

Ricky Nelson
Professional Baseball Player – Coach
Inducted into Hall of Fame October 18, 2013

Ricky was delivered to E.B. and Willie Pearl (Precious) Nelson by Dr. Howard Holmes on May 8, 1959, in Eloy, Arizona. He went through the Eloy schools from 1st – 8th grades. He served as Student Body President his eighth grade year.

At Santa Cruz, Ricky was on the varsity wrestling team his freshman and sophomore years. He played football, baseball, ran track for the freshman teams and was in the varsity marching band where he wrote one of the songs they played in concert. His junior and senior years, Ricky played varsity baseball. He was a member of the State Championship team his junior year and the State Champion Runner-Up his senior year. He received recognition on the All-Conference, Super All State, and Class AA-A Baseball All-Star Teams. He also served as senior class president.

Ricky is indebted to Ralph Cariño for picking Ricky to play Little League for him when no one else would. He also credits Ray Montijo for playing Ricky on his summer baseball team to give him the experience and confidence to make the SC varsity teams.

Ricky went to Arizona State University where he played varsity baseball and was on the 1981 National Championship team. Recognized for his baseball talents, Ricky was drafted by the Seattle Mariners where he played for 5 ½ years. He also played for the New York Mets and the Cleveland Indians. He retired in 1987.

Ricky returned to ASU and earned his Exercise Science/ Physical Education degree while working for the Maricopa County Juvenile Probation Department. In 2001, he took a break to manage the Oakland Athletics Arizona Rookie League team to a league championship.

Ricky served on the first Arizona Probation Officers Association as Vice-President for 12 years, the Arizona Professional Baseball Commission for 4 ½ years, helped start the Arizona Diamondback Training Centers in 1998, developed neighborhood partnerships for 4 years, coached a variety of youth sports, and has been a Gideon for 10 years.