



DELAWARE STATE UNIVERSITY

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For Immediate Release

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DeSean Jackson Renews His Commitment to Delaware State University

New Agreement Extends to 2028

Former NFL star named Box To Row Coach of Year

Led historic turnaround of the once-storied program

Dover, Del. — On the evening of his interview to become Delaware State University's 25th football coach one year ago, DeSean Jackson signed a new deal with the University through 2028, rewarding him for the best program finish in nearly 20 years and a long-term commitment to the program.

Delaware State University, a five-time MEAC Champion under the legendary Coach Bill Collick, won just two games in the 2024 and 2023 seasons and had not had a winning season since 2012, prior to Jackson's arrival.

Under Jackson, the team finished 8-4 (4-1 in the MEAC), led the FCS in rushing, and played in the MEAC championship game, falling to the eventual MEAC and Celebration Bowl champions, South Carolina State University.

Noting the significance of the day, Jackson said, "Just two days before Christmas last year, I began the next phase of my professional career, as a first-time head coach, in a community I did not know, with players I did not recruit. It was not easy, but it was important. Giving my whole self to these young men and representing one of the best Historically Black Colleges in the country has been a high honor and one I do not intend to take for granted. We have some unfinished business to take care of on the field, and I am proud to be a part of the athletic transformation taking place at the school."

Last year, Delaware State University President Tony Allen announced a \$125 million athletic transformation initiative that includes a new indoor training facility, a revamped stadium, significant improvements to the downtown athletic campus, and the start of a long-awaited convocation center. The first phase of the campaign includes the indoor training and stadium facilities, which will cost \$50 million. The State of Delaware has contributed \$20 million, along with \$5 million in private support from University alumni and supporters.

To support these efforts, Jackson used his longstanding relationships with the reigning Super Bowl champion Philadelphia Eagles to promote the *Battle of Legends*, an instant classic on October 30 at Lincoln Financial Field between Michael Vick-led Norfolk State University and Delaware State University.

The team played in front of 47,000 fans, including 12,000 high school students from Philadelphia and Delaware. The game was preceded by a broadcast of *ESPN's First Take* on Delaware State University's campus, and a *Good Morning America* broadcast featuring coaches Jackson and Vick, the Norfolk State and Delaware State Marching Bands, and cheerleaders. Including the game, the activities created more than 24 million impressions.

Allen, who has focused on University growth and student achievement, said, "We have proven that we are a top-tier HBCU academically. The goal now is to be equally relentless in ensuring our physical footprint and co-curricular activities align with what is happening in the classroom. Athletics is a significant part of that equation."

In September, US News & World Report ranked the University among the Top 5 Public HBCUs and Top 10 overall for the seventh and ninth year, respectively. Forbes lists the University as No. 2 in HBCU online education.

Allen continued, "The job of Delaware State is not to develop a good story about access and opportunity that changes and prepares young people to take their rightful place of usefulness and honor in a global community. That is Delaware State already. Our goal is to increase the number of storytellers who believe in the power of HBCUs like ours and can make the investment in a future they can see for themselves, their community, and their country. Coach Jackson understands that vision and is helping us carry that message around the world."

In addition to carrying the team to the MEAC elite, Jackson and his coaching staff elevated the profiles of their most talented players, including several [MEAC First Team selections](#): running back Marquis Gillis, who led the MEAC in rushing with 1,197 yards; running back James Jones, who was named Impact Player of the year by the HBCU Superlative Awards; offensive linemen Jestus Johnson and Isaiah Cook; and linebacker Brian Bates.

Freshman defensive back Jalen Delapierre commented, "Chasing Greatness is the goal on the team and at the school. All I can do is thank God."

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