

GUEST COLUMN

For the Thursday, July 6, 2017 Edition

From: Mayor James E. "Jamie" Mayo

**NELA Native Professional Athletes  
Give Local Kids their Time and Attention**

I just want to give kudos to the number of area athletes who are taking time to give back to their local community this summer. Last week, NELA natives and current NFL players Xavier Woods (Dallas Cowboys), Paul Turner (Philadelphia Eagles), Michael Hunter (New York Giants), and Kantrell Brice (Green Bay Packers) visited with kids in West Monroe to talk to them about the importance of hard work. On the 4<sup>th</sup> of July, former CFL and NFL player Rod Williams gave his annual block party in south Monroe. Free food, games and entertainment were provided for the kids.

This weekend, Saturday, July 8<sup>th</sup>, former Neville High School and Louisiana Tech standout defensive lineman Justin "Jellybean" Ellis will host a Skills & Drills youth football camp at Neville High School. He has invited several of his NFL friends and colleagues to participate. The event features two sessions: Session 1 - 9 am til 10:30 am for 7 to 11 year olds; and, Session 2 - 11:30 am til 1 pm for 12 to 17 year olds. There are a limited number of spaces (125) for each camp. Registration is taken at Pro Source Sports Speedy and Agility, 1410 Natchitoches Street, West Monroe.

I commend these young men for sacrificing their time and talent to give back to our local community. I want to encourage more people to utilize their time and talent to find productive ways to engage, educate, and inspire our youth. With so much negativity going on, we have to pool our efforts to give them more productive things to do with their time. By working together, we are making it happen.