

PAUL SCHATTE



2025 HALL OF FAME LEGACY INDUCTEE

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Paul Schatte was a rare blend of educator, entrepreneur, and world-class pitmaster whose career profoundly shaped the barbecue community in Oklahoma and beyond. Beginning his professional life as a teacher and later a school superintendent, Paul's passion for barbecue—rooted in his childhood family cookouts in suburban Houston—eventually led him to the competitive BBQ circuit, where he rapidly rose to prominence.

After securing over 50 Grand and Reserve Grand Championships across the U.S. and earning runner-up for KCBS Rookie of the Year in 1991, Paul claimed the prestigious Jack Daniel's World Championship Invitational Barbecue title in 1994. In 1999, he became General Manager of Head Country Food Products in Ponca City, Oklahoma. Under his visionary leadership, the company expanded from a 12-person operation producing 1,100 gallons a day to a global brand employing 30 and producing over 6,000 gallons daily, with Head Country sauces now distributed in more than a dozen countries.

Paul was inducted into the inaugural class of the Oklahoma Barbecue Society Hall of Fame in 2014 and received numerous accolades, including the Oklahoma Governor's Award for Excellence in Exporting and appointment as Honorary Chairman of the Oklahoma Business Advisory Council. Beyond business and competition, Paul has remained a passionate educator—mentoring countless up-and-coming BBQ competitors, producing instructional videos, and generously sharing his expertise and products with the BBQ community.

Rooted in faith, family, and service, Paul also contributed decades of leadership in civic roles, from church and school boards to economic development committees. His motto, "Outdoor cooking is the oldest method known to mankind, but Americans have perfected it!", reflects both his respect for the craft and his commitment to elevating it for future generations.