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Basketball Inspires More Than Obama

Chicken Soup for the Soul teams up with the Orlando Magic's Pat Williams and Basketball stars to show the extraordinary impact of the game

COS COB, Conn. – For our nation's commander-in-chief, the road to The White House involved a round or two of hoops along the way. The campaign trail found him in pick-up games between rallies, and as chronicled in *Chicken Soup for the Soul: Inside Basketball*, President Barack Obama even scrimmaged with the North Carolina Tar Heels. It has become clear to many Americans that President Obama's love for the game might have even played a role in landing the presidency.

In his 2004 memoir, *Dreams From My Father* (Three Rivers Press), President Obama recalled heading to the basketball court as a kid because it gave him a sense of comfort and community, especially while his dad was away. From learning the value of teamwork during pick-up games as a child to using basketball as a way to connect with South-Siders in Chicago, basketball has played a major role in shaping our President's character. In fact, President Obama's brother-in-law, Oregon State basketball coach Craig Robinson, says basketball is "the reason why he's sitting where he's sitting."

President Obama is just one example of what can happen when the lessons learned on the basketball court translate into success in every aspect of life, a correlation to which millions of basketball players around the world can attest. Orlando Magic Senior VP and co-founder Pat Williams has seen how basketball's best skills – leadership, teamwork and success – have impacted lives off-the-court and compiled stories from the world of basketball to explore just how the game has impacted so many of its players, including the President.

The result, *Chicken Soup for the Soul: Inside Basketball* (Chicken Soup for the Soul Publishing, LLC, February 2009, \$14.95, 978-1-935096-29-0), a new release filled with inspirational stories about the impact the sport has had on the character of our country. The collection is packed with character-defining and inspirational experiences from today's NBA superstars like Chris Paul and Grant Hill, to the NBA's most famous coaches like Pat Riley and Gregg Popovich, to regular fans who have been given extraordinary gifts, thanks to playing the game they love.

"Basketball has certain intrinsic elements that forge my passion for what I do for a living and life," writes Mike Kryzewski, better known as "Coach K," in the foreword for *Chicken Soup for the Soul: Inside Basketball*. "Consider taking a collection of individuals and molding them into a team, mentoring, developing friendships, earning trust, communicating clearly, setting goals, taking responsibility, nurturing disciplines, being confident and creative, honing skills through hours of practice and hard work, handling crises, having pride, courage and passion that lead to individual heroics. I am a firm believer in the philosophy that the importance of basketball is not in the making of shots, but is in the people who make these shots."

In *Chicken Soup for the Soul: Inside Basketball*, you'll also read stories about:

- What happened when then-Senator Obama hooped it up with the North Carolina Tar Heels
- Grant Hill's personal reminder about solid teamwork
- Why Chris Paul sacrificed a state record for points scored in a game – and instead, honored his granddad

Chicken Soup for the Soul: Inside Basketball (Jack Canfield, Mark Victor Hansen, and Pat Williams) released February 2009. Chicken Soup for the Soul Publishing, LLC, publishes all the latest titles in the famous Chicken Soup for the Soul book series which are distributed through Simon and Schuster, Inc. Since 1993, books in the Chicken Soup for the Soul series have sold more than 112 million copies, with titles translated into more than 40 languages. Chicken Soup for the Soul Publishing also licenses the right to use its famous trademark to high quality licensees through IMG, the world's premier licensing agent. The company is currently implementing a plan to expand into all media, is working with TV networks on several TV shows and is developing a major Internet presence dedicated to life improvement, emotional support and inspiration. In 2007, *USA Today* named *Chicken Soup for the Soul* one of the five most memorable and impactful books in the last quarter century. For more information visit: www.chickensoup.com.

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To request a review copy or excerpt of *Chicken Soup for the Soul: Inside Basketball*, please contact Rusty Shelton at (512) 785-4469 or rusty@sheltoninteractive.com.