



Curtis Pride

1968-Present



Early Life



- Curtis was born in Washington D.C.
- At 9 months old, a standard test revealed that he was deaf at birth
 - Curtis was born to two hearing parents: his dad was an employee of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and his mother was a nurse.
- Early on in his life, Curtis' family moved to Silver Spring, Maryland where he could attend the Montgomery County Public School System's Auditory Service infant program.
- He continued his education at neighborhood schools, where he was sadly bullied due to being the only Deaf child in attendance.

Early Life Continued...

- Even with the extra struggles, Pride was an excellent student who earned good grades and excelled in sports, specifically soccer, basketball and baseball, although wrestling, swimming, track and gymnastics were in the mix as well.
 - Curtis was so successful with soccer that he was named one of the top fifteen youth soccer players in the world as a teen.
- Basketball is what Curtis continued to follow in college, attending William and Mary College on a full basketball scholarship and was a team starter for four years.



A Unique Opportunity



- During this time, baseball lobbied for his attention, and Curtis was presented with a unique deal that allowed him to stay in college while playing for the Kingsport Mets of the Appalachian League.
 - Curtis graduated with a Degree in finance.
- Although he was ready to find his way into the financial sector, Pride continued to move his way up through the minor leagues, eventually going pro.
 - As an outfielder and a left-handed batter, Pride played for half a dozen different teams, including the New York Yankees, Boston Red Sox and Detroit Tigers.

Let's Go Tiger's, Let's Go



- Curtis had his best records with the Detroit Tigers
 - During his time with the Tigers, he officially became the first full-season Deaf player in the contemporary history of Major League Baseball (MLB).
 - Pride also played the most MLB games since William Hoy, who retired in the early 1900s.
- Over Pride's 23 years in the sport, he participated in 421 MLB games across 11 seasons.
- Curtis was honored with the Tony Conigliaro Award, which is *"presented annually to a major league player who has overcome adversity through the attributes of spirit, courage and determination."*

After Retirement

- After Curtis announced his retirement in 2008, he became the head baseball coach at Gallaudet University.
 - As the coach, Curtis led the players to several successes, including a season with the most wins in the program's history.
- For two consecutive years, Curtis was named the North Eastern Athletic Conference (NEAC) Coach of the Year.
- He also served as the head coach for Team USA in the World Physically Challenged (WPC) Tournament in Japan in 2014, where the team earned its first gold medal.



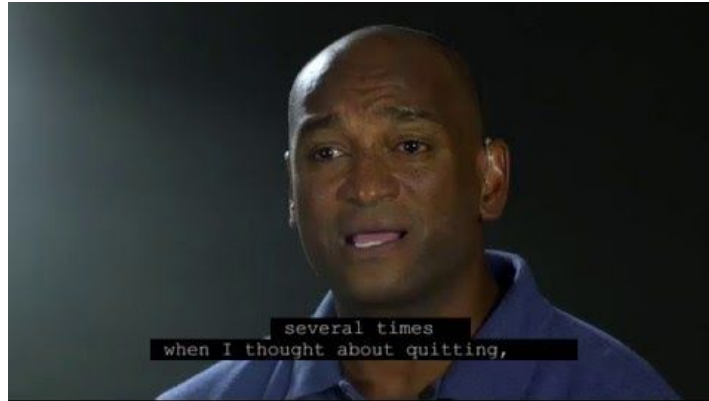
After Retirement, Continued...

- Also in 2014, Pride was named MLB “Ambassador for Inclusion” with the charge to *“provide guidance, assistance and training related to MLB’s efforts to ensure an inclusive environment.”*
- Curtis was also selected to President Obama’s Delegation for the 2012 Olympic Summer Games Closing Ceremony, and was appointed to the President’s Council for Fitness, Sports and Nutrition.
 - Curtis also serves as a spokesman for the Better Hearing Institute.



Media Attention

- Pride was featured multiple times on television and in magazines, receiving several forms of recognition.
 - He was named *“one of the nation’s ten outstanding young Americans”* by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, and *“ROle Model of the Year”* by the Alexander Graham Bell Association.
- During all of this, Curtis made sure to personally respond to the many letters he received, particularly from parents and young people dealing with disabilities.



Together with Pride

- Curtis is married, and is a father of two who also have hearing loss.
- Curtis and his family live in Wellington, Florida where he and his wife run the **Together With Pride Foundation.**
 - The foundation is to *“support and create programs for Deaf and Hard of Hearing children that focus on the importance of education and the learning of life skills along with promoting a positive self-esteem.”*

- Although Curtis was raised with the oral approach and is a proficient lip-reader, he eventually learned American Sign Language later in life and supports and supports promotes the concept of a comprehensive education for the Deaf.



Sources

Information for this biography comes from...

Gallaudet Website biography: <http://www.galludet.edu>

Great Deaf Americans (2nd Ed.) by Matthew Scott Moore and Robert F. Panara

Keynote Speakers Website: <http://www.keynotespeakers.com>

Major League Baseball Website: <http://www.mlb.com/news>

Society for American Baseball Research Website article by David Laurila:
<http://www.sabr.org>