

## **“No Excuses” Derrick Coleman**

Derrick Coleman, a former NFL football player who played for the Seattle Seahawks in 2013 to become a Super Bowl champion, and who is currently the Assistant to the Director for Player Engagement for the Green Bay Packers, delivered a powerful presentation titled "No Excuses." Coleman, the first Deaf/Hard of Hearing (D/HH) Super Bowl champion and the first to play on the offensive line, shared his journey of overcoming obstacles from a young age. Diagnosed with hearing loss at age three, Coleman's parents chose to send him to mainstream programs where he excelled with the help of hearing aids. Despite early struggles, his father's encouragement and his own determination drove him to succeed.

Growing up in the Compton area of Southern California with limited financial resources, Coleman faced bullying and discrimination due to his hearing loss. However, pivotal moments, such as standing up for himself when his hearing aids were ripped out of his ears and thrown in the grass by his older sister's friends, taught him the importance of self-advocacy. Through years of speech therapy and unwavering dedication, Coleman cultivated a mindset of resilience.

Coleman emphasized the necessity of relentless dedication and the absence of procrastination in achieving success, particularly for individuals with hearing loss. He highlighted the importance of a support network and credited his friends for helping him reach the NFL despite going undrafted out of UCLA.

Throughout his NFL career, Coleman maintained effective communication by lipreading his quarterbacks in the huddle and adapting to different positions on the field. He shared his gratitude for receiving hearing aids from Starkey, which allowed him to experience sounds like never before.

In addition to his football career, Coleman established the "No Excuses Foundation" to empower individuals to overcome challenges and pursue their passions. His mantra, "Just Do You," encourages people to embrace their unique abilities and push past limitations.

Coleman's presentation served as an inspiring testament to the power of perseverance, self-advocacy, and unwavering determination in overcoming obstacles and achieving one's dreams.