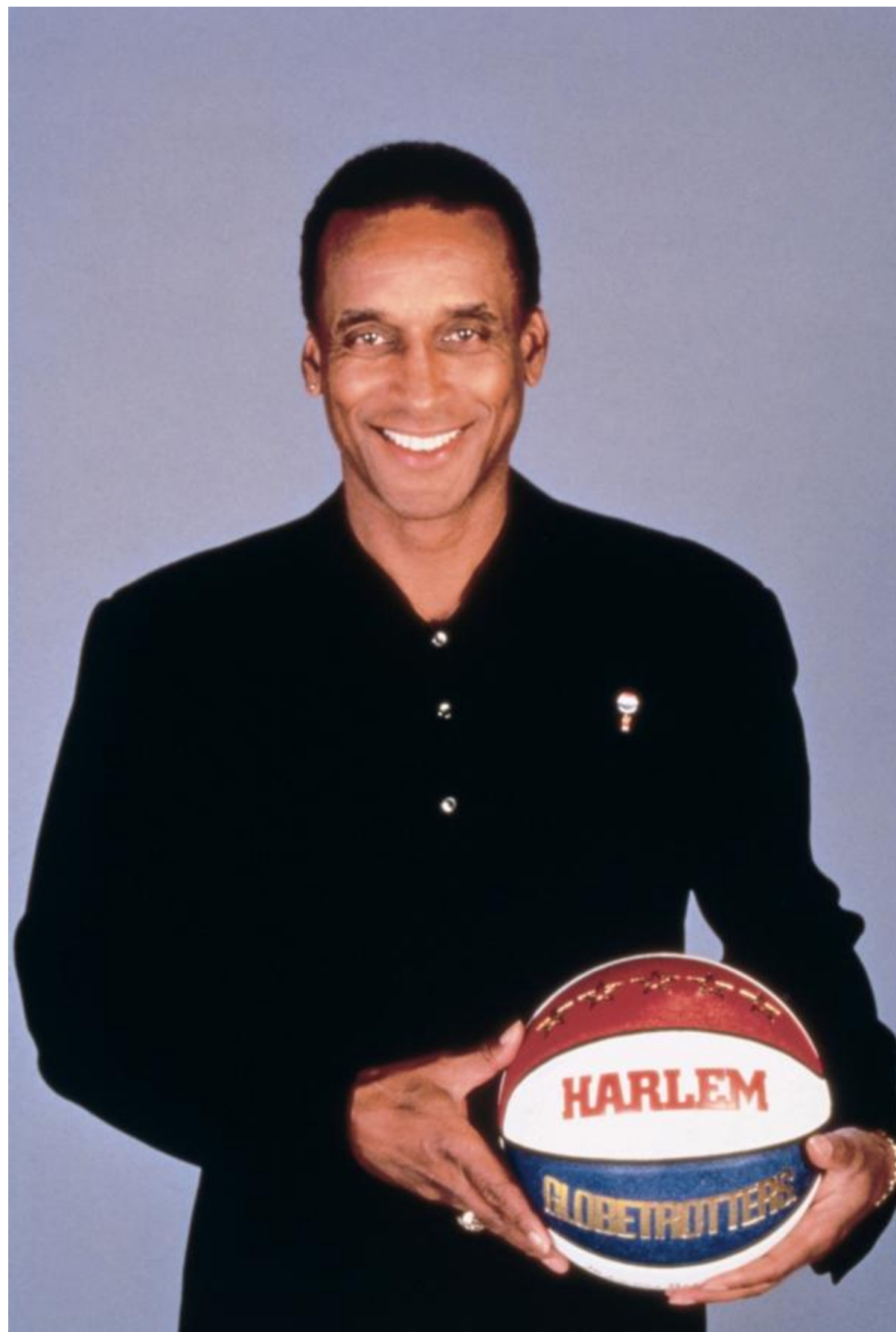




# **Edwardsville native Mannie Jackson to receive NCAA's highest honor**

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**GODFREY** – The NCAA will award Edwardsville native Mannie Jackson with its highest honor, the Theodore Roosevelt Award, today at its annual convention. Named after the former president, whose concern for the conduct of college athletics led to the formation of the NCAA in 1906, the award is given annually at the NCAA Honors Celebration to an individual who exemplifies the ideals of college sports.

Jackson, an Edwardsville native who went on to become an entrepreneur and influential business leader, announced the creation of the Lewis and Clark Community College Mannie Jackson Center for the Humanities at the former Lincoln School in Edwardsville, and initially pledged \$200,000 toward a program endowment in April 2012 during a book signing event for his memoir, “Boxcar to Boardrooms.” Since his announcement, and with his leadership, the college is approaching nearly \$2 million raised to date for the center’s endowment. Jackson and the college broke ground on the project in October. It is expected to be opened in late 2015.

“Mannie’s philanthropic work alone makes him the perfect candidate for such a prestigious honor,” Lewis and Clark President Dale Chapman said. “Our world is becoming increasingly pluralistic and polarized. We must learn to listen to our neighbors, from around the world, and develop a better understanding and appreciation for their struggles and concerns, to inform our way forward to solutions and progress. No one understands this better than Mannie, and his resolve to see this humanities center headquartered in his hometown is deserving of an award in itself.”

“All of us who have known Mannie for these many years could not be more proud of his accomplishments in terms of NCAA achievements, success in business and his philanthropic commitment to mankind,” said Ed Hightower, L&C Board of Trustees member, Edwardsville School District superintendent and a long time friend and professional colleague of Mannie Jackson.

Born in a railroad boxcar in Illmo, Mo., Jackson spent his early childhood years with his parents and other members of his extended family living on the tracks. Years later, following a fabulous high school basketball career at Edwardsville High School, he accepted a basketball scholarship to the University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign. It would be the start of an amazing journey that would take him to the highest levels of the business world.

He eventually went on to become a senior vice president of Honeywell International, Inc., a Fortune 500 company, and served on the board of directors for six major international companies. He also became the first African American chairman of the board for the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame, where he himself was later enshrined.

His 2002 enshrinement came in recognition of his becoming the first African American to own a major sports/entertainment organization having purchased the Harlem Globetrotters in 1993. The year 2002 also saw Black Enterprise magazine name him one of the nation's 40 most powerful and influential black corporate executives.

The 6-foot-2 Jackson, who was elected team captain and finished his college career as the fifth-leading scorer in Illinois history, describes his business career accomplishments "as improbable and maybe more difficult than averaging 60 points per game in the Big Ten."

At Illinois, Jackson broke down racial barriers when he and former high school teammate Governor Vaughn became the first African Americans to letter and start for the Illini basketball team. After graduation, Jackson headed to New York City to work and play for the Technical Tape Corporation in the National Industrial Basketball League. Ironically, Vaughn would join the Globetrotters.

Working in New York City "allowed me to see beyond basketball," Jackson said. "It allowed me to see beyond academics, and it allowed me to see beyond race, because for the first time, I met many high level business achievers from all backgrounds."

His ascent in the business world was interrupted when Globetrotter owner Abe Saperstein asked Jackson to join the international team as a competitive player. Following his globetrotting basketball days, he reentered the corporate world with a new found global prospective.

In 1992, with the once-storied Harlem Globetrotters in bankruptcy, his business and basketball passions intersected when he began investigating the possibility of buying the team. Jackson was still with Honeywell when he eventually purchased the Globetrotters the following year. Jackson was able to turn the Globetrotters into a fast-growing, profitable and relevant entity.

In order to help other African Americans in the business world, Jackson later co-founded and served as the first chair for the Executive Leadership Council, an organization devoted to increasing the number of black executives in corporations worldwide.

A commitment to philanthropy was cemented during Jackson's tenure as owner of the Globetrotters when the organization's charitable contributions totaled in the millions, including \$2 million raised for the Nelson Mandela African Children's Foundation. To demonstrate just how far he had come, the man who spent his early years in a segregated

community in southern Illinois counted Mandela as a friend, and had met such world leaders as Pope John Paul II and several U.S. presidents, not to mention polarizing figures such as Fidel Castro and Nikita Khrushchev.

In recent years, Jackson has turned more of his attention to helping others succeed in the business world. He sees himself as a philanthropist and a venture capitalist working with several new companies and early startups.

“I find myself having the opportunity to work with many brilliant people who have great ideas, and what they need is the experiences I’ve had and the capital contacts I have,” Jackson said. “I pick one or two a year that I want to invest my time and dollars into. I enjoy helping people realize their dreams.”

Jackson’s legacy of giving back has extended to his alma mater, where he donated \$2 million to start the Mannie L. Jackson Illinois Academic Enrichment and Leadership Program (I-LEAP). The program provides academic and social support through bi-weekly one-on-one academic coaching sessions, mentoring, academic skills development, leadership training and referrals to resources.

His efforts in Edwardsville to establish the center for the humanities will bring together diverse audiences and programming through lectures, readings, dialogues, public service opportunities and humanities programs. The center will aim to create a global nation of neighbors by supporting cultural differences, encouraging exchanges and fostering a better understanding of the modern world.

“I have faced many societal challenges during my life. The formation of the endowment and center will result in programs that give people a better understanding of societal differences and how we should embrace those differences. Without that understanding, people throughout the world will continue to have conflicts with other cultures,” Jackson said.

In July 2011, the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) announced Lewis and Clark as one of the first six two-year colleges ever to receive its challenge grants. These competitive grants aim to help raise endowments to strengthen humanities programs at community colleges, encourage the development of model humanities programs and curricula, and broaden the base of financial support for humanities on two-year college campuses.

The \$250,000 challenge grant required Lewis and Clark to raise a \$500,000 match, which was surpassed early with the support of Mannie Jackson and numerous other donors throughout the community.

In addition to a personal gift of \$200,000, Jackson also donated the former Lincoln School to the college to serve as the programming center for this endeavor.

L&C Board chairman Bob Watson praised Jackson for his commitment to the mission of Lewis and Clark Community College to enhance the economic opportunities of the more than 220,000 people Lewis and Clark services in parts of seven counties.