



JAMES IHEDIGBO
"DIGGS"

www.JamesIhedigbo.com

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When James Ihedigbo was a young football player at the University of Massachusetts, his coach called him into his office one day and said something that changed him forever: "James, you see those other guys out there? They can work just a little bit and get the job done. But for you to excel on this team, you're going to have to outwork everybody on the field." These words defined the pivotal moment at which James realized that low odds did not signal inevitable defeat, and they could be beaten through hard work, passion, and dedication. Needless to say, he not only excelled on the field but became captain of the team.

In fact, the powerful defensive safety seems to have a built-in filter that interprets "No" as "Not until you work for it!" Sacrifice and hard work can make any dream a reality. It is this message that has driven each of James' major accomplishments for years, and it is this message that he spreads to young boys and girls all over the world when he's asked to speak to them about how to realize their dreams.

In every area of his career, James has gone on to defy expectations and beat the odds. When he wasn't drafted, he beat the odds in 2007 when he tried out for the New York Jets and became a walk-on as a rookie – such odds are one in a million. Such things rarely happen in the NFL.

He defied expectations in 2010 when instead of allowing the earthquake crisis in Haiti to be "their problem", as a world citizen, he recognized it as "his problem" and immediately organized a delegation of medical professionals and athletes to travel there and work alongside Wyclef Jean's Yele Haiti foundation to provide help. He likes to get in the trenches and get his hands dirty.

Shunning the self-serving glamour and influence that he enjoys as a pro athlete, Ihedigbo defies expectations of the typical gamer by using his platform to bring recognition to his true passion. His pride and joy is not his trophy case, but his HOPE Africa foundation. If you want to see a broad smile creep across his face, simply ask him about all of the students that HOPE Africa has helped by providing scholarships to the family's college in Nigeria, founded by his parents who share a book-worthy success story by their own merit: they immigrated from Nigeria, both earned Ph.D.'s from U Mass, and then went back to Nigeria to found their own college, which James supports today.

James is not a typical pro athlete with the typical agenda to make as much money as he can, conspicuously consume the trappings that accompany wealth, and evoke the envy of others. Instead, he shuns the limelight to live a simple, humble life driven to leave a legacy of helping others. He doesn't just lend his name to humanitarian efforts, but he lends his hands. When it came time to help the Valerie Fund for sickle cell anemia, he didn't have his publicist roll out a statement, he rolled up his sleeves and donated blood – and brought other notables along with him. Examples like these are how James defines true success.

He's unexpectedly touchable and friendly, and he actually enjoys writing back to his fans on Twitter and Facebook. He still signs and sends out autographs the old fashioned way. And after years in the NFL, he's still deeply, genuinely touched by letters painstakingly written in their neatest handwriting by fans young and old who say they want to be just like him. They see him as larger than life. He sees his life as larger than himself. And what fulfills it most is changing the lives of others.







AVAILABLE FOR

Modeling/Acting
Product/Event Endorsements & Promotions
Celebrity Spokesperson
Speaking Engagements
Television/Radio Promos

NFL VITALS

Height: 6-1
Weight: 214
Age: 27
College: University of Massachusetts
Experience: 4th season New York Jets, Defensive Back
High School: Amherst Regional HS [MA]

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