



CAPITOL CITY SPEAKERS BUREAU

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Ozzie Smith

Travels from: Missouri

Fee Range: \$25,001 - \$40,000

On July 28, 2002, Ozzie Smith was inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame in his first year of eligibility. He is just the 37th player chosen in his first year of eligibility and he is the 22nd shortstop to make the Hall.

Ozzie, known in baseball as "The Wizard" has emerged as the best defensive shortstop of all time. He retired after the 1996 season after playing 19 years in the major leagues, the first four years with the San Diego Padres and the last fifteen with the St. Louis Cardinals. His nickname describes his style of play.

He performed magic with his glove and played baseball with amazing acrobatic agility. Ozzie broke countless records during his nineteen years of service: all-time assist leader at shortstop with 8,375 assists, all time leader at turning double plays with 1,590, 13 consecutive Gold Glove Awards at shortstop, was selected for the All Star game 15 times, with 10 consecutive years as the National League starting shortstop, and in 1987 and 1988 he was the top vote getter in the All Star balloting. In 1994 and 1995 he received the most votes in the National League All Star balloting.

Ozzie's Hall of Fame plaque reads, "Revolutionized defensive play at shortstop with his acrobatic fielding and artistic turning of double plays. The 13-time Gold Glove winner set six major league fielding records among shortstops, including most assists, double plays and chances accepted. An effective offensive player, he accumulated 2,460 hits and stole 580 bases. Named to 15 All-Star teams. His relentless pursuit of perfection helped lead the Cardinals to three World Series, including a 1982 championship. His congenial personality, consummate professionalism and trademark back flip made 'The Wizard' a fan favorite."

Off the field, Ozzie is a great ambassador to baseball. He was the 1995 recipient of the Roberto Clemente award, the humanitarian award of Major League Baseball, the 1994 recipient of the Branch Rickey Award, honoring Major League Baseball's outstanding individual who personifies "Service Above Self." In 1992 he was named the St. Louis Man of the Year, an award previously given only to business and civic leaders. In 1983 he was given the NAACP Image Award for Sportsmanship, Humanitarianism, and Community Activities and in 1986 was named to the Father of the Year Honors Group by the National Fathers Day Committee. His charitable endeavors almost always benefit children, whether it be instructing inner city children in baseball, serving as chairman for fund raisers at area Boys Clubs, visiting sick children at local hospitals, and hosting underprivileged children when they visit his restaurant and the ballpark.

Since Ozzie's retirement, he has been named the new host of This Week in Baseball, succeeding Mel Allen, and joined the KPLR Channel 11 Cardinal broadcast team as color analyst for all home televised games on the station.