

Gerald Colangelo  
Chairman of USA Basketball Board of Directors

Jerry Colangelo has been recognized as “Champion, Pioneer and Innovator” in Sports and Business by national and international media. He is being called “the shrewdest businessman in sports today.”



From a working class kid in a poor ethnic community “Hungry Hill” in Chicago Heights to a phenomenally successful entrepreneur, Jerry Colangelo has proven what’s possible when you dream about something and work to achieve it.

Jerry Colangelo is Chairman of USA Basketball’s Board of Directors for the 2009-2012 term. He was appointed as the first Managing Director of the USA Basketball Men’s Senior National Team program for the 2005-2008. Colangelo assembled the coaches and players of the “Redeem Team,” who returned USA Basketball to Olympic glory and claimed the gold medal at the 2008 Games in Beijing, the USA’s first gold in a major international competition since 2000. He is now focused on additional Gold Medals at the 2010 World Championships and 2012 Olympic Games in London.

Colangelo spent two seasons with the Chicago Bulls working as marketing director, scout and assistant to the president before moving to the Valley to help start the expansion Suns. He took over the expansion Phoenix Suns NBA franchise as the youngest general manager in professional sports and has since guided the Suns into one of the most successful organizations in the NBA. With the Suns, his roles have included general manager, head coach, president, managing general partner, chief executive officer and now chairman. The 40-plus-year tenure with one franchise is the longest in the NBA.

The former Chairman of the NBA’s Board of Governors, Colangelo has had a major influence on the growth of the NBA. He was also instrumental in the startup of the WNBA, supporting the advancement of women in basketball. Colangelo was on the founding committee for the WNBA, and owner of the Phoenix Mercury, which were one of the league’s inaugural teams in 1997.

He brought Major League Baseball to the Phoenix in 1998 and served as Chairman and CEO of the 2001 World Champion Arizona Diamondbacks. Going from expansion team to World Champion in just four years was a record for Major League Baseball. Colangelo was involved with the governing of baseball, serving on the Legislative Committee, Equal Opportunity Committee and on the board of directors of the MLB Advanced Media, the technology arm of the league. In 1996 Colangelo was the key element in facilitating the move of the NHL’s Winnipeg Jets to the Valley of the Sun to become the Phoenix Coyotes. Jerry Colangelo and partners developed projects in Phoenix such as the US Airways Center (formerly the America West Arena), Chase Field (formerly the Bank One Ballpark) and other projects.

Colangelo’s impact on the game of basketball has been so great, he has been named the NBA’s Executive of the Year four times. He was elected to the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame; inducted into the Illinois Basketball Hall of Fame; inducted into the Phoenix Suns “Ring of Honor”, the club’s most elite group and inducted into the National Italian American Sports Hall of Fame.

Colangelo is currently a Chairman of the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame, the National Italian American Foundation and Young Life International. Nationally, Colangelo has been among *The Sporting News*’ most powerful people in sports for over the last decade and most recently was listed 60th in *BusinessWeek*’s annual “The Power 100” ranking of the 100 most powerful people in sports for 2008.

His contributions to charity and community organizations have been profound. He supports organizations, such as Lift Up America, Boys and Girls Club, Young Life, Mentor Kids, United Way and more. The Valley of the Sun United Way also bestowed its highest honor, the Spirit of Caring award, to Colangelo for his passion for improving lives in the community. Recently Colangelo was honored as Humanitarian of the Year by Sinai Institute.

Jerry Colangelo authored a book entitled “How You Play the Game” where Colangelo gives insight into the world of the business and his own life. In the book entitled “Return of the Gold”, written by Dan Bickley, Colangelo shares compelling stories of his life and his journey working with incredible players of the Redeem Team. He attended the University of Illinois, where he earned All-Big Ten honors, and captained the Illini. Colangelo and his wife, Joan, have four children, six granddaughters and four grandsons.