

## Roberts Was a Two-Time Southside District Pitcher of the Year

By: Dennis Smith

**(With Park View High School slated to merge with Bluestone HS to form the new Mecklenburg County HS in 2022, the South Hill Enterprise is running an ongoing series that looks back at some of the outstanding athletes, teams and coaches and their stories through the years. This is story No. 64 in the series.)**

Transferring from Brunswick Academy before her junior year, Amanda Roberts was an ace in the circle for the Park View High School softball team.

Roberts was selected as the Southside District pitcher of the year both seasons she played for the Lady Dragons as well as being named as a First team All-District selection. She earned All-Region honors in her junior season and was a United States Marine Corps Distinguished Athlete award winner in her senior campaign.

She was also a starter at outside hitter both seasons on the Park View volleyball team.

Roberts was a member of the South Hill Dixie Softball World Series championship team with a number of girls that played at Park View so the transfer for her went smoothly.

“A lot of us had played together,” she said. “We knew who was going to be playing where.”

The Lady Dragons captured the Southside District title for the first time in 11 years in her senior season by going a perfect 12-0 in district play.

Roberts said the game that stands out to her the most is a 2-1 loss to Tabb in 11-innings that season in a Division 3, Region I playoff contest. She struck out seven while allowing only four hits but the Lady Dragons left 12 baserunners stranded on base in the loss.

“I pitched the whole game,” she said. “We gave it all we had.”

Roberts said she enjoyed played for Park View coach John Manning.

“I love Coach Manning,” she said. “I try to get in touch with him when I come home.”

Roberts received interest from several colleges in her senior season and she narrowed her list to Ferrum, Lynchburg and Randolph-Macon.

She said once she visited Ferrum, she knew that is where she would go.

“I didn’t want to go to a big school,” she said. “I knew when I visited Ferrum that is where I wanted to go. I loved the school and campus and it felt like home.”

Roberts had one big question for the Ferrum coaching staff before she made her final decision.

“Do you let your pitchers hit?” she said with a laugh.

Ferrum told her they needed a pitcher and she would have an opportunity to bat if she earned the right. She quickly answered that question after getting to campus.

Roberts was named the 2014 rookie pitcher of the year for the USA South Athletic Conference. She had a great career for Ferrum and was an honorable mention All-Conference selection as a sophomore and was named to the USA South All-Tournament team in 2016. She also was named as a USA South All-Academic selection in 2015 and 2016.

Roberts injured her knee in the weight room in September 2015, suffering a torn meniscus and a partially torn ACL.

“Our athletic trainer said he thought I could rehab it and still play without surgery,” she said.

Roberts worked hard during rehab and had a great season in the circle and was the winning pitcher when Ferrum topped Averett 10-1 to capture the USA South Conference tournament championship in 2016.

“We lost the first game in the tournament and came back to win six straight,” she said. Roberts said winning the 2011 Dixie Softball World Series and winning the 2016 USA South tournament title were her biggest moments in softball.

“They are the two biggest softball memories in my life,” she said.

In the 2011 World Series for South Hill, Roberts caught a line drive for the final out of the title game and in the 2016 conference championship game, she fielded a grounder to make the final out of the contest.

“Those little things still stand out to me,” she said.

Roberts was not the only family member that proved to a standout athlete at Ferrum

After a semester at Oregon, younger sister Ashley Roberts decided to transfer to Ferrum where she played volleyball.

“She had always told me she was never going to Ferrum,” Roberts said with a laugh. “But I was really happy when she decided to come to Ferrum and I knew she was close by.”

Even though the two sisters are five years apart, they often played softball together growing up.

“She played up a lot because she was a catcher,” Amanda said. “She has always fit right in.”

Thanks to earning Associate’s Degree from Southside Virginia Community College through dual enrollment classes at Park View, both sisters were able to graduate early.

Amanda Roberts said once she hurt her knee before her junior season, it made the decision to graduate early a lot easier.

She recently earned her Master’s Degree in School Administration from Liberty University.

Roberts works as a teacher for Franklin County Schools and is married to Jesse Wall who is an educator and coach. Amanda has served as an assistant coach for the Ferrum softball team since 2018 and enjoys giving back to her college team.

“They value me because they know I have been there,” she said. “I wanted to give back.”

It has been a big year for the Wall family, who reside in Eden, North Carolina, as they welcomed son Jesse Daniel Wall, Jr., a month ago.

“He is really a good baby,” she said. “He is growing like a weed.”

Amanda Roberts was a two-time Southside District pitcher of the year at Park View High School. (Dennis Smith)

Amanda Roberts was the winning pitcher in Ferrum’s 10-1 win over Averett in the 2016 USA South tournament championship game. (FU photo)