

HEZZIE DURANT MORGAN III

H EZZIE WAS BORN IN JASPER, ALABAMA ON JANUARY 11, 1952 TO LILLIAN UNDERWOOD

Morgan and Hezzie Morgan, Jr. His father served in the U.S. Army and young Hezzie lived in California and Japan during his early years. He returned to Jasper at the age of eight and attended the Walker County Training School. He attended Walker High School in 1966, two years before integration, and soon his athletic talent and leadership skills were recognized.

He played football at Walker High School and soon became the first African American football captain, the first African American wrestling captain and he was a member of the track team. He came in 2nd place at the Wrestling State Championships and was an All-American. He received a scholarship to play football at the University of North Alabama.

He played football at UNA from 1970-1972 and joined the JROTC program. He graduated in 1975 and was commissioned as an officer in 1975 and served two years in the National Guard with the rank of Captain. He was honorable discharged from the Army in 1978.

After serving his country, Morgan made the decision to return to Walker County. He taught Physical Education at Curry High School from 1978-1982 and was the assistant football and basketball coach. He taught history at Dora High School from 1982-1983 and served as the assistant football and assistant basketball coach. From 1983-1987, he served as the Dora High School head wrestling coach where he coached his first state champion, Ray Sanders. He was also an assistant football coach on Dora's 1987 State Runner-Up Football Team.

Hezzie taught and coached Walker High School from 1987-1989. He became the first African-American head wrestling coach.

In 1989, he moved to Detroit, Michigan and coached at McKenzie High School where he had the great honor to coach Jerome Bettis and Walter Smith.

From 1992-2005, Morgan served as an administrator, teacher and assistant coach for the River Rouge School District in Michigan. He had the great opportunity to coach Chester Taylor of the Baltimore Ravens. He served as Administrator at the Alternative School for River Rouge and the Behavior Specialist at River Rough High School. He coached the sports of wrestling and track with great success as well.

In 2007, Hezzie returned to Walker County with his wife, Sherina Morgan. Together, they have three daughters and seven adorable grandchildren. Morgan currently teaches and coaches at Dora High School. He teaches history and has been an assistant football and golf coach. He has been the head wrestling coach for the last nine years. He has had a total of nine state champions in wrestling, eight in the last nine years, and is continually trying to improve the program and promote the integrity of the sport. His passion for the sport is passed on to his wrestlers, who would all agree, that they have learned life lessons from Coach Hezzie Morgan that could not have been learned anywhere else. Hezzie Durant Morgan III plans to retire from teaching in 2017 but continue coaching as long as the good Lord allows it. "Live to Wrestle. Wrestle to Live."

