



KEN RILEY:

FINALLY AN **NFL HALL OF FAMER**

A BRIEF HISTORY OF **THE HBCU**
MAJORETTE

JUSTINA MILES

AWES AUDIENCE AT **THE SUPER BOWL**

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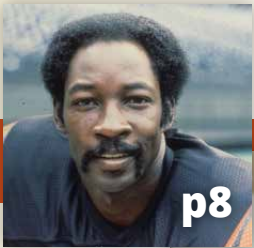


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PUBLISHER: Will Moss
EDITORS: Will Moss, Reginald Culpepper
MANAGING EDITOR: Reginald Culpepper
ART DIRECTOR: Stacy Edwards
ADVERTISING: Stephen Butler, Will Moss,
Doug Meniffee, Larry Jemison, Loren Moss

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A LETTER FROM THE PUBLISHER

Wow! Where did 2022 go?? It was just 2021 and now we are months into 2023 already. These days are going by so fast that I'm trying to remember what all I did this past summer because next summer is coming up. That makes you think about "time" in these moments. How much time do we have on this Earth? Am I in the place where I was looking to be at this time in my life? Should I have started what I wanted to do months ago? If I start now, how much time would it take to get to where I wanted to go? How much longer is my dinner going to take in the oven? I'm hungry — TIME. It's something that we never seem to have enough of even though we think we have a lot of it. It is always draining away like a small hole in a leaky inflatable pool. Time is valuable and should not be wasted because once it passes, you can never get it back.

If you are looking for that start to your career that you have been dreaming of — if you are in a place where you are moving too slow to get to where you want to be — if you are in a place way off the beaten path and wish to get back on that path — or if you are just plain tired of where you are and it is not working for you — then we may be able to throw you a Magic Johnson assist (or LeBron James assist if you are too young to remember) in your search. Last year, we held an amazing 54 virtual and in-person recruitment events within a 12-month period. That is over 4 events each and every month, where you were able to register, participate, communicate with the hiring or HR managers, and submit your resume for potential interviews. We are talking about opportunities with a slew of top Forbes 100 & 500 companies that are looking to hire diverse candidates like YOU. Check out our article in this issue on our upcoming events and how you can be a part of it and get back on track to your goals.

Whatever you had planned on doing or were supposed to do last year, the "time" is now. Do not wait until it is too late. If you plan to start 6 months from now, imagine where you would be in 6 months if you had started NOW. I'm not just talking about careers. It could be exercising, dieting, starting a business, working on that home project, fixing up the old car in the garage (or in the middle of your yard if you are hood with it), or anything that smells like self or life improvement. Make this start to 2023 as the one where you will remember that this was the year it all started for you.

As always, we wish everyone a great 2023! Time to get locked in and focused. Check us out online through our web site and socials. HBCUCONNECT.COM – Get Connected!

Sincerely,

Will Moss

Will Moss | CEO | HBCU CONNECT
www.hbcuconnect.com/willmoss



JUSTINA MILES MAKES HISTORY DURING 2023 NFL SUPER BOWL WITH AMAZING PERFORMANCE

Justina Miles, the 20-year old Bowie State University student, performed “Lift Every Voice and Sing” in American Sign Language (ASL) during a couple of performances at the 2023 NFL Super Bowl on Feb. 12. As a nursing student and cheerleader, she became the first Deaf Black woman to perform there according to the NFL on CBS. After signing during Sheryl Lee Ralph’s pre-show performance, she later returned for Rihanna’s halftime show and also signed for her during her “BBHMM” and other hit songs, which immediately went viral on social media. Though she couldn’t be seen onstage or onscreen during the halftime-show broadcast, Miles’ ASL renditions were livestreamed on YouTube. This is not the first time she has gone viral for her skills. She also has a highly viewed TikTok that was produced in 2020 when she signed Lil Kim’s 1996 hit song “Crush On You” for a TikTok challenge which has since gained 1.1 million views. Additionally, she earned a silver medal at the 2021-2022 Deaflympics in Brazil with the U.S. women’s track relay team.

Miles explained the importance of signing a song like “Lift Every Voice and Sing” by saying “... That song represents resilience for me, and the national anthem never really resonated with me personally.” She continued, “... This song is so positive. It’s so beautiful, and you don’t really hear or see it very often — or even hear about it.”

“I value the opportunity to make it possible for all deaf people to enjoy these songs, and not have them miss out on the full Super Bowl experience.” She also mentioned that the “Lift Every Voice and Sing” song “... really bring(s) that empowerment to millions and millions of Black deaf people all over the country who’ve never really seen that before. I feel that is truly lifting every voice, even my voice.”

She was obviously not the only ASL performer at the Super Bowl but she was the one who garnered the most attention especially after she returned for Rihanna’s halftime show and started signing and jamming to a plethora of hit songs by the multi-Grammy award winner. Several people on social media immediately made their voices heard by commenting on how much they were enjoying the halftime show with the energetic ASL performer.

According to the National Association of the Deaf, she’s performed ASL renditions of music at various concerts throughout the country so she is no stranger to the music industry.

Though Miles clearly won the Super Bowl, the Philadelphia native’s team did not. After the devastating loss, she posted on her Instagram account, “we kno who the best team inna world is still ... flyyyyyy eagles flyyyyyy.”

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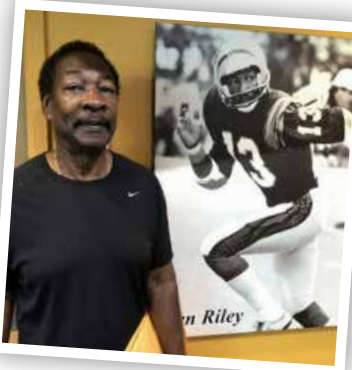
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FLORIDA A&M UNIVERSITY LEGEND, KEN RILEY, ELECTED AS A 2023 PRO FOOTBALL HALL OF FAME CLASS MEMBER

Over 40 years removed from retirement, Florida A&M University standout football player Ken Riley has finally been elected to the Pro Football Hall of Fame. He is only the second FAMU player to be elected. The other is the great Bob Hayes. Unfortunately, Riley passed away in 2020 at the age of 72 but his family is forever grateful that this amazing honor is bestowed upon him. Riley's widow, Barbara, was asked what she thought of the celebration. In tears she replied "It was wonderful. I just wish Ken was here to see it."

At Florida A&M, Riley was the starting quarterback and guided the team to a 23-7 overall record during his tenure there which included three SIAC titles. During that time, blacks simply were not allowed to play QB because the belief was that black QBs did not have the mentality to play the position at the highest level. Typically black QBs were transitioned to be a running back, wide receiver, or defensive back in the NFL.

He was eventually drafted by the Cincinnati Bengals and was told that he would begin training as a defensive back. "... I did my job. Every coach I had from



high school to the NFL, I was always taught humility, let your work speak for you," Riley said in a 2019 interview. "There were some times when I led the conference in interceptions. It went unnoticed. That's something I can't control. There are guys that are in there (Pro Football Hall of Fame) that don't have the numbers I have. In Cincinnati we were not publicized or glorified so to speak. Paul Brown's philosophy was that was what he was paying you to do."

He played for the Bengals from 1969 to 1983. During his career, he recorded 65 interceptions in 207 starts for the Bengals, a tally that ranks fifth in NFL history and first for the Bengals.

After being a player, he went on into the coaching ranks at FAMU and led the team to two MEAC championships and a couple of Coach of the Year honors. He also served as athletic director for FAMU for more than a decade and was inducted into the FAMU Athletic Hall of Fame, the Black College Football Hall of Fame, and the Cincinnati Bengals Ring of Honor.

Welcome to Canton!

HBCU MAJORETTE TEAMS ARE A THING OF BEAUTY AND HISTORY

By Nakylah Carter (Good Morning America)

What are majorettes? “I think it is a mix of pop culture dance and other expressions through movement that is done on the fields with a marching band,” said Traci Greene, coach of the Southern University Dancing Dolls and a former Dancing Doll majorette herself. Majorette dancers mix multiple styles of dancing, including jazz, hip-hop, ballet, burlesque, cabaret, kick lines and more, to entertain audiences while simultaneously honoring the dancers who came before them. Performances by majorette teams are often grand, with props, bright outfits, cohesive hairstyles, tricks and dances in collaboration with their school’s band song selections, which often reflect Black culture on HBCU campuses.

The 1968 Orange Blossom Classic hosted the first known majorette performance with Alcorn State University’s Golden Girls majorette team. Gloria Gray Liggins was a part of the original eight dancers on the line. “I don’t think any of us really thought it would bloom or be what it is right now,” Liggins said, “We were just college students wanting to be a part of the band. Maybe perform at home games, travel some.” Liggins, along with the other original seven girls — Mar Deen Bingham Boykin, Delores Black Jenkins, Patricia Gibbs, Barbara Heidelberg Fox, Paulette



McClain Moore, Josephine Washington Parker and Margaret Bacchus Wilson — made their debut with “long, golden boots and gold capes” at the halftime show with their team against Florida A&M University. According to Liggins, the vision came directly from band director Samuel S. Griffin after seeing Notre Dame University’s band perform with a “twirler” who wore a gold performance costume. “I give all the accolades to the band director, it was all him,” Liggins added. “It wasn’t us, it was him. He had the idea and the vision, and he said it was a blessing that it went forward.”

For those involved in HBCU culture, majorette dance is important not only to the campus but to Black culture as a whole, adding to the connection between Black people and dance in general. “The Golden Girls didn’t really just teach me dance, they taught me real-life lessons. They taught me how to become a woman, a better friend, a better sister, and I will never ever forget those moments.”, said junior Jakayla Lofton of Alcorn State University.

Lofton added, “I hope they can see my passion. I hope they can see how much I love to be here, and I hope to inspire younger dancers to be in [this] place ... to entice you to look at me and look how I’m loving it and to come and join us.”



HBCUCONNECT EVENT HOSTING BUSINESS CONTINUES TO GIVE YOU WHAT YOU NEED: NEW CAREER OPPORTUNITIES!

Virtual recruitment events have exploded over the past couple of years due to the 2020 pandemic that left a lot of us in the cold (and at home). While in-person events were beneficial, the hiring companies would invest substantial resources and time into the event to interact with potential candidates who may or may not be mildly interested and just came to get out of the house and enjoy some free drinks and food. Luckily for us (HBCUCONNECT), we are proficient with putting together both formats for hiring employers.

This past year saw, we hosted 54 different recruitment events for companies such as Microsoft, ServiceNow, Visa, Bristol Myers, Nationwide Insurance, JPMorgan Chase, GE Appliances, Truist, Coupa, American Express, Walgreens, Johnson & Johnson, LinkedIn, and MORE! This year is already off and running with a slew of new virtual events featuring newcomers VHB, the University of Rochester, and Crossroads Charter Schools joining the fray.

See our current calendar of recruitment events. Keep in mind that dates are subject to change. Register on the site, HBCUConnect.com, to get the latest news and updates as the calendar is also subject to change, including adding new employer recruitment events. If you are looking for a new opportunity or just curious as to what might be out there, check us out online and RSVP for one of our events when we advertise them to our member audience.

Date	Recruitment Event	Location
MARCH		
14	Bristol Myers Squibb – Information Technology	Virtual
23	Visa – Women’s History Month: Celebrating Black Female Creativity and Innovation	Virtual
30	Crossroads Charter Schools – Teachers and Educators	Virtual
APRIL		
13	JPMorgan Chase – Card Services	Virtual
27	American Express	Virtual
MAY		
4	JPMorgan Chase – Card Services – 2nd Event	Virtual
19	University of Rochester	Virtual
25	Johnson & Johnson	Virtual

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