

## **Gerald Williams '82**

Gerald Williams from the class of 1982 is our second 2018 recipient today of the Distinguished Alumnus Award.

Gerald was an accomplished student-athlete while at Bishop Hendricken. Class president, captain of the football team, all-state athlete, and a 1982 super bowl champion are just a few of his titles. Gerald went on to attend the University of Rhode Island graduating in 1992 with a bachelor's degree in communication studies, followed by a master's degree in adult education in 2000. During his time at URI, Williams was a member of the 1984 and 1985 football teams, the two winningest football teams in school history, which advanced to the NCAA Division I-AA Playoffs both seasons. These athletic accolades earned him a spot in the URI Athletic Hall of Fame.

In 2000, Gerald was named the 3rd director, and first American Indian director, of the enormously successful Talent Development Program at his college alma mater. The "TD" program, with the official name of Special Programs in Talent Development, began in 1968 and recruits minority and economically disadvantaged Rhode Island high school seniors and offers them a range of support services throughout their four years at URI.

As the TD program's longest serving director, Gerald developed its first ever brochure, student handbook, virtual computer lab and program newsletter. He extended the program to the URI Providence Campus, established partnerships with Price Waterhouse Cooper and Ernest & Young, and establishing the Talent Development Grant as a tuition and need based scholarship. It is to Gerald's credit that the number of TD acceptances has doubled from 300 to 600 students. Additionally, Gerald oversaw the 1.5-million-dollar renovation of Taft Hall where TD resides, and on October 6, 2018 TD celebrated 50 years of existence on the URI Campus at the Omni Hotel in Providence.

Beyond his duties as the TD director, Gerald finds time to sit on the Rhode Island Nurses Institute Middle College Board, the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators, and the Times 2 Board. He is also a member of the URI Alumni of Color Network, Brothers United for Action, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (Providence, RI Chapter), the Narragansett Indian Nation, and the Black Political Action Committee.

Gerald has been married to Lisa Elderkin Williams since 1988 and has two daughters, Gelisa and Krystle, and a granddaughter, Maniyah. He is also proud son #5 of 7 boys by Richard and Carole Williams who were married for over 50 years. Gerald is not the first in his family to be inducted into Hendricken's storied Hall of Fame as his brothers, Raymond '83 and Steven '84, are both members of Hendricken's Athletic Hall of Fame.

Please join us in honoring Gerald Williams who has given much of his time and talent to the community helping countless students succeed and thrive for more than 20 years. We are proud to name him a Bishop Hendricken Distinguished Alumnus.