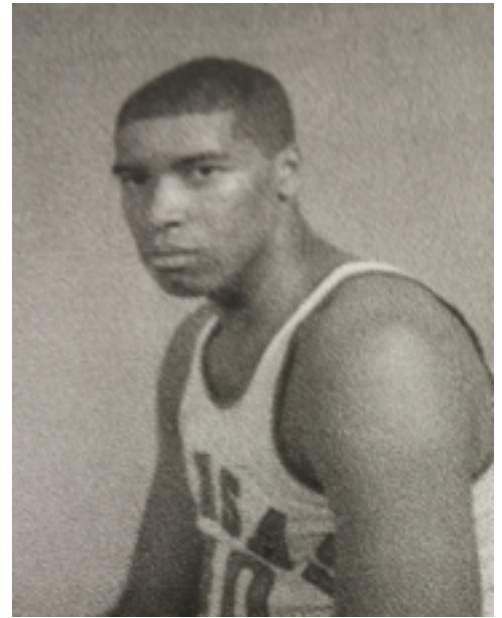


GEORGE UNSELD
CLASS OF 1961



George, along with Skip Clemmons and David Cosby were among the first to integrate the Jefferson County Public School's basketball program. They achieved many firsts among them, taking a team to the State Tournament, which hadn't even graduated a senior class. But more importantly, they set the standards and showed that the game of basketball and integration went hand in hand. They often ate meals in the school bus as they weren't allowed into the "white only" restaurants. Most of the Seneca students would celebrate after the games at Frisch's but the black players had no place where they were welcome to celebrate.

But the gym and the Seneca Basketball Teams beginning with an unbeaten JV team in 1959 were magical. The gym was packed by the beginning of the JV game and you came early and never left your seat until after the game. It was the only place in town that you wanted to be!

George graduated from Seneca when he was only 17. Many believe that he would have loved to play at UL, but NO Division I school in Kentucky was offering scholarships to African Americans in 1961. So George accepted a scholarship to Kansas University where he played for his first three collegiate years. His senior year he and Gale Sears were involved in some civil rights activities and the coach told him he could not participate if he wanted to play basketball, George chose not to play. BUT he was still drafted by the Boston Celtics in the NBA .

After graduating from Kansas he returned to Louisville and taught and coached at SENECA. He was the first African American coach hired in the JCPS system. After his tenure at Seneca, George worked in Administration at the Board Office and later as a Metro Council Board Member. Throughout his career George advocated for young people and stressed the importance of early childhood education. His life work showed his dedication to sports, education and working together to establish a better, stronger and more unified Louisville.

George died in 2010 at the age of 66.