



# City of Hanford Press Release



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**September 20, 2022**

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## **City of Hanford to Honor Newest Member of Longfield Center Hall of Fame**

*Former college baseball champion Jeremy Freitas joins distinguished list of members*

**HANFORD, CA** – The public is invited to attend a ceremony honoring the newest Longfield Center Hall of Fame Award winner, Hanford-native and local baseball legend Jeremy A. Freitas.

Established in 1994 by the City of Hanford, the Longfield Center Hall of Fame Ceremony is a biennial event. To be considered for the Hall of Fame Award, individuals must have graduated from local schools, served as role models in the community, earned accolades in academics, athletics or professional organizations, and been directly or indirectly involved with the Longfield Center. The committee that selects the honorees is made up of former inductees and city staff members.

Jeremy Freitas began playing sports at the Longfield Center, the City of Hanford's community center, when he was 11-years-old. It was there that he met Hanford Parks and Community Services employee Donald LeRoy Taylor, his friend and mentor. Freitas has many fond memories of Donald, also known as DT, including the time DT told him to never say the words "I can't."

Freitas graduated from Hanford High School with honors in 1993 before going on to play baseball at Fresno State, Fresno City College and eventually the University of Southern California, where he was part of the 1998 College World Series National Championship team. He graduated from USC as an Academic All-American that same year.

Freitas was then drafted by the Kansas City Royals in the 25<sup>th</sup> round of the Major League Baseball draft. He played three seasons of minor league baseball before retiring from the sport in 2001.

Embodying the spirit of his mentor DT, Freitas now gives back to Hanford's youth through his volunteer work with Hanford Youth Baseball and Sierra Pacific High School.

“Thank you for this award,” Freitas said. “I’ve been very blessed in my life, and if I can help the community and kids half as much as Donald LeRoy Taylor did, I will be satisfied.”

With the addition of Freitas, the Longfield Center Hall of Fame now has 64 members.

**WHERE:** Longfield Center, 560 South Douty Street

**WHEN:** Saturday, September 24, 2022 / 11:30 a.m.

For more information about the ceremony or to RSVP, contact Armando da Silva:

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*About the Longfield Center:*

*In 1955, the City of Hanford purchased the catholic church located on the corner of 2<sup>nd</sup> Street and Douty Street for \$3,072. It was to be converted into a recreation facility in honor of Hanford men who had lost their lives in the Korean War. This project was spearheaded by Joseph R. Longfield, who donated building materials and recruited the volunteers needed to make this dream a reality. The center was an instant hit! To honor his hard work, the converted church was named the Longfield Center. By 1966, attendance at Longfield was at an all-time high and more space was needed. However, funding for a larger and more modern community center proved challenging. A determined Hanford City Council set aside funds for several years until they had enough to build the center without grant assistance. On November 30, 1977, the doors to the new center opened to the public.*

*About Joseph R. Longfield:*

*The Longfield Center was named after Joseph R. Longfield, a former mayor and city council member. Joseph Longfield moved to Hanford in 1926 from North Dakota. Joseph taught auto mechanics and metal shop at Hanford High for approximately 30 years. Following his retirement, he became active in local politics, serving as a city councilman and mayor. Young people, especially those who were disadvantaged, were very important to him.*