Randy Weinglass  
Times correspondent

Richard Rincon scored on a lay-up with 26 seconds left and Fred Lopez made a pair of foul shots with seven ticks remaining to help Ysleta stave off the hosts 50-47 for the championship of the 1986 Riverside Invitational Basketball Tournament Saturday night.

It was a big victory for Indian coach John Papa, who last season was an assistant at Riverside. Ysleta upped its record to 6-2 after winning just three games all of last season.

The loss was the second for Riverside in 10 outings.

Ysleta led 46-38 with just 58 seconds remaining, but the Rangers fought back to within one point with 32 seconds left.

Rincon broke the Ranger pressure defense and hit his key bucket, then an intentional foul

### boys basketball

was called against Riverside.

This call gave Lopez a pair of foul shots with seven seconds remaining, but more importantly it gave Ysleta possession of the ball and the victory.

Both Frank and Fernie Gonzales were named to the all-tournament squad along with Trillo and Perez. They joined Manny Macias and Mike Gay of third-place Austin, Travis Duke of fourth-place Burges, David Moreno of Irwin and Fernie Verdugo of Bowie on the all-tournament squad.

Other game results: Austin 61, Burges 49 — Austin exploded for 45 second-half points and claimed third place. The Panthers were led by Mike

Gay's 19 points and Russell Owens added 14 more. Javier Loya led Burges with 14.

Irvin 53, Amarillo Caprock 51 — Otis Davis drilled a 13-foot jumper with 0.21 remaining and Robert Thomas added a foul shot with 13 seconds left, giving the Rockets the comeback win for fifth place.

El Paso Tournament  
Coronado won the El Paso High tournament when Mike Ferguson made good one of two free throws with two seconds remaining in a 32-31 win over the host El Paso Tigers.

Non-Tournament  
Hobbs 91, Eastwood 87 — The host Hobbs Eagles edged away from a 62-all the going into the final period and defeated the Troopers, who had five players score in double figures. Brett Wagner led the Troopers with 26 points. Eastwood fell to 7-4 for the year.

# Ysleta improved under new coach; Hernandez hits 200

By Joe Jansen  
Times staff writer

If Tuesday's Andress Ysleta boys basketball game had been played a year ago, it would have been decided by halftime.

Ysleta won only three of 26 games last year, and a losing attitude prevailed by year's end. Not this season.

The Indians were down by 13 points early in the second quarter of a game that Andress clearly controlled with a disciplined offense and a suffocating defense.

But Ysleta fought back in the second half, pulling to within one point early in the fourth quarter. Andress eventually pulled away to win 54-39, but it was proof positive the Indians are a different team.

## basketball notes

"One thing I can say about this team is they don't quit. It would have been easy to fold it up (Tuesday), but these guys haven't quit in any game this year," Ysleta first-year coach John Papa said.

The Indians already have won six games this year, including a win over Riverside. Papa was an assistant to Riverside coach Jim Forbes for two years before moving on to Ysleta.

"I learned a lot from him and I think he learned some things from me," Papa said.

Burges' Cynthia Hernandez was the first El Paso high school player to reach

the 200-point plateau this year. The Mustangs' gunner has scored 247 points, including 20 or more in seven of the team's 13 games. Her season-high is 31.

El Paso High's John Arizmendez lost 15 pounds and missed several games last week because of a virus. But the junior scored 19 points to lead the Tigers to an overtime victory over Riverside Tuesday in his first game back in the lineup. The Tigers, who shot just one free throw in a loss to Coronado in the finals of the El Paso Tournament last weekend, made 22 of 30 free throws Tuesday.

Courtney Gentry is making a big impact on the Austin girls' basketball this season, despite the fact she's a freshman. The 5-10 center is the team's third-

leading scorer at 87 points a game, including 51 points in her last four games. The Panthers, who finished 15-10 last year, are tied with Bowie and Coronado for District 1-5A's best record at 8-3.

Cathedral's Steve Kall scored only two points Tuesday, but his timing was perfect. Kall tipped in a missed shot with 11 seconds left as the host Irish stung Parkland 47-46.

Eastwood's girls have a perfect record, 11-0, but the Eastwood boys may have the perfect starting lineup. Each of the five Trooper starters — Brett Wagner, Randy Bustillos, Rick Olivas, Tony Provenzo and Jimmy Moreno — has scored more than 100 points this season and each starter has led the team in scoring in at least one game.



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# Cathedral hires new head coach

By Lenny Jurado

El Paso Times

EL PASO — John Papa was sincere and passionate in addressing Cathedral's basketball players as their new head coach Wednesday.

"One thing that you can count on from me is that I'm going to give it my best every day," he said. "And if I'm going to be giving my best, what do you think I'm going to expect from you? ... If we do that, and we're on the same page, good things are going to happen, many positive things are going to happen. But the bottom line is we're going to have fun, because basketball is a fun game to play."



Papa, the Fighting Irish's junior varsity coach this past season, formally was introduced by principal Sam Govea in the school's library.

He brings 12 years of head-coaching experience between Ysleta, where he was the El Paso Times' Coach of the Year for the 1986-87 season, and Santa Teresa, as well as several years as an assistant coach with four other El Paso programs.

One of those assistant jobs was under Jim Forbes at Riverside, the last El Paso boys basketball program to reach the state semifinals (1995).

Basketball is second-nature to the El

## Cathedral

Continued from 1C

Paso native, and the fire to coach is far from being extinguished in Papa.

"When I became the head coach at Ysleta, I was about 31 years old. I'm 53 now," Papa said. "Back then, I was thinking, 'How am I going to be when I'm in my 50s?' Well, I still have the same fire in me."

The players see that, as well.

"I think he brings a lot of tradition, which the school needs right now," junior basketball player Memo Flores said. "He brings a lot of experience, and I think he has a passion and love for the game that he'll (transfer) to us."

Govea gave a raving endorsement for Papa, who was a college signee out of Coronado and played for New Mexico Junior College, New Mexico State and Lubbock Christian.

Papa was lauded for his knowledge of fundamental basketball, but Govea spoke mostly about the coach's character.

"I believe he's what we're looking for in a coach in a sense of building character through the program, making the game fun, promoting what Cathedral's about: family, community," Govea said. "And I think he brings that to the table."

Above all, Papa expects to be a role model while using sports as a metaphor for life.

"I feel that the example that a good coach, a good teacher can give carries a lot of weight," he said. "I feel that that sometimes goes beyond Xs and Os."