

Kelly Hay

Kelly is the daughter of longtime CBISD educators Wayne and Anna Hay of West Columbia. Kelly is a member of the 1991 graduating class of Columbia High School. Kelly Hay was the fifth Columbia High School tennis player coached by Charlie Brand to win a singles title at the state tennis tournament, joining fellow Hall of Honor inductees Bobby Farmer, Van Manning, Joe Langner and Clark Woodson.

Winning the 1991 Class 4A girls singles tennis state championship was the culmination of one of the most impressive sports careers in Columbia High School history.

Kelly qualified for the state tennis tournament in both her freshman and sophomore seasons but was eliminated in the first round. Kelly Hay did not lose a single match throughout her senior year, a season highlighted by Kelly eventually bringing that elusive state championship in girls singles home from Austin. “Only one match went to three sets all year long,” Kelly remembers about her dominating 1991 tennis season. “Coach Brand told me when that season began that I wouldn’t lose a match my senior year. And he was right.” “He was an amazing coach,” Kelly said of the longtime Columbia High School tennis coach who passed away earlier this year. “I could always sense how much he believed in me. He made me work real hard.” She said everyone who played tennis for Coach Brand “knew you had your number one fan on the sideline” watching when they were on the tennis court.

After Columbia, Kelly was a two time All American at Odessa Junior College and in the 1992 National Tournament she made the semi-finals in singles and finished second in doubles. Kelly then transferred to the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville. She transferred to Texas Tech for her senior year where she received an academic award at a Southwest Conference awards ceremony. While attending Texas Tech Kelly was number one in doubles and number two in singles for the Red

Raiders' girls tennis team. She graduated from Texas Tech with a degree in Sociology.

She credits her athletic talent to her parents. Kelly would also like to thank her former neighbor, the late Betty Sue Ellisor, who coached her in tennis when she was a child, former Columbia Lakes tennis pro Chris Blue, and her fellow CHS Sports Hall of Honor members Coach Charlie Brand, Van Manning and Clark Woodson. "I took lessons from Clark when I was a senior in high school and we practiced together a few times at Texas Tech when he was going to law school there and I was a student and tennis player," Kelly said. "Clark and Van deserve thanks for coming back to West Columbia after they graduated to work with younger high school tennis players."

She currently lives in Dallas where she is attending the Perkins School of Theology at Southern Methodist University. She is pursuing a Master of Divinity degree.