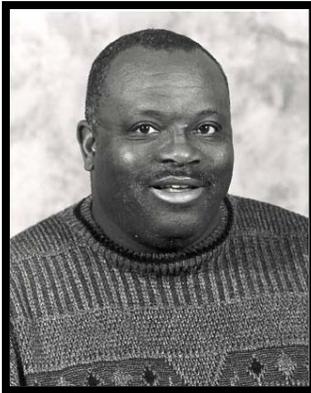


Tommie Lindsey

CHSSA HALL OF FAME 1999



One of nine children, Tommie Lindsey was born in Hattiesburg, Mississippi. Though he lacked formal training in public speaking, Lindsey had grown up listening to the powerful rhetoric of Baptist ministers and civil rights leaders. Church sermons helped him to develop an understanding for the power of words. His first experience with public speaking occurred in the ninth grade when he decided to participate in graduation events for his class. Not only did his English teacher doubt his abilities as a speaker, she gave him the most difficult topic: *Investing in learning to cultivate the intellect*. Lindsey, however, was not dissuaded and went on to earn a standing ovation for his speech on graduation day. This experience gave him the confidence to continue in the field of public speaking.

After high school Lindsey received a scholarship to the University of San Francisco where, in 1973, he earned a degree in communications arts and social science and became the universities' first African-American valedictorian. He began his teaching career at Alameda County Juvenile Hall, moving to El Rancho Verde Alternative HS, and finally in 1988 to James Logan where he established their nationally competitive speech program. In its first year the Logan Forensics program had a mere thirteen students; today the team has two hundred students, making it one of the largest programs in the United States.

Lindsey was selected as the California Teacher of the Year in 1994 and in that same year was the recipient of the Smith College Omstead Award, which is given to the top teachers in the country for their innovation in education., In 2000 he was awarded the National Forensic League's Coach of the Year award, and he was a recipient of the MacArthur Fellowship in 2004. Oprah Winfrey, on her Nationally Syndicated television show, recognized Lindsey for his contributions and dedication to forensics. In addition to directing one of the largest speech programs in the nation, he recently coauthored a book entitled *It Doesn't Take A Genius: Five Truths to Inspire Success in Every Student*.

A coach for over thirty years, Lindsey is currently a member of the NFL's Executive Council. He has formerly served as the chair for his district and the Vice-President of the Golden Gate Speech Association. He is the father of two children Erika and Terrence. Erika, twenty-four, is applying to MIT for graduate work and Terrence, twenty, is currently attending San Jose State University. In his spare time, Lindsey takes care of Mrs. Josephine Dukes, his mentor, who is 105 years old. In addition he is currently working on another book.



Lindsey has coached his students to nearly unmatched success both locally and nationally: Forty state champions, thirty national semi-finalists, twenty national finalists and six national champions! Regardless he continues to put his alumni to one challenge: he hopes that they will one day go out into the world and serve humankind by, as he puts it, "Being a voice for the voiceless."