

Hugh Cantrell



Nicholasville, KY
Director Category
Inducted November 1992

Hugh Cantrell is the Founder, CEO and President of the NSA. In 1982 around his kitchen table in Lexington, KY, he announced his plans for The National Softball Association to his son Eddie Ray, Don Moore, Ernie Browning, eventual board members Jim Miles and Bernie Livers. After having been a player, coach, tournament organizer and sponsor for more than 25 years, Hugh saw the need for a softball association that would put the teams and players first. A softball association that would do it better than the rest. Slogans by NSA personnel have risen over the years for the NSA that reflects the attitude that Hugh instilled into his early local and State directors. “*NSA – The dedicated Association*”, “*NSA – One Better than the Best*”, *NSA – The Players Association.*” These slogans represent the personal conviction of the NSA Founder and President.

In the autumn of 1982, the plans were set in motion for Hugh and his fledgling National Softball Association to get off the ground as incorporation papers were filed in Lexington. The first official conference was soon to follow in November of 82. It was at this conference that the groundwork and framework was put into place for the spring of 1983.

In January of 1983, Hugh appointed the first six Board of Directors that would serve as the decision making body of the NSA. Though the day-to-day business was left up to the seventh board member Hugh, the original Board of Directors acted as the Rules committee. Six original board members are still with the NSA in some capacity as of November 2002. This says a lot about the commitment of the people that Hugh recruits.

In 1983, the NSA sanctioned 638 teams in three states. In 2002, the NSA does or has done business in all 50 states, Canada, Guam, Puerto Rico, Mexico, The Bahamas, Russia and Holland.

In 1985, Hugh Cantrell was voted as the recipient of NSA’s highest honor, being the first and only unanimous winner of the Presidential Award of Excellence.

The vision and the dreams of a softball fanatic from the hills of Eastern Kentucky, (Hugh was born in the Paintsville, KY area.) has turned the NSA into a driving force in Amateur Softball today. Proven by consistently ranking as the nations leader in Youth Fast Pitch and Men’s Major, AA and A programs. Hugh Cantrell is married to Faye Cantrell and has two children, Eddie Ray, and Susan Renee (1962-1985). In November 1992, Hugh Cantrell the Founder, the President, and the CEO of the National Softball Association fittingly became the first person inducted into the NSA Hall of Fame.