

IN MEMORY OF ACHILLES.
MAY YOUR INCREDIBLE
PASSION AND SPIRIT LIVE ON
FOREVER.





"The only person you should try to be better than is
the person you were yesterday."

Chapter 1: Travis Williams

Achilles Williams was born Travis Williams in Los Angeles, California in 1984. He lived in Compton, California as a child with his mother and three younger brothers. One of Achilles' brothers, Evan Williams, told me their childhood was "always extremely dysfunctional. That's the only way I can describe it." His father was not in the picture, his mother had three younger sons to look after, and there was usually strife between them.

So at the age of 15, Achilles left home. He moved to Atlanta, Georgia to live with his aunt and cousins, where he would go on spend the majority of his teenage years. Evan Jones, one of Achilles' best friends, told me about his first encounter with him in Georgia:

"I'll never forget the first time I met Travis (I grew up knowing him as Travis so that's what I'll always refer to him as). I was about 12 or 13 years old and we met as opponents on the basketball court. He had long straight hair wrapped in a bandana and looked like he was a member of boy band. He was really good at basketball and immediately we were rivals on the court, though we always had mutual respect for one another. After a few weeks of competing, we eventually became friends and instantly clicked. Little did we know we would be almost inseparable for the next 15 years."



"He's always been... [chuckles]... well, he's never been tied down to one place", quipped Tamisha Moye', the mother of Achilles' daughter, Azarria. Because of his wanderlust and lack of stability, he attended several different high schools. Though he never stayed at any of them for an extended period of time, he always left his mark with his one-of-a-kind personality and was always very popular wherever he went. "He did what he wanted to do, he was always free spirited", Tamisha added.



"Be BOLD.

I'll always be a social rebel. The ONLY way I'll ever live is MY way..."

Evan Jones eventually became one of Achilles' closest friends: "We shared countless experiences I'll never forget, both good and bad. From the times we skipped school to create obstacle courses around the house, or when we tied ourselves to the back of a car and rollerbladed down the biggest hills in the neighborhood, or when we threw wild house parties at our families' houses (only to get caught later).

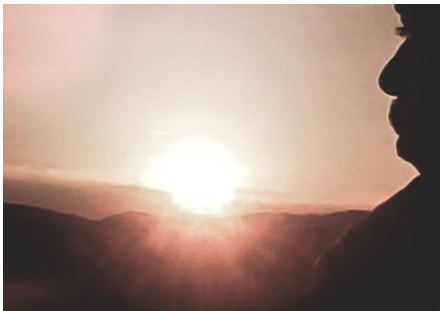
"We went through some tough experiences together as well, from processing the loss of his closest cousin (like a brother to us), to being set up and robbed at gun point, and getting wrongfully arrested and taken to jail."

"We literally went through almost every high and low possible together. But we were always there for each other, no matter what."



Because of Achilles' constant travel, he was unable to graduate from high school. But this did not deter him from completing his education. He signed himself up for Job Corps and spent six months in small town Kentucky obtaining his diploma. This was the place he first found his love for fitness. Upon his return he had transformed his body into a strikingly muscular build, very different from the slim frame he left with. From that day forward, he was devoted to maintaining his personal fitness and he began encouraging his friends to make the commitment as well.

During the following five years Achilles tried a few different occupations, though none of them seemed to fit his passionate personality. "He hated working for somebody", Tamisha Moye' explained, "couldn't stand it." She continued, "regardless of wherever he was in life, he always wanted more. He never quit, no matter how bad the situation. He always stayed encouraged." He moved back and forth from Atlanta to California still searching for his true calling, often struggling financially along the way.





Though he couldn't yet settle on one passion, Achilles was an unbelievably talented in so many ways. His friend, Jezrael Hood related:

"It's so crazy, I tell people all the time, the dude was unreal, he was super talented at everything. I used to think I was talented and I could do everything, you know, but I used to watch him in amazement. One time I came home and he was in his room drawing this girl he saw in a magazine, and it looked just like the girl. I was like, 'You drew this? I didn't know you could draw.' He goes, 'I just started. I take my time with it.' The next day, I came home and he is in there playin' a guitar. I was like, 'What?'. Then one time I heard him rapping, I was like, 'Dude you good!'.

"It was just so crazy man. He literally was good at everything."

It wasn't until Achilles ultimately settled in Atlanta that he found his true passion. "He had to sell everything and go back to California because he was down that bad" his friend, Maddrick Long, told me. "We actually flew Trav back from California, got him his own room, set him up. It was four of us living in a three bedroom town house. It was crazy man, parties every night."

He continued: "My room was across from Trav's room. I didn't like gettin' up early in the morning, but this guy would be up at the crack of dawn as soon as the sun comes up, [laughs], playing Kings of Leon, on his computer, singing and shit to himself, eating, always eating. He was just so positive early in the mornin', bro, just so positive. We was all slim as hell back then, there was no Team Fitness. We was always just true to each other and just real."



"They say a picture is worth a thousand words... And when they see this pic they'll probably just see some trainer next to some random lifeguard station who seems to like to do random things and take shirtless pictures promoting health & fitness... And you wouldn't be wrong.

But what you won't see is the passion and triumph I come from. The humble beginnings of coming from a place where having nothing is common, and the streets are made of quicksand. The fact that I refused to settle or to become just another product of the hood...

With nothing more than blind faith and stubborn will I quit my "job" on the spot some 7 years ago with belief that I was born to do more than just to "work" and pay bills... A belief in myself that I could live on my own terms and be as free as my heart had always longed to since I was just a poor boy...

By no means am I saying it was easy in any way, God knows I struggled many years and I am still not a rich man but I don't hurt for much these days and it sure was worth it. Best decision I've ever stuck with. And so I thank God for the lessons I've learned and the opportunities.

I know that there is someone else out there making their own way that I hope to inspire, motivate and touch every chance I get... I know you can make it. I'm pulling for you. Oh yea... One last thing about random pics and that last job I had. It was actually my favorite job, I even felt proud doing it. Guess what it was though... I was a lifeguard."