

Who is Curtis Pride?

Name _____

Class · period _____

Date _____

THE SHORT VERSION

Curtis Pride (1968–present) was found to be deaf at nine months old and grew up excelling at several sports. He played 421 Major League Baseball games across 11 seasons, became the first full-season Deaf player in the contemporary history of MLB, and later coached at Gallaudet University.

EARLY LIFE

A test at nine months, a move to Maryland, and a kid who played everything

01 CHILDHOOD AND SCHOOL

- 01** Curtis was born in Washington, D.C. At 9 months old, a standard test revealed that he was deaf at birth.

Curtis was born to two hearing parents: his dad was an employee of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and his mother was a nurse.

- 02** Early on in his life, Curtis' family moved to Silver Spring, Maryland where he could attend the Montgomery County Public School System's Auditory Service infant program.

- 03** He continued his education at neighborhood schools, where he was sadly bullied due to being the only Deaf child in attendance.

02 SPORTS AND COLLEGE

- 01** Even with the extra struggles, Pride was an excellent student who earned good grades and excelled in sports, specifically soccer, basketball and baseball, although wrestling, swimming, track and gymnastics were in the mix as well.

Curtis was so successful with soccer that he was named one of the top fifteen youth soccer players in the world as a teen.

- 02** Basketball is what Curtis continued to follow in college, attending William and Mary College on a full basketball scholarship, and was a team starter for four years.

A BASEBALL CAREER

A unique deal, half a dozen teams, and 421 games in the majors

03 A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY

- 01 During this time, baseball lobbied for his attention, and Curtis was presented with a unique deal that allowed him to stay in college while playing for the Kingsport Mets of the Appalachian League.

Curtis graduated with a degree in finance.

- 02 Although he was ready to find his way into the financial sector, Pride continued to move his way up through the minor leagues, eventually going pro.

As an outfielder and a left-handed batter, Pride played for half a dozen different teams, including the New York Yankees, Boston Red Sox and Detroit Tigers.

04 HIS YEARS WITH THE TIGERS

- 01 Curtis had his best records with the Detroit Tigers.

During his time with the Tigers, he officially became the first full-season Deaf player in the contemporary history of Major League Baseball (MLB). Pride also played the most MLB games since William Hoy, who retired in the early 1900s.

- 02 Over Pride's 23 years in the sport, he participated in 421 MLB games across 11 seasons.
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- 03 Curtis was honored with the Tony Conigliaro Award, which is:

presented annually to a major league player who has overcome adversity through the attributes of spirit, courage and determination.

THE TONY CONIGLIARO AWARD

AFTER RETIREMENT

Coaching at Gallaudet, a gold medal in Japan, and a national role

05 COACHING

- 01 After Curtis announced his retirement in 2008, he became the head baseball coach at Gallaudet University.

As the coach, Curtis led the players to several successes, including a season with the most wins in the program's history.

- 02 For two consecutive years, Curtis was named the North Eastern Athletic Conference (NEAC) Coach of the Year.
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- 03 He also served as the head coach for Team USA in the World Physically Challenged (WPC) Tournament in Japan in 2014, where the team earned its first gold medal.

06 NATIONAL ROLES

- 01 Also in 2014, Pride was named MLB "Ambassador for Inclusion" with the charge to:

provide guidance, assistance and training related to MLB's efforts to ensure an inclusive environment.

MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL

- 02 Curtis was also selected to President Obama's Delegation for the 2012 Olympic Summer Games Closing Ceremony, and was appointed to the President's Council for Fitness, Sports and Nutrition.

Curtis also serves as a spokesman for the Better Hearing Institute.

07 MEDIA ATTENTION

- 01 Pride was featured multiple times on television and in magazines, receiving several forms of recognition.

He was named one of the nation's ten outstanding young Americans by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, and "Role Model of the Year" by the Alexander Graham Bell Association.

- 02 During all of this, Curtis made sure to personally respond to the many letters he received, particularly from parents and young people dealing with disabilities.

TOGETHER WITH PRIDE

A family, a foundation, and two languages

08 FAMILY AND THE FOUNDATION

01 Curtis is married, and is a father of two who also have hearing loss.

02 Curtis and his family live in Wellington, Florida where he and his wife run the **Together With Pride Foundation**, which exists to:

support and create programs for Deaf and Hard of Hearing children that focus on the importance of education and the learning of life skills along with promoting a positive self-esteem.

TOGETHER WITH PRIDE FOUNDATION

03 Although Curtis was raised with the oral approach and is a proficient lip-reader, he eventually learned American Sign Language later in life and promotes the concept of a comprehensive education for the Deaf.

09 NAMES AND TERMS TO KNOW

NAME OR TERM	WHY IT MATTERS IN THIS STORY
William Hoy	The Deaf player who retired in the early 1900s; Pride played more MLB games than anyone since.
Tony Conigliaro Award	The annual award for a major league player who has overcome adversity, which Pride received.
Ambassador for Inclusion	The MLB role Pride was named to in 2014, guiding the league's work on an inclusive environment.
Oral approach	The method Pride was raised with; he is a proficient lip-reader and learned ASL later in life.
Together With Pride Foundation	The foundation Pride and his wife run for Deaf and Hard of Hearing children.

CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

Answer in complete sentences using what you read

10 WRITTEN RESPONSE

01 How and when did Pride's family learn he was deaf?

02 Why did Pride's family move to Silver Spring, Maryland?

03 Pride went to college on a basketball scholarship but ended up in baseball. Explain how that happened.

04 What record did Pride set during his time with the Detroit Tigers?

05 Name two things Pride did after retiring from playing in 2008.

06 Pride was raised orally and learned ASL later in life. Using his foundation and his coaching, explain why he supports a comprehensive education for Deaf children.

11 WHERE THIS INFORMATION COMES FROM

Gallaudet University biography	gallaudet.edu
<i>Great Deaf Americans</i> (2nd ed.)	Matthew Scott Moore & Robert F. Panara
Keynote Speakers	keynotespeakers.com
Major League Baseball	mlb.com/news
Society for American Baseball Research	David Laurila · sabr.org