

Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Gale Sayers

PERSON

Sayers, Gale, 1943-

Alternative Names: Gale Sayers;

Life Dates: May 30, 1943-September 23, 2020

Place of Birth: Wichita, Kansas, USA

Residence: Chicago, IL

Work: Vernon Hills, IL

Occupations: Entrepreneur; Football Player

Biographical Note

NFL Hall of Famer Gale Eugene Sayers was born on May 30, 1943, in Wichita, Kansas. Sayers grew up in Omaha, Nebraska and graduated from Omaha Central High School. As a running back at the University of Kansas, he was a two-time All-American player known as "The Kansas Comet." In 1963, he set an NCAA Division I record with a 99-yard run against Nebraska.

Sayers was drafted in 1965 by the Chicago Bears and remained with the team for his entire NFL career. He was the unanimous choice for NFL Rookie of the Year in 1965. He was named the MVP of the 1967, 1968 and 1970 Pro Bowl Games, and he was named to the 75th Anniversary All Time NFL Team. Sayers was inducted into the Black Sports Hall of Fame in 1975, the NFL Hall of Fame in 1977, and the Chicago Sports Hall of Fame in 1980. In July 2000, he was named to the NFL All-Time Millennium Team.

After completing his professional football career in 1971, Sayers returned to the University of Kansas to receive his B.A. degree in physical education while also working as the assistant athletic director. Sayers accepted the assignment as assistant director of the Williams Education Fund for three years and received his M.A. degree in educational administration. Sayers served as athletic director at Southern Illinois University from 1976 to 1981.

Sayers moved back to Chicago and launched a sports marketing and public relations firm, Sayers and Sayers Enterprises. He then started a computer supplies business in 1984 and built that business into a provider of technology products and services. In

1999, Sayers was inducted into another Hall of Fame - the Chicago Entrepreneurship Hall of Fame. He is also a recipient of the prestigious Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year Award.

Sayers spends a great deal of time supporting and fundraising for a variety of charitable organizations including the Better Boys Foundation, the Cradle Adoption Agency, the Gale Sayers Center, Grid Iron Greats, Junior Achievement, and Wesley House. The University of Kansas has established the Gale Sayers Microcomputer Center in recognition of Sayers's commitment to both education and technology. Sayers has authored an instructional publication on the fundamentals of football's offensive strategies called Offensive Football. In addition, his 1971 autobiography, I Am Third, was produced into an award-winning television movie, Brian's Song, starring James Caan and Billy Dee Williams. In 2007, he released a new book, Gale Sayers, My Life and Times.

Sayers serves on the board of directors at American Century Mutual Funds, located in Kansas City, Missouri.

Sayers passed away on September 23, 2020.

Related Entries

Omaha Central High School [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

University of Kansas [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

Howard Kennedy Elementary School [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

Chicago Bears [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1965 to 1971]

Running Back

Southern Illinois University [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1976 to 1981]

Athletic Director

Sayers 40, Inc. [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1984 to ?]

Founder

American Century Mutual Funds [MEMBEROF]
[from ? to ?]

Board Member

University of Kansas [MEMBEROF]
[from ? to ?]

Director of Fundraising for Special Projects

Cradle Foundation [MEMBEROf]
[from ? to ?]

Member

Gale Sayers Center [MEMBEROf]
[from ? to ?]

Founder