

Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with David R. Duerson

PERSON

Duerson, David, 1960-2011

Alternative Names: David R. Duerson;

Life Dates: November 28, 1960-February 17, 2011

Place of Birth: Muncie, Indiana, USA

Work: Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Occupations: Football Player; Corporate Chief Executive

Biographical Note

Former NFL player-turned-business owner David Duerson was born in Muncie, Indiana, on November 28, 1960. After graduating from Northside High School in Muncie, Duerson began his promising football career at the University of Notre Dame. Duerson spent the summers from 1979 to 1981 working as a law clerk in Miami, Florida, and during the summer of 1982, he served as legislative aide to U.S. Senator Richard Lugar. Duerson graduated from Notre Dame with a B.S. degree in economics in 1983.

Following graduation, Duerson joined the Chicago Bears, where he played from 1983 to 1989, earning his first Super Bowl ring in Super Bowl XX. In 1990, he joined the New York Giants, and that year the Giants won Super Bowl XXV. He then went on to play for the Phoenix Cardinals from 1991 to 1993. After leaving the NFL, Duerson decided to go into business through franchise ownership. He attended McDonald's Corporation's Hamburger University and in 1994 bought three McDonald's restaurants in the suburbs of Louisville, Kentucky. Selling his franchises in 1995, Duerson became president and CEO of Fair Oaks Farms, one of the primary suppliers of sausage to McDonald's and a number of other companies with an international distribution arm to Japan, Singapore, Turkey and Kuwait. Under his leadership, sales grew from \$38 million in 1998 to \$63.4 million in 2001. That same year, he earned an executive M.B.A. from Harvard University's Owners and Presidents Management Program.

In 2002, Duerson started Duerson Foods, providing pork and turkey sausage products to corporations such as Burger King, White Castle and SYSCO.

Duerson has earned a number of honors over the years, including being named two-time All-American at Notre Dame and the 1987 NFL Man of the Year. He serves on the

University of Notre Dame Board of Trustees and as chairman of the National Football Foundation & College Hall of Fame, Chicago Chapter. He is also active with the Boys & Girls Clubs of America, serving as a national trustee. Duerson and his wife, Alicia, have four children.

Duerson passed away on February 17, 2011.

Duerson was interviewed by The HistoryMakers on August 28, 2003.

Related Entries

Longfellow Elementary School [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

Oliver W. Storer Junior High School [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

Northside High School [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

HS diploma

University of Notre Dame [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

BS - Economics

Harvard University [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

MBA - Owner/President's Management

Northside Middle School [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

Storer Elementary School [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

McDonald's Corporation [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 199412 to 199504]

Owner/Operator

Chicago Bears [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1983 to 1989]

Football Player

New York Giants [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1990 to 1990]

Football Player

Phoenix Cardinals [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1991 to 199404]

Football Player

Duerson Foods, LLC [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 200201 to ?]

President, CEO, Owner

Fair Oaks Farms, LLC [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 199504 to 200202]

President, CEO, Majority Partner

University of Notre Dame [MEMBEROf]
[from ? to ?]

Board of Trustees

National Football Foundation & College Hall of Fame [MEMBEROf]
[from ? to ?]

Chair

Boys & Girls Clubs of America [MEMBEROf]
[from ? to ?]

Board of Trustees

Maryville Academy [MEMBEROf]
[from ? to ?]

Board of Directors

Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Incorporated [MEMBEROf]
[from ? to ?]

Member

Sigma Pi Phi Fraternity (Boule) [MEMBEROf]
[from ? to ?]

Member

Masonic Lodge Hiram #14 [MEMBEROf]
[from ? to ?]