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## LOS ANGELES SPARKS TO RETIRE LISA LESLIE'S JERSEY

*WNBA Legend to be Honored August 10<sup>th</sup> as Sparks Take on Indiana Fever*

LOS ANGELES - The Los Angeles Sparks will retire the jersey (No. 9) of WNBA legend Lisa Leslie on Tuesday, August 10<sup>th</sup> as the Sparks match-up against the Indiana Fever at 7:00pm at STAPLES Center on ESPN2. Leslie, who led the Sparks to back-to-back WNBA Championships in 2001 and 2002, retired at the conclusion of the 2009 season. The jersey retirement ceremony will be held during halftime of the game and will be carried in its entirety on the broadcast.

"Lisa and I came into the league together and I have had the privilege of experiencing and witnessing firsthand how great her impact has been on women's basketball and the WNBA," said Penny Toler, Sparks VP/GM. "She was a phenomenal friend, teammate, leader and player and we are so proud to be able to honor her by retiring her jersey."

Leslie, 38, was the first Los Angeles Sparks player to be placed with the franchise in the 1997 Initial Player Allocation and finished her career as the Sparks and WNBA career leader in points and rebounds. As the most decorated player in WNBA history, she has earned three WNBA MVP awards, two WNBA Finals MVP awards, three WNBA All-Star MVP awards, two Defensive Player of the Year awards, eight 1st Team All-WNBA selections, was named to the WNBA All-Decade Team and was selected WNBA Player of the Week 15 times.

She was also honored in 2001 with the prestigious Flo Hyman Memorial Award by the Women's Sports Foundation and the 2006 Sportswoman of the Year award by the Los Angeles Sports Council. She became the first player in WNBA history to record 6,000 points in 2009 and the Sparks home court was renamed "Lisa Leslie Court" in her honor in 2006.

The Inglewood native ranks among the WNBA's all-time leaders in points (2nd, 6,203), rebounds (1st, 3,307), field goals made (1<sup>st</sup>, 2,332), blocked shots (2<sup>nd</sup>, 822), minutes (5<sup>th</sup>, 11,634) and points per game (6th, 17.3). In international play, Leslie is second to none. As the floor leader and mentor to Team USA, Leslie finished with a 32-0 record in Olympic competition and won four consecutive gold medals, (1996, 2000, 2004 & 2008). She closed out her fourth Olympic competition ranking as the USA's all-time leading scorer, rebounder and shot blocker after compiling 488 points, 241 rebounds and 36 blocked shots in four Olympic Games, while ranking fourth in assists (45) and sixth in steals (35). She was honored as the 2002 FIBA World Championship MVP and the 1993, 1998 and 2002 USA Basketball Female Athlete of the Year.

Leslie becomes just the second player in Los Angeles Sparks franchise history to have her jersey retired, joining Penny Toler (No. 11) as the second woman to have her jersey hanging in the rafters at

STAPLES Center.

To honor Leslie's accomplishments, the Sparks will give the first 5,000 fans in the doors Lisa Leslie jersey backpacks, courtesy of Farmers Insurance. For more information or for tickets to the jersey retirement ceremony for Sparks legend Lisa Leslie please visit [www.LASparks.com](http://www.LASparks.com) or call 877-44-SPARKS.

About the Los Angeles Sparks

The Los Angeles Sparks are entering their 14th season in the Women's National Basketball Association. The Sparks are one of the three original teams still operating in the WNBA. In December 2006, the Sparks were purchased by a group of investors, led by Carla Christofferson and Kathy Goodman and they are one of seven WNBA teams owned and operated independent of NBA teams. The Sparks won back-to-back WNBA Championships in 2001 & 2002. The team's roster of star athletes includes 2008 WNBA MVP & Rookie of the Year Candace Parker, All-Star DeLisha Milton-Jones, four-time WNBA Champion Tina Thompson and 2005 WNBA Champion Ticha Penicheiro. The Sparks play their home games at STAPLES Center in the heart of downtown Los Angeles. For Sparks ticket information, call 1-877-44-SPARKS.