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12-18-2020

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Recommended Citation

Johnson, Kelli, "Roy Goines" (2020). *Publications*. 6.

https://mds.marshall.edu/african_american_pub/6

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Roy Goines



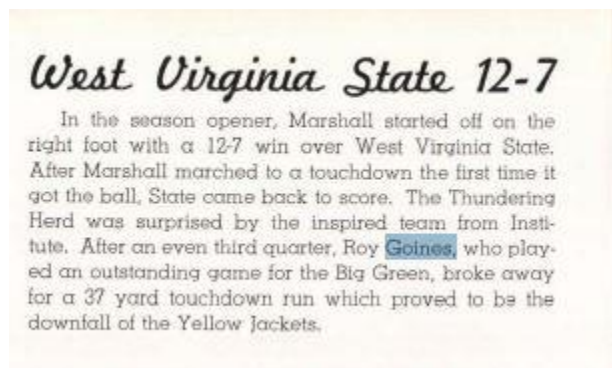
Roy Goines at Marshall University, photo courtesy of MU Special Collections

Roy Goines was born on January 3, 1938 in Barboursville, West Virginia, to a family with five sisters and two brothers. His grandmother and grandfather, Fred and Octavia Sorrell, moved to Barboursville from Virginia at the urging of his grandmother's aunt, Mattie Fliggins. Fred Sorrell was white and Octavia Sorrell was black; interracial marriage was illegal in Virginia but Ms., Fliggins told her niece that Barboursville would be a less prejudiced, safer place for the couple. The Sorrells raised 5 children in Barboursville: Howard, Claudia, Dorothy, Louise, and Martha. Howard worked for 35 years at Marshall University as a maintenance worker and service engineer. When he retired in 1973, MU named the maintenance building after him, the first building on campus named after a living person.

Barboursville was indeed more permissive when it came to its black residents. While black people could not go to the Keith-Albee Theater in Huntington, Goines fondly remembers watching Roy Rogers, Gene Autry, and Hopalong Cassidy at the Criss Theater in Barboursville where he and his friend Teddy Allen could sit anywhere. But there were no black schools in Barboursville (the "colored" school had closed in 1939).

Goines attended Barnett Elementary School and Douglass High School in Huntington, West Virginia. He rode a bus to Douglass every day since the schools in Barboursville were for whites only. He moved to Huntington in 1952 and graduated in 1955. Goines played football for the Douglass High School Wildcats, was student council president in his senior year, and was voted, among other things, best looking and smartest. The Wildcats played at Fairfield Stadium on Thursday nights. Douglass athletes only played against players from other black schools like Garnett in Charleston and Straton in Beckley. In 1954, Goines' former Douglass basketball and baseball teammate Hal Greer became the first African American to play for a public, non-HBCU, college in West Virginia.

In 1954, Goines' former Douglass classmate Hal Greer had been recruited to play basketball at Marshall. Greer was the first African American to play for a public, non-HBCU, college in West Virginia. In 1955, Goines received a scholarship to play football at Marshall University where he studied accounting. He was the first African American football player and the first African American to receive an academic scholarship at Marshall University. Roy Goines was the only black person from the JV squad to also play on the varsity team. The other three black players were Ray Crisp Sr. (whose 3 sons also played for MU in the 1970s), Howard Barrett, and Walter West. Goines lettered in football for three seasons. In a landmark 1957 game, with Marshall College playing West Virginia State, the first time Marshall had played an HBCU, Goines ran for 37 yards for a touchdown ending the State Yellowjackets' hopes and solidifying a 12-7 win for The Marshall Big Green (as they were known at the time).



From The Chief Justice, Marshall's yearbook, 1958, courtesy of MU Special Collections

In his senior year, Goines was not only known as an outstanding athlete but was also nominated to the students' Who's Who and assumed the role of second in command of the ROTC, both first for a black student at Marshall.

While at Marshall, Goines lived with his family. He has been quoted as saying that, while he made the transition to playing with white quite easily (his hometown of Barboursville only had two black families and he grew up playing with white kids) the social aspects of campus life were more challenging. There were very few black students at Marshall in the late 1950s and black student social life revolved around family and the Fairfield neighborhood. He stated that there were restaurants in town where black folk could not eat but that, as a Marshall football player, he was able to eat some places where other blacks couldn't.



ROY LESTER GOINES

Roy's promising football career was cut short with a serious injury this season, but he still managed to participate in quite a few campus activities. Among those are included Executive Officer of the ROTC Battle Group placing him second in command of the unit. The Robe and Varsity M also claimed the popular Accounting major as one of its members.

Military Honorary Sponsors Food And Clothing Drive

SCABBARD AND BLADE. FIRST ROW, left to right: Charles Groves, Major Anthony Corarie, Captain Maurice Rice, Charles Duckworth. SECOND ROW: James Wilson, Alan Earls, Roy Goines. THIRD ROW: Joe Coffman, John Glavaris, James Anderson,

Richard McDade. FOURTH ROW: James Lambert, Fred Meadows, Howard Sutherland. FIFTH ROW: Gilbert Terhune, Richard Shank, Richard Milton, John Pack, James Thurman.



Photos courtesy of MU Special Collections

Goines graduated from Marshall College in 1960 with a degree in Business Administration. He went on to graduate school at the University of Detroit, served in the U.S. Army, worked as a Human Resources Director for Ford Motor Company plants and the corporate office in Detroit for over 20 years, taught business classes at various colleges, and retired to Southern California in 1988.

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