

RITE NOW @ ROP



Former NFL Player’s Powerful Message of Hope for Youth

On July 24, Miami Youth Academy had the privilege of welcoming Preston Parker, a former NFL player, who shared his powerful story with our youth to inspire them to find and pursue their true purpose.

Mr. Parker recounted his journey to success at both the collegiate and professional levels, but also revealed how substance use and legal troubles ultimately derailed his career. He spoke candidly about how his addiction caused him to miss practices, neglect his priorities, and limit his potential for success. Drawing from his own experiences, Mr. Parker emphasized how the challenges each young person faces are often “warnings” — signals of the damage that can come from continuing destructive behaviors like substance abuse. He urged the youth to reflect on their unique strengths and talents, encouraging them to discover their purpose and envision a long-term, successful future.

He then posed a challenge to the group: to examine the gap between their current choices and their future vision, and to summon the courage to break free from negative habits in order to reach their full potential. The young men at MYA were fully engaged during the talk, responding thoughtfully to the questions posed by Mr. Parker. Afterward, they shared how they planned to apply the lessons they’d learned to their own lives and expressed deep gratitude to Mr. Parker for taking the time to connect with them.

As Mr. Parker left, each young person was left reflecting on one powerful question from his talk: “Are you brave Enough to be Great?”