

Tyrone Willingham
Former Football Coach and Player

Tyrone Willingham is a former American football coach and player. His impressive coaching resume includes head coaching positions at the University of Washington, the University of Notre Dame and Stanford University.

Willingham's coaching style emphasized toughness, enthusiasm, intelligence, discipline, and commitment. The result provided his players with more than just the opportunity to enjoy victories on the field; his guiding principles prepared his players to be successful in life.

On December 13, 2004, Willingham was named Washington's 22nd head football coach. His already impressive resume grew extensively as he resurrected the Husky football program. Under Willingham's leadership the Huskies made significant strides toward establishing the stability and discipline of a successful program. His team consistently ranked among the top two in the Pac-10 in fewest penalty yards per game, along with setting or matching a number of offensive school records.

Willingham's athletes also experienced success in the classroom and in the community. Washington was among the leaders in the Pac-10 in graduation rates and numerous players received Academic All-Pac-10 honors. Husky football players were also active in charities, serving as mentors and role models for area youth.

Practicing what he preached, Willingham was also known for his charitable efforts. For his commitment to community service, Willingham was honored with the 2000 Eddie Robinson Coach of Distinction Award. The award is presented to a college football coach nationwide for career achievement and his outstanding service as a role model.

Prior to Washington, Willingham, served as the head coach at Notre Dame (2002-2004) and at Stanford (1995-2001). He was 21-15-0 with the Fighting Irish and 44-36-1 with the Cardinal.

As an athlete, Willingham was a walk-on in both football and baseball at Michigan State, earning three letters in each sport. As a quarterback and flanker in football, he was named the team's most inspirational player in 1976. The following year, Willingham was awarded the Big Ten Conference Medal of Honor as the outstanding scholar-athlete in the league. In baseball, Willingham received the sportsmanship award in 1975 and was a Second Team All-Big Ten selection in 1977.

Born Lionel Tyrone Willingham in Kinston, N.C., he graduated from Jacksonville High School in Jacksonville, N.C. Willingham earned his degree in physical education with a minor in health education from Michigan State. He and his wife, Kim, have three children: Cassidy, Kelsey and Nathaniel.