

Leroy Staley, Legendary Pro Basketball Player

In 1977, Leroy Staley promised his parents, Moses and Eula Staley, that he would earn a college education. “Both have passed away, but I am keeping that promise.” At 54, Leroy enrolled at Ashford University to earn his Bachelor’s degree online.

Leroy chose Ashford largely because it offered a program in his area of expertise - Sports & Recreation Management. His love of sports began when he was a young boy. “I got started in sports through the Boys & Girls Club when I was 11 years old, playing basketball for Coach Glenn Purmuy. That’s how I got to where I am today.” In high school, Leroy maintained his relationship with the Ben Moore

at Pierce Jr. High, Dale Klay, at Thomas Jefferson High School, Tom Wilson at Florida College. Then, after Florida College, his experiences and talent landed him a place on the Indiana State basketball team, where he played the same years as Larry Bird in 1978-1979. “My best memory is probably the time we played against Michigan State and Magic Johnson. We returned from the trip on my birthday March 27th - that’s the biggest birthday party I have ever had returning on ISU campus!”

Due to various life events, Leroy was unable to complete his degree at Indiana State. Instead, he found work in the Indiana state corrections department as a Correctional Officer. After a year-and-a-half, he was offered a position as Recreation Leader IV, where he spent 4 and-and-half years for the Indiana State Prison system at Branchville Youth Facility. Thus began Leroy’s 27-year career, which has included positions as Sports Specialist, Recreation Specialist, Assistant Supervisor of Recreation and Supervisor of Recreation in

the Federal Prison Systems.

Throughout his career, Leroy occasionally returned to the idea of finishing his degree, and when he moved to Mississippi a few years ago 2005, he decided to take action. When still a student at Ashford, he told us, “I enjoy learning from the other

students and hearing their ideas. I have had many great experiences with my classmates. I've also been pleased with how well my teachers instruct their online courses, and impressed with how supportive the administration is to online students. My life has changed a lot as a result of being enrolled at Ashford University. I have less time being bored here in Mississippi, and I feel more focused on my current job." Leroy said he was proud to set an example for his 2 sons and one daughter, DeMichael, Ladarius, and Destiny.

After graduation, Leroy planned to retire and now he works at Opis Fairway Oaks Rehab-Nursing home as Assistant Recreation Supervisor, but he also was a volunteer Assistant basketball Coach at Florida College in Temple Terrace, Florida. In 2015 he was hired as Assistant basketball Coach at Trinity College located in Trinity, Florida. "I found sports because of the Boys & Girls Club in basketball, Forrest Heights Little League in baseball, so now I want to give back to my hometown being Tampa, Florida. I want to teach sports and

prevention and not only help kids to stay off the streets and out of prison, but also to achieve success in life." We look forward to hearing about the impact Leroy is making on the lives of others.