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**For Immediate Release:**

## **Hometown Hero Initiates Scholarship Program to Benefit Griffin-Spalding Students**

**Griffin, GA** – Haskell Ward was born March 13, 1940 in Griffin Georgia. He grew up on Solomon Street and attended Broad Street School and Moore Elementary School. His time at Moore Elementary and the teachers that invested in him there proved to be influential. Ward returned to Griffin on September 15, 2021, and presented Griffin-Spalding County School System (GSCS) Superintendent Keith L. Simmons with a gift of \$25,000 to create a scholarship fund to help students at Moore Elementary.

Haskell shared that just a few years ago, he requested and received transcript information from his primary education and learned that he had not passed the first grade. He was retained and repeated first grade and then was retained and also repeated second grade. From third grade on he was a model student, successful academically, and voted most likely to succeed in high school. He went on to attend and earn a Bachelor's degree from Clarke College in Atlanta and then earned his Master's degree from UCLA.

Haskell Ward said, "my success in life can be traced to here, Moore Elementary school ... when I go back and look at the happiest days of my life, they are going to be in the area of the elementary school."

"This scholarship should be used to help little kids who are the future. Little kids like me," said Ward.

Haskell Ward shared with staff and students about his childhood memories and life experiences. He shared rich stories about many historic moments that he participated in. Haskell Ward shared about meeting John F. Kennedy, Jimmy Carter, Ronald Regan, Haile Selassie, Barack Obama Sr., Malcolm X, Martin Luther King Jr, UCLA classmate Lew Alcindor (aka. Kareen Abdul Jabaar) and more. He shared about his time in the Peace Corps and his time serving as Deputy Mayor of New York City.

GSCS Superintendent Simmons stated, "It is always great for alumni to return and for our current students to learn about their successes and experiences. It provides role models for them; people they can aspire to be like. In Haskell Ward's case especially, it is wonderful to see an example of a child who credits his early educational experiences at Moore Elementary School for his many successes."

Mr. Ward's advice for students is "You are not to the condition born. You can be anything you set your mind to be so long as you set your mind out to do it."

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