

## **Willard Bailey, Educator and University Administrator**

Willard Bailey is considered by many, including this writer, to be a father figure as well as a role model in the area of building relationships and programs. In his positions as athletic director, head football coach, and associate professor of education, he exemplifies what I and many others consider a perfect blend of achievements in all of these areas. His career has been studied and continues to amaze people with all of his accomplishments over a period of four decades. These achievements also carry with them a unique quality when we considered that they were made while working for colleges and universities with limited resources and facilities. In his pursuit of developing young people into mature adults, he has been particularly successful in his efforts to work with young men. Coach Bailey's contributions to athletics, academics and his community should be highlighted so that more people will become aware of his accomplishments.

Willard Bailey, a Suffolk, Virginia, native, and a 1962 alumnus of Norfolk State University, Norfolk, Virginia, played the offensive guard and linebacker positions. He was a four year letterman and graduated with honors. He received a grant to attend New York University, New York, New York, and was awarded the Master's Degree in Education and Athletic Administration, with honors. With 44 seasons as a head football coach on the collegiate level, he is deemed the winningest coach in the State of Virginia while coaching in the State of Virginia – a total of 240 wins.

Bailey began his coaching career as basketball, baseball, and track and field coach for Essex County High School in Tappahannock, Virginia. While at Essex County High School (1962-1964) his team won two basketball championships.

His college coaching career began in 1964 at Virginia Union University in Richmond, Virginia, as assistant football coach. In 1971, he was appointed head football coach at VUU and remained in that position for thirteen years. While at Virginia Union, he led the Panthers to five CIAA championships (1973, 1979, 1981, 1982, and 1983). He also made four NCAA playoff appearances.

In 1977, Coach Bailey developed a professional program of Recreation for Virginia Union University. Within four years after graduating from the program, one of his graduates, Mr. Irving Clay, became the Superintendent of Recreational Services for the City of Richmond.

In 1978, Coach Bailey obtained full academic tenure at VUU as associate professor in education, an honor that followed him to both Norfolk State University and Saint Paul's College. The late Jim Tate, former Head Football coach at the University of Richmond recommended to the National Alumni Association of the University of Richmond that Coach Bailey be inducted as an honorary member of that body. In his request, he stated "Coach Willard Bailey is the only head football coach I have ever known to enjoy full

academic tenure at universities. This is practically unheard of.” Coach Tate’s recommendation was unanimously approved.

In 1984, Coach Bailey went back to his alma mater, Norfolk State University, and led the Spartans to their first conference title after an eight year drought and made his fifth NCAA Division II playoff appearance. Also, while director of athletics, both the women’s and men’s basketball teams won championships that same year.

In 1995, Bailey returned to VUU for his second tenure. His teams improved every year until he won his 7<sup>th</sup> CIAA Championship in 2001. In 2003, VUU’s football program was picked to finish last in the Northern Division of the CIAA. However, a team inspired by Coach Bailey won the championship that year.

After leaving VUU, Bailey received a call to become head football coach and associate director of athletics at Saint Paul’s College in Lawrenceville, Virginia. Under his coaching, SPC defeated every team that they played at least once, and during his stay there as head coach the college had its first player ever to be drafted to the National Football League - Greg Toler. Coach Bailey left Saint Paul’s as the winningest coach in the school’s history.

Coach Willard Bailey has spent his career molding his athletes into college graduates and respectful citizens. His long list of former players that were drafted by the NFL and the Canadian Football League include the following: James Atkins, Malcolm Barnwell, Carl Bland, Willie Gillus, Pete Hunter, Arthur Jimerson, Anthony Leonard, Luther Palmer, Herbert Scott, Judge Thomas, and Gregory Toler.

In the area of community service, Coach Bailey coordinated the Win-Win Team for Youth Enrichment at Saint Paul’s College. The purpose of this program is to drastically reduce the number of young people plagued by the devastating effects of AIDS, accidents, homicides, suicides, and the lack of youth fitness.

In 2014, Coach Bailey was encouraged to combine the New Voices if the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, the Win-Win Team for Youth Enrichment and Central International Academy to form Central International University, becoming President and CEO. The founding father of CIU intends to maintain his interest in athletics, his lifetime source of recreation.

Coach Bailey’s peers have honored him as they have recognized his ability to serve and to lead in the following:

2015: Selected to the Board of Trustees at the historic Ebenezer Baptist Church, Richmond, Virginia

2013: Was asked to lead a group of professionals to form Central International Academy

2008: Keynote speaker for graduating class of Athletic Administrators, Virginia State University, Petersburg, Virginia

2008: Inducted into Athletic Hall of Fame at Virginia Union University

2007: Initial organizer and founder of the Win-Win Team for Youth Enrichment which addresses Health, Safety and Wellness of our adolescents and youth today

2006: Named Humanitarian of the year by the Virginia Conference for Community and Justice

2004: Inducted into the CIAA Hall of Fame

### **Most Prized Accomplishments**

- Won first championship in basketball at Essex County High School in the school's history.
- Won first football championship for Virginia Union University in 50 years (1923-1973)
- Led the CIAA in defense at VUU in 7 out of 10 years
- In 1<sup>st</sup> year as college football coach - Record 5-2-2 ; 2<sup>nd</sup> year, Record 7-3 ; 3<sup>rd</sup> year, Record 10-1 for first CIAA championship and NCAA playoff
- Division II Winningest football program in the nation during first tenure at VUU
- As Athletic Director and Head Football Coach at VUU, the men's and women's basketball teams won national championships in their respective sports. During the same period the varsity football team won four championships in five years.
- Became the winningest football coach in the history of the CIAA
- In 1980, was recognized as National Coach of the Year by Sheridan Broadcasting Company
- Establishment of the Win-Win Team for Youth Enrichment
- 78% of the student athletes coached by Coach Bailey at VUU graduated with quality degrees

### **Affiliations**

Life memberships include: NAACP, Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc., World Mission, Operation Smiles, Feed the Children Foundation, and American Football Coaches Association

Other memberships include: National Urban League, Big Brothers Association, and Ebenezer Baptist Church, Richmond, VA

### **References**

Dr. Allix B. James, President Emeritus, Virginia Union University, Richmond, VA

Dr. James Satterfield, former Vice President and Supervisor of Athletics, Norfolk State University, Norfolk, VA

Dr. Harrison Wilson, President Emeritus, Norfolk State University, Norfolk, VA

The Honorable L. Douglas Wilder, Former Governor of Virginia

Dr. Howard Hopkins, Principal, Huguenot High School, Richmond, VA

**A special note:** Our research has not revealed another coach in the history of the NCAA who has become the winningest coach while coaching in his state and the winningest coach in the history of this athletic conference (CIAA) as well as the winningest football coach at the four different colleges/universities where he has been employed. While accomplishing the above, the same coach enjoyed full academic tenure as an Associate Professor at three of the colleges/universities.