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Coaching Legend Gives 'Titan' Pep Talk To ESU Football Team Coaching Legend Gives 'Titan' Pep Talk To ESU Football Team

Emporia State University hosted former coach and football legend Herman Boone, whose 1971 season was profiled in the movie 'Remember The Titans.'

Herman Boone stands on the Emporia State University football field and jokes that he feels out of place.

"It's this three piece suit," he tells members of the school's football team.

Boone, a coaching legend in the world of football, visited ESU to deliver the Bonner & Bonner Diversity Series lecture on Wednesday night.

Before dinner and a speech, he spent time with the football team, giving them pointers and a pep-talk that could have come from a movie.

That should be no surprise, given Boone's historic 1971 coaching season is profiled in the 2000 Disney motion picture, "Remember The Titans." Boone is portrayed by Denzel Washington.

Boone rose to prominence after taking the reigns of a newly desegregated Virginia high school football team in 1971. As head coach, he brought the team together and took them on an undefeated winning streak, ultimately claiming the state championship that same year.

It's the type of season legacies - and movies - are made of.

"You can't fake caring," Boone told players Wednesday night. "That is the one thing you can't fake."

Boone hasn't lost his sense of humor, joking at one point, "I'm better looking than Denzel Washington."

But above it all, he still has the ability to captivate and inspire teams across the country.

"I never thought I'd ever meet him," said ESU football player Danny McEvoy. "This was just... unbelievable."

"He molded a team and got that team to come together on one common goal," said ESU coach Garin Higgins. "That's something all us coaches try to achieve."

Boone told players they were bigger, stronger, faster - even smarter - than those of his time. But the one thing he says hasn't changed, is how they must play if they want to win the game.

"You have to believe," Boone said. "To believe is to have faith that you can win; that you can outlast and outplay your opponents for sixty minutes. That's what it's all about."

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