



# Hall of Fame

## William (Willie) Simmons

Schaumburg, Illinois

Inducted in 1980

Willie Simmons passed away in September of 1977. His loss was felt deeply by wheelchair athletes, especially Class I athletes, in the Chicago area and also throughout the entire United States. He received a Bachelor of Science degree in Psychology from the University of Illinois and was a member of the Gizz Kids while there. Willie was named the Most Valuable Player for the Gizz Kids during the 1962-1963 school year.



Willie was prolific in national and international competition. While competing in the National Wheelchair Games, he was national champion in the 60 yard dash in 1961; National champion in archery and slalom in 1963; national champion in the javelin, slalom and 60 yard dash in 1964; and national champion in javelin, slalom, 60 yard dash, 100 yard dash and 240 yard relay in 1965. Willie was selected for international competition with the U.S.A. Teams in 1963, 1964, 1965 and 1966. He was part of the silver medal basketball team at the Stoke Mandeville Games in 1963. Willie was part of Team USA at the 1964 Paralympic Games in Tokyo, where he garnered gold medals in Basketball and the 240 Meter Relay. In the 1965 at Stoke Mandeville he earned gold medals in Slalom and 240 Meter Relay while earning silver medals in the 100 Meter dash and Basketball competition. Willie again was named to Team USA for the 1968 Paralympic Games in Tel Aviv, Israel where he earned a silver medal with the Basketball team. Willie was named an All-American at the National Wheelchair Games in 1972; All-conference for Basketball in 1974 and 1977; and was All-Tournament at the National Wheelchair Basketball Championship Tournament in 1975 and 1977.

As a vocation, Bill was the Vice President of Marketing for the Cole-Parmer Instrument company in the Greater Chicago Area.