

Nominee for Coach/Administrator Category
for El Paso Athletic Hall of Fame
Mr. Joe Bob Shook



The greatest venue in El Paso, Texas to watch a football game is the UTEP Sun Bowl and the second greatest venue is the Socorro Athletic Complex otherwise known as the “SAC” which has become a staple among area high schools to compete in.

The “SAC” is there today because of the inspiration, drive and vision of Joe Bob Shook, today’s nominee in the Coach/Administrator Category for the El Paso Athletic Hall of Fame.

Joe Bob Shook was born in Sweetwater, Texas, the same hometown of Larry Durham who played football at UTEP and of his namesake Larry Durham Center on the campus of the University of Texas at El Paso.

Joe Bob Shook has carved a unique and legendary career in his own right in his some 30 plus years as a Coach and Administrator in El Paso, Texas.

Mr. Shook played football at Sweetwater High School graduating in 1964 and from there went on to play Junior College Football in Henderson County, Texas. Shook played offensive guard and in 1965 played in the “Junior Rose Bowl,” an annual game that pitted the top junior college football teams in the state vying for the Championship. After Junior College football although he had many offers to continue playing football including at the University of Hawaii, Mr. Shook decided to focus on his education and attend the University of Texas at El Paso.

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Upon graduating with an Education Degree from UTEP in 1971, Mr. Shook went on to Ross Junior High School as an Assistant Football Coach from 1972-76. At the time Ross had 9th graders on campus and the Head Coach was Wally Hartley, a recent inductee into the El Paso Athletic Hall of Fame.

It was at Ross that a lifetime friendship and bond was formed with fellow assistant coach Charlie Brown as the pair would cross paths many a time coaching circles over the years and always remaining friends until Mr. Brown's untimely passing in November of 2020.

Joe Bob's first head coaching job was at Socorro High School in 1979, 1980, and 1981 as he was hired by then Superintendent Pat Downer. Soon after his hire Superintendent Downer told Coach Shook, "You know I am going to have to fire you, as you are going to 0-30, but I want you to get your Masters Degree." And yes indeed, Coach Shook went on to get his Masters at UTEP.

The year before Shook was hired, Socorro was a 2A school and in Shook's first season the school made the decision to jump to 5A competition in all sports and only with 650 students. The school competed against other huge 5A schools like Coronado, Bel Air, Eastwood and the like, and the players always gave it their all.

After his three year stint as Head Coach Mr. Shook then became Assistant Principal at Socorro Junior High School for two years before being hired by then Superintendent Bill Sybert in 1981 as the Athletic Director for the Socorro Independent School District replacing Coley Huffman.

During his stint as Athletic Director, the Socorro Activities Complex through a voter bond became a reality after the research and vision by the project's architect James Booth and input from Mr. Shook along with then Superintendent Jerry Barber and others, however Shook was the one who was unwavering in his commitment to make the "SAC" happen. "

The "SAC" was built in a very short time period for upwards of 9,000 spectators and was designed not only for football and track and field but other type special events like city wide band contests and in later years soccer as the El Paso Patriots professional soccer team called "The SAC" home. The field had natural grass, a huge scoreboard, picturesque landscaping and easily the largest high school press box in the city to accommodate News Media, VIP's , Scouts and Film Crews. The UTEP Football team has practiced at the SAC and for decades now, participating teams practice at "The SAC".

The very first game ever at "The SAC" was between Montwood and Socorro as the only two schools in SISD at the time and now there are six schools for the District with games having to be played on Thursday, Friday, and Saturdays.

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Joe Bob Shook was the SISD Athletic Director for five years and one of his first hires was Tony Robles as Socorro Football Coach followed by John Parchman from Cisco, Texas. Parchman later left Socorro for Midland Lee where he captured the Texas Class 5A Football Title. Mr. Shook then hired as the next coach Jim Carson who went on to win five consecutive District Titles for the Socorro Bulldogs. In basketball circles he hired Bobby Ortega as Head Boys Basketball Coach at Socorro High School.

Tom “Joe Fan” Ciaburri a local sports authorian, who has broadcasted many a game from “The SAC” with the Time Warner Sports Crew said this about Joe Bob Shook, “He was a visionary and great in researching about The SAC as the size of the facility has made it possible for thousands of student athletes and coaches to have the chance to play in a first class facility.”

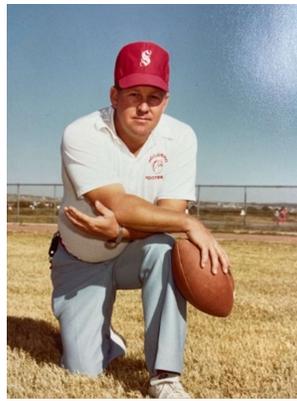
After his duties as Athletic Director, Mr. Shook spent two years in charge of Secondary Education for the Socorro School District and then became Area Executive Director for SISD from 1988-2001 as the same time the District was first in the city in ushering in Year Round Schooling.

Joe Bob Shook was married for 37 years to Sue Shook, who unfortunately passed away in 2003. Mrs. Shook was an English and Speech teacher for 37 years as well in the Socorro School District until her untimely passing in 2003. In her honor Sue Shook Elementary School was named in her honor in 2005.

Joe Bob Shook today looks at “The SAC” as a proud papa and even now, 40 years later it still remains a first class facility due in part to those that like Mr. Shook have a true passion for how the facility makes the District shine.

Now retired since 2004, Mr. Shook continues to follow the many area high schools and their challenges and roots for their successes. J

Joe Bob Shook deserves your vote for acceptance into the El Paso Athletic Hall of Fame in the Coach/Administrator Category.



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