



2025 Sports Honoree - Dave Zylstra

David William Zylstra was born in Glendora, California in 1958, four years after his parents immigrated to the United States from the Netherlands in 1954. The eldest of three children, Dave spent his childhood in West Covina, where he developed a love for sports, hard work, and community values that would shape his life for decades to come.

Dave attended Edgewood High School, excelling both academically and athletically. He played football, basketball, baseball, tennis and ran track, graduating in 1976. During his senior year, he began dating his future wife, Maxine, marking the beginning of a lifelong love story.

Following high school, Dave enrolled at the University of Redlands. He played basketball his Freshman year and his Sophomore year participated in a 6 month study abroad program in Salzburg, Austria which allowed him to travel extensively throughout Europe and to spend time with his Oma and other relatives in the Netherlands. In 1980, Dave graduated from the University of Redlands with a degree in Business Management.

After graduation, Dave returned home and began working in the family business, West Covina Wholesale Nursery. He and Maxine married in 1981 and that same year took over the operation of the nursery. In 1988, they decided to relocate the nursery headquarters and growing yards to La Verne, positioning the business for future growth. That same year, they also made the decision to move their growing family to La Verne. Dave and Maxine have now been married for 45 years. They were high school sweethearts whose love and commitment have been the foundation of their family and community involvement. They have six children-Ryan (Lindsay), Whitney (Brian), Brock (Sarah), Tanner (Rylee), Madison (Brayden) and Logan (Jaclyn) and are the proud grandparents of 20 grandchildren, who have followed in their family's tradition of sportsmanship, faith and service.

For more than three decades, Dave Zylstra has been a pillar of the La Verne community-dedicating his time, energy and heart to coaching, service and leadership. A passionate supporter of youth development, Dave spent 33 years coaching youth sports in La Verne, including City Recreation basketball, Little League and AYSO soccer. He not only coached countless teams but also inspired generations of young athletes-including his own children and grandchildren-by teaching teamwork, integrity, and perseverance. His dedication extended beyond the sidelines as he served as Treasurer for La Verne Little League for many years and took an active role in Field Maintenance, ensuring the best possible environment for local players. As a board member of AYSO, Dave helped strengthen the foundation of youth soccer in the community.

In addition to his years of volunteer coaching, Dave served as an assistant coach for Bonita High School's Boys Basketball Team (2007-2011) and also for the Girls Basketball Team (2012-2014), continuing his commitment to mentoring student-athletes at the high school level. His leadership, humility and consistency earned him the Jim Scranton Award, recognizing his outstanding service and dedication to La Verne's youth programs.

Beyond sports, Dave has been deeply involved in Community and Church service. As a devoted member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, he has served in several ecclesiastical leadership positions, providing spiritual guidance, mentorship and support to others. He has also been a steady influence in helping young men achieve the rank of Eagle Scout, guiding them through the learning, challenges and lessons of their scouting journey.

Dave's community involvement reaches far beyond the playing field and his church involvement. He has been very active in the La Verne Fourth of July Parade, helping make the celebration a beloved City tradition. Together with Maxine, he has hosted numerous fundraisers and community events at their home, fostering connection, friendship and service among neighbors and friends. He also traveled with the Bonita High School Choir as a chaperone, accompanying students on memorable trips to New York, San Francisco, San Diego and Florida, further showing his dedication to supporting youth in all aspects of their growth and education.

Dave's spirit of service also extended to the La Verne K-9 Foundation, where he served as Treasurer and Committee Member, helping to support the City's Police K-9 Program.

Dave's big-hearted generosity is further reflected in the tradition he established of providing plants for all graduations throughout Bonita Unified School District, showing his community pride.

A longtime member of Sierra La Verne Country Club, Dave enjoyed building lasting friendships and contributing to the camaraderie and community spirit the club represented.

Through every role-Coach, Leader, Mentor, Volunteer, Husband, Father and Grandfather-Dave Zylstra has embodied what it means to give back. His decades of dedication have helped shape the character of La Verne's youth and strengthened the community he so proudly serves. Alongside his supportive wife, Maxine, Dave Zylstra has built a legacy of love, leadership and lifelong service in La Verne, the city they love.

After living in La Verne for 33 years, Dave and Maxine now make their home in Newport Beach, but his legacy in La Verne continues to make a lasting impact.