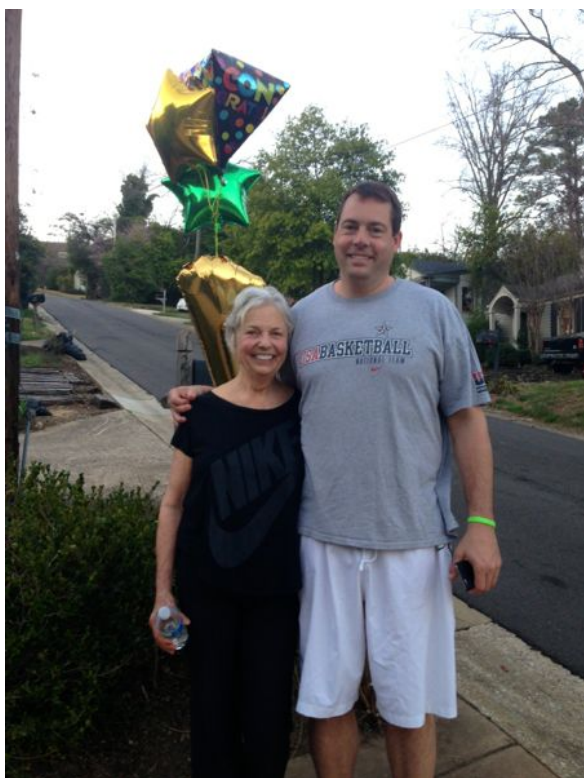


Haase developing Stanford program for the long haul

By Janie McCauley, AP

At the family home in South Lake Tahoe, Carol Haase sent her husband out to the shed to search for just the right pieces of wood.

The creative mother of five had begun planning yet another important project in a long list of them for her kids. Son Jerod Haase, in his first season as Stanford men's basketball coach, had commissioned her to create a pair of wood-burning art pieces – including one for outside the Cardinal locker room at Maples Pavilion.



Jerod Haase, with mom Carol, still relies on her.
Photo/Provided

He requested three words: Invested. Tough. Selfless.

And he asked for another piece to hang in his office with a space for former players to sign it when they return to visit campus.

After coaching stops at alma mater Kansas, North Carolina and the University of Alabama at Birmingham, Haase is ready to put down roots on The Farm. He hopes to build a program that, eventually, contends year in and year out again like it did for decades before.

For him, that starts by thoughtfully incorporating the program's past success while imparting his own philosophies on a new team.

"I've come to really believe in culture," Haase said. "When I first became a head coach, we had a lot of conversations on the staff, 'Is culture a real thing?' or 'How important is it?' After my second year at UAB, I really jumped all in. The idea of, we have to develop a culture and know who we are because if we want to get to a certain spot and a certain level of success, there have to be some foundational pieces that we have.

"Our core values at UAB were different than they are here. When I got here, I knew they would be different. Stanford is a different place, this is going to be a different team. We're going to have a different vision for our program."

Those three words – invested, tough and selfless – are ones Haase hopes define Stanford for years to come.

"It took him a long time to pick the words," said Carol, a former elementary and middle school art and English teacher who still fires clay work in her kiln.

The Cardinal, picked to place 10th in the Pac-12, are off to a 6-3 start and currently on their December break for final exams. Players are greeted by the reminder of the team's philosophy with the wood burning every time they open the

locker room door.

“That’s something we’re trying to do for life,” senior guard Marcus Allen said.

Haase is trying to move the program forward while leaning on its history. Former Stanford star Casey Jacobsen is a part-time practice player, and Haase has spoken a handful of times with Golden State Warriors assistant coach and former Cardinal center Jarron Collins since taking over in March. Collins hopes his demanding NBA schedule permits him to get to a practice one day soon.

“He sent out emails. He does a really good job of reaching out,” Collins said. “They sent out all their literature and bios on the coaches. They’ve set up an email service. He seems fiery, and that’s important. I’m excited for his start, and I hope he does well.”

Haase spoke to more than two dozen former players and successful longtime ex-Stanford coach Mike Montgomery. There was also input sought from current players, and even former coach Johnny Dawkins when they ran into each other on the recruiting trail.

The basketball has come along nicely, though Haase said it would be “baby steps” at first. Even with 10 of the top scorers returning, building cohesion was among Haase’s first priorities. Of course, Stanford had a strong opportunity to bond during a season-opening trip last month to Shanghai, where it beat Harvard. The Cardinal also went through a Navy Seals training course.

Haase took about four months choosing those three key words, saying, “I have pages and pages of notes of getting thoughts from everyone about what they think the program is, what it needs to be if we’re going to be successful, what is important.”

“If I’m lucky enough to be the coach here for 25 years, our core values, I would be shocked if they changed,” he said.

Haase is settling in at the university he once thought he’d attend . He walks his kids to school most days before strolling to his office. He continues to appreciate what Stanford offers, thrilled to have the full support of Hall of Fame women’s basketball coach Tara VanDerveer and Rose Bowl-winning football coach David Shaw.

All that effort has helped Haase quickly establish trust with his players.

“He knows what he wants,” Allen said. “He leads by example. Coach Haase brings a level of energy and just a level of being very personable, almost like he’s a player. He’s right there, he’s right in your ear telling you things.”