

The Florida Agricultural and Mechanical College



WILLIAM H. GRAY JR., PRESIDENT

Tallahassee, Florida

DEPARTMENT OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION

July 2, 1945

Dr. Wm. H. Gray, Jr.

Dear President Gray:

I am writing to you relative to our coaching situation next year. Coach Bell and Coach Neilson have both resigned to accept positions at other schools for more money. We have been able to get in touch with two men who are interested in the coaching position here.

Dr. Graves, present head coach at Morris Brown College, has his doctor's degree in Biology and is asking for four thousand dollars (\$4000.00) in the event he accepts a position here. In view of the fact that he could serve both as head coach and as a member of the department of Biology, it would seem wise for us to try to secure his services.

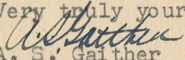
In the event that we cannot get Dr. Graves, our next best selection would probably be Jack Adkins, former head coach at Lemoyne College and now in the U. S. O. He holds a master's degree in political science. We attended graduate school at Ohio State University at the same time.

He is asking for thirty six hundred dollars (\$3600.00) to accept a position here. In view of the fact that experienced college coaches are difficult to find at this time, and since there are five or six coaching vacancies in major colleges, I am urging that you secure the services of one of these men as soon as possible.

I should like to add that I have worked here for nine years. I hold a master's degree in Health and Physical Education from Ohio State University. Prior to my illness in 1942 I was backfield coach under coach Bell and head basketball coach. I coached Florida's first championship team and assisted Bell in making his record of five losses in six years, winning three national championships and four conference championships in football. As advisory coach this year I contributed to two more championships. I have also served as head of the department of Health and Physical Education.

In my conversation with you today I understood that my salary for the coming year will be twenty five hundred and ten dollars (\$2510.00). I will appreciate any consideration of an increase in salary that my services has merited.

Very truly yours,



A. S. Gaither
Athletic Director

July 26, 1951

Mr A S Gaither
Florida A and M College

Dear Mr Gaither:

Allow me to congratulate you on the fine article
which you wrote for the Atlanta Daily World, and
to thank you for sending me a copy.

Yours very truly,

George W Gore, Jr

GWGjr:vby

Leather

THE SPIRIT OF EXCELLENCY

I have been asked to write an article on "The Winning Spirit", but I have chosen instead the title, "The Spirit of Excellency". This terminology more nearly describes the ideas I want to convey. To me, the spirit to win is the spirit to excel; however, excellency does not necessarily imply a competitive contest in which scores determine the outcome.

It is my firm belief that the social pattern under which we live makes it imperative that the Negro function at all times with maximum efficiency. He cannot afford to let up on his job nor can he relax in his responsibilities. Asking no quarter, giving no quarter, he must drive with everything he has. To do this, he must be proud that he is a Negro; accept the challenge of excellency; ~~and~~ avoid all appearance of defeatism; throw his shoulders back and feel that God gave him the potential to do an excellent job. He must not be satisfied with mediocre performance. He must have confidence in his ability and realize that the only way he can work out a decent standard of living is by proving that he can do an excellent job. The Negro must have more faith than any other American group. He must pray harder to his God. He must be a militant believer in the inevitable triumph of justice. He must be more honest, more dependable, and a better citizen. He has to be well trained and he must do a better job than any one else can do. In his economy, he must make his dollar go farther.

Yes, I believe the Negro should try to excel. If he is a ditch digger, I want him to be the best in town. If he is a doctor, I want him to be the best in his community. If he is a tackle, I want him to be the best in his conference. I want the boy to become saturated with

the burning desire to succeed. To me, this is the spirit of excellence.

I am thinking of Jackie Robinson, Campanella, Newcombe, Doby, Jethroe, Easter, Noble, Thompson, Minosa, Simpson, Mays, Paige and other Negroes who have crashed the racial barriers to Major League Baseball. Did these men reach their present status through mediocre performance characterized by a spirit of defeatism? Can they continue to hold their jobs if they perform only "just as good" but no better than the other fellows on the bench?

Character building is one of the main objectives of intercollegiate athletics. I know of no better laboratory in which to build character than on the athletic field. I know of no better incentive in this laboratory than the spirit to excel. In my opinion, institutions of learning are passing up a great opportunity to prepare a young man for better living when they fail to utilize this wonderful potential.

We hear a great deal about scholarships for college students. Today and also twenty years ago, I can remember colleges and universities giving scholarship aid to young men and women whom God had blessed with good voices to sing, skilled hands to sculpture and paint and fertile minds to do an excellent job in academic work. Yes, often, through dogged determination and hard work, they have excelled. All of this is well and good, as it is a just reward for excellency and it does not offend the delicate conscience of the Academicians.

The cult of the mind is neither valid nor scientific. It is dead. We now accept the theory of mind-body unity. The whole boy and girl go to school. We do not send the child's head and heart to school and leave the rest of his body at home. Now, we conceive that he^{is} educated

through his brain, his arms and legs, his muscles and ligaments, in fact, his whole body.

God has blessed the athlete with good neuro-muscular coordination, quick reaction time, strong vigorous muscles, exceptional speed of foot, highly sensitive ability of perception, excellent development of fundamental skills through rugged and diligent work and a courageous will to excel. For these God given qualities, his rugged diligent training and development, he is given an athletic scholarship. The Academicians are alarmed and howl to the high heavens that the fair name of "Padunk College" has been disgraced. They point with pride to their tradition of superior academic training. They give as examples a few outstanding colleges and universities that have deemphasized or dropped intercollegiate athletics. They fail to mention the good solid schools with excellent academic prestige and glorious traditions who have done neither.

I like to think of Notre Dame and its Fighting Irishmen", Ohio State and the "Buck Eyes", Princeton and the "Tigers", Harvard and the "Crimson", Yale and the "Bulldogs", Michigan and the "Wolverines", North Carolina and the "Tar Heels", Duke and the "Blue Devils", Florida and the "Gators", Georgia Tech and the "Rambling Wreck", Tennessee with its "Volunteers" and many other outstanding colleges and universities.

Here at Florida A and M College, a student must maintain a one point average to remain in school. The requirement for athletes is no greater and no less. No exceptions are made and none are asked. We find that the academic records of athletes compare favorably with those of non-athletes. The coaching staff feels that an athlete should have at least, a normal I. Q. There is no place for the moron on our squad.

Whatever success Florida A and M College has had in its program of athletics may be attributed to the following:

1. An administration that recognizes the value of a successful athletic program.
2. A strong and wholesome school spirit in the students, faculty, alumni and friends who support the team, win, lose or draw.
3. A group of hard working athletes who feel that it is a privilege and a high honor to wear the "orange and green"; who have a burning desire to win by the rules and to train by their motto of "Blood - Sweat and Tears".
4. A group of hard working coaches who want to win; who give a lot of attention to details; and who measure success by the degree of excellence they can develop in their men.

We do not get the exceptional athlete at Florida A and M College. Fifty-one of the sixty-five boys on our 1950 football squad are from the State of Florida. We lost 21 letter men from that group this year. Our team for the coming year will be much weaker. I know that we face a tremendous job of rebuilding and will be lucky to win half of our games. You can bet your bottom dollar that the "men in orange" will be in there trying to win. We will win some and lose some but we will be shooting always for the star of Excellence.

Finally, out of my years of ups and downs in this field of coaching, I have come to believe the following things:

1. To evaluate and know your men is one of the most powerful assests a coach can have.
2. The coach has the right to expect the best out of his men at all times. Production is the only language he should understand.

3. The mental attitude of your squad is more important than its physical condition. Make it good and protect it dearly.
4. Kind treatment of your men pays rich dividends. It is a universal language that all men understand.
5. All men cannot be treated alike but all men can be treated fair.
6. There is no place in athletics for the self sufficient, non progressive, lazy coach with a defeatist attitude. The game moves too fast for the coach to stand still and catch up.
7. The boy on the field wants to win the game just as much as the coach on the bench, or the fans in the stands. Otherwise, he should not be out there. Maybe he could not help making that mistake.
8. Be slow in giving up on a big man. He may be a long time in coming around but when he does, you've got something.
9. Do not subject a first year man to a baptism of fire before he is ready. First, give him a chance to do good when the odds are in his favor. Men tend to repeat the experiences that result pleasantly.
10. I believe in large squads. We don't cut our squad, we let the boys cut themselves. A boy who sticks 30 days through the tough grind of pre-season training under this hot Florida sun has got the kind of heart we want in a man. He is a good guy to have around. You may need him some day.

11. You get nothing in this world that is worthwhile without "putting out" for it. You don't dream the lucky number; pick the lucky horse or hit the sweep stakes. You've got to work -- work -- work.
12. Give your assistant coaches responsibility, authority and credit. It makes them better men. They can sincerely share your joys in victory and are a welcome source of comfort in defeat.
13. There is a merit in defeat. It helps you to correct your mistakes and is the best thing I know to keep the size of your head constant.
14. Make no apologies for winning or wanting to win and no apologies for losing.
15. Hitch your wagon to the Star of Excellency.

October 23, 1951

Mr A S Gaither
Florida A and M College

Dear Mr Gaither:

I think it is a fine thing that Bethune-Cookman College is planning to celebrate Althea Gibson Day in connection with their Xavier University football game on Saturday, November 10.

Yours very truly,

George W Gore, Jr

GWGjr:ivby

October 24, 1951

Mr. Richard V. Moore
President
Bethune Cookman College
Daytona Beach, Florida

Dear Dr. Moore:

The College and Miss Gibson appreciate very much your kind invitation for her to visit with your College on Saturday, November 10. Miss Gibson has willingly consented to come, and the College is happy to grant her this permission.

I am suggesting that transportation for her and a chaperon be sent in advance as it will eliminate the red tape involved in arrangements from here.

With every kind wish for your continued success, I am

Yours very truly,

A. S. Gaither
Athletic Director

ASG:fmh

cc: Dr. George W. Gore, Jr.

Miss Althea Gibson

November 2, 1951

Mr. A. S. Gaither
Florida A and M College
Tallahassee, Florida

Dear Mr. Gaither:

This is to acknowledge, with thanks, your kind letter of October 24, concerning Miss Althea Gibson Day at Bethune-Cookman College on November 10.

In accordance with your request that transportation for Miss Gibson and her chaperon be sent in advance, enclosed, you will find a check for \$50.00 for travel expenses. However, we are desirous of Miss Gibson coming from Jacksonville by train, due to the fact the Committee plans to meet her at the station with the Band and have a big parade from the station to the College on Saturday morning.

In checking the train schedule from Tallahassee, I find that Miss Gibson can leave Tallahassee on Saturday morning, November 10, at 5:40 A. M.; arriving in Jacksonville at 9:00 A. M.; leave Jacksonville at 9:45 A. M., and arrive in Daytona Beach at 11:13 A. M., Saturday morning. We will be awaiting her arrival at the station, then we will parade to the College from the station.

The Committee wishes to thank the Administration and the Athletic Committee for your cooperation, and we assure you that the citizens and the College Family are honored in having Miss Gibson as our guest.

If possible, will you forward to me two or three pictures of Miss Gibson for newspaper publicity, and most especially one with a tennis racket.

We would be delighted to have any other members of your staff or students as our guests on this day. If this office can be of further assistance, please notify me.

Best wishes for your continued success.

Cordially yours,

Richard V. Moore
President

Enclosure

cc: Dr. George W. Gore, Jr. ✓
Miss Althea Gibson

The Florida Agricultural and Mechanical College



DR. GEORGE W. GORE, JR., PRESIDENT

Tallahassee, Florida

December 11, 1951

DIVISION OF EDUCATION

Dr. George W. Gore, Jr.
President
Florida A and M College
Campus

Dear Dr. Gore:

If you will remember, we discussed the possibility of carrying a game to Jacksonville on October 25, 1952, but Mr. Lee informed me that it is impossible to get the stadium in Jacksonville on this date because of the Georgia - Florida game. I am thinking that the next best arrangement would be to play Bethune Cookman in Jacksonville on November 1 if the stadium is available. We could make this an annual affair with 1952 being considered as their game and the following year as our game. A guarantee covering expenses could be provided each year.

This would be fair to both schools as it would stop criticisms of our not playing in Jacksonville, and it should eventually prove financially beneficial if such an arrangement could be worked out.

I am suggesting that we get in touch with the authorities at Bethune Cookman concerning this matter. Also, we should immediately make efforts to secure the stadium if agreeable to both schools.

Yours very truly,

A. S. Gaither
Athletic Director

ASG:fmh

cc: Mr. J. R. E. Lee, Jr.

Dr. Gore: I had written this letter before our talk today. Thought maybe you would want it for your files. A.S.G.

February 7, 1955

Department of Physical Education

Dr George W Gore, Jr., President
Florida A and M University
Campus

Dear Dr Gore:

Coach Griffin has been offered the position of Head Coach and Athletic Director at South Carolina State College, Orangeburg, South Carolina. He has requested permission to go to Orangeburg for an interview concerning the position. In addition, three other coaches have submitted requests for absences for interviews at the same place.

Needless to say, the possibility of losing these men from our athletic and physical education staffs has caused me considerable worry and alarm. Each man has been well grounded in our system of football - both as players here and coaches. Furthermore, with one exception, they have earned their advanced degrees and have pursued their training each summer after receiving them. Our youngest coach will receive his master's degree this summer. Such training for coaches is unusual in any college and any university.

The academic competency of our men, in addition to their development as coaches in specialized areas in football and other sports, makes them highly desirable in our field. Especially is this true of Coach Griffin. As I look over the possibilities for a line coach, if he leaves, I can think of not one man who would be his equal.

The success of the Rattlers has been due to more, however, than just the training that I have mentioned above. The unusual morale we have maintained through the years has been built largely because of the spirit of loyalty and determination manifested by our coaching staff. Each assistant coach is a FAMEAN who earnestly works not only for his job, but for his Alma Mater as well. No one knows better than I how much this factor

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Dr George W Gore, Jr., President

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February 7, 1955

has contributed to our success.

I have talked with each man. I find that not one of them really wants to leave. I believe that with substantial increases in their salaries, not one of them would leave Florida. They have frankly stated to me that they feel they deserve consideration because of two things:

1. Their dual responsibilities here as coaches and instructors.
2. Their contributions toward the annual production of winning teams here at the university. (The record speaks for itself)

In my position, I have been unable to give them the assurance they seem to need.

Personally, I feel that the loss of these men - especially Coach Griffin - will seriously handicap our future in football. His present degree of skill as a line coach is due to eleven years of training and experience here. We cannot just pick up coaches that fit into our system. This is true in any well organized coaching unit.

I feel that a heart to heart conference between these men and the administration might do much in assisting them in making up their minds. By all means, this conference should be held before they depart for South Carolina.

I understand that South Carolina is determined to build a strong football team and a strong Department of Physical Education. According to all information I have gained, they believe that our staff is capable of giving them what they want. I hate to think that their gain would be our loss.

Sincerely yours,

A S Gaither
Athletic Director

ASG/a