



## Ralph Williams

Class of 1970

Ralph Williams, a High School Basketball all American, enrolled at Tuskegee University in 1966 on a basketball scholarship. Williams was the first ever All American to come to Tuskegee. Already recognized for his tenacity on the basketball court, this highly recruited young man was humbled by the opportunity to leave Birmingham and come to Tuskegee. From the position of "Point Guard" William's prowess on the basketball court continued. He was named Most Valuable Player and Co-Captain of the varsity team during his freshman year. From 1966 to 1969 he led the team in "assists" and "steals." In addition to the talents exhibited on the basketball court, Williams also excelled in Track and Field. From 1968 through 1970 he placed in the top 10 in "Cross country" running the "mile" and "2 mile."

After graduating from Tuskegee University in 1970, Williams returned to Birmingham as a coach and Industrial Arts Teacher where he remained for other thirty years. During his tenure as coach he led his teams to many back-to-back local and state championships including the AAU girls championship in 1987. In 1987 he was named Coach of the Year by the Birmingham Tip Off club and was inducted into the Birmingham Grid Forecaster's Hall of Fame in 2003.

While Williams is recognized as one the premier coaches of his time with exceptional knowledge of coaching and basketball, his success is credited to his compassion and willingness to help young people to develop their skills to their maximum ability. One parent stated, "What I believe sets coach Williams apart from his peers is not only his ability to discern the strengths and needs of each player, but his unselfish ability to work players in and out of practice to develop their game. He also teaches them about life and how to live it with character and dignity emphasizing hard work and team play."

Coach Williams credits his opportunity to live a rewarding life to two legendary coaches, Mr. Robert L. Dickerson and Mr. Oscar L. Catlin and his wife Linda.