

SERVED ON ESPN MAY 4
EOE SPECIAL FOCUSES ON STAR ATHLETES & THEIR MOMS
ALSO ON ESPN CLASSIC IN PRIME TIME ON MOTHER'S DAY

This Saturday, May 4 at noon ET, ESPN will present *Apple Pie*, a special 90-minute program featuring star athletes and their mothers, exploring how they contributed to their son or daughter's success as athletes and as people of strength and character. The athletes profiled include NBA stars **Shaquille O'Neal and Grant Hill**, soccer player **Mia Hamm**, NFL quarterback **Drew Bledsoe**, Olympic wrestler **Rulon Gardner** and hockey-playing siblings **Tony and Cammi Granato**.

The ESPN Original Entertainment program was produced by Fifty Eggs, Inc., producer of the critically acclaimed *A Hero for Daisy*, which focused on Title IX and was aired on ESPN Classic. ***Apple Pie* will also be aired on Mother's Day in prime time on ESPN Classic, Sunday, May 12 at 7:30 p.m.**

Some of the insights in this heart-warming, yet probing, documentary:

Shaquille O'Neal, one of today's most successful and prominent athletes, returned to LSU and earned his degree to fulfill a promise made to his mother, Lucille. After being on welfare when her son was born, Lucille worked two jobs for years to support him and now attends college herself. She receives 50 roses from her son each year on her birthday.

Grant Hill's mother, Janet, one of just six African-American women in her class at Wellesley, has gone on to a successful career in business, and along with her NFL star husband, Calvin, instilled the importance of school and integrity in her son, saying "*There are two things no one can ever take away from you – your education and your reputation.*"

At age 15, **triathlete Molly Barker** helped her mother, Mary, cope with alcoholism by taking up running. At first, they would run one block. Then they slowly increased to a mile and eventually did 10K road races together. Molly has founded "Girls on the Run," a nationwide program which inspires self-esteem in girls aged nine through 15 by teaching them skills which encourage confidence and the courage to voice opinion.

Baseball player Kenny Lofton was raised in East Chicago, Indiana by his blind grandmother, Rosie Lou Person. She helped him overcome a severe stuttering problem as a youth, and he says his proudest moment was when he could afford to buy her a house.

Erik Weihenmayer was the first blind climber to reach the summit of Mount Everest. His mother, Ellen, refused to send him to a special school after he lost his eyesight at age 13 and forced him to do household chores. He turned to wrestling to help "come to terms with my blindness," and later, after his mother's death in a car accident when Erik was 16, he took up mountain climbing to fill the void she left behind.

The youngest of nine children, **wrestler Rulon Gardner** was raised on a Wyoming farm, waking up each day 4 a.m. to milk cows and pitch hay before school. While his teachers put him in special education, Rulon's mother, Virginia, tutored him and encouraged him. Her influence provided the confidence that would help lead to an Olympic Gold Medal.

At four, **race car driver Sarah Fisher** received her first car from her mother, Reba – a pink Barbie pedal car. By the age of five, Sarah was racing quarter-midget cars. At 19, she became the youngest woman ever to qualify for the Indianapolis 500.

Mia Hamm claims she inherited her athletic ability from her mother, Stephanie, a former dancer, and her grandmother, a former ballplayer for the Irish Maidens.

Drew Bledsoe's mother, Barbara, was the first in her family to graduate from college and when growing up in Washington state was a better athlete than most of the boys her age. He claims his arm strength comes from her side of the gene pool.

EOE, the newest ESPN programming franchise, is developing a wide-variety of branded programming to add to the network's comprehensive event and sports news coverage. Using a collection of vehicles – original movies, documentaries, reality-based shows and more – ESPN's goal is to broaden its audience by more strongly appealing to younger and casual sports fans. In addition, the company is exploring new ways to connect with consumers by applying these projects across all platforms of the ESPN family – television, Internet, radio, etc.

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