

I am ENTERTAINMENT

THE ENTERTAINER'S HANDBOOK

INSIDE THE FILM & MUSIC BIZ WITH...



Film & TV Actor
IronE SINGLETON
(The Blind Side, One Tree Hill)



LOUISE WARD
UTA Talent Agent
(Channing Tatum's agent)



JON ZELLNER
Sr. VP of Programming
CLEAR CHANNEL



TV & Film Actress
LYDIA BLANCO
(Southland, Better Off Ted)



Grammys Talent Exec.
RON BASILE
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EXCLUSIVE:

Chandra Lynn

She's The Entertainment Marketing Whiz You Need To Know. Ask TYRA BANKS!

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Finding Film Success

IRON

THE 'BLIND SIDE' ACTOR ON THE ROAD

The Brilliant Actor Who Beat All The Odds & Shares The Screen With Sandra Bullock & Nicholas Cage

The Blind Side's, IronE Singleton, showed us all that he is worthy of the title "Great Actor." His on-screen performance with Sandra Bullock, helped *'The Blind Side'* become one of the Top 10 films at the Box Office in 2009. IronE's performance helped the movie gross roughly **\$235Million** Domestically placing it in elite company next to films such as *Avatar*, *Star Trek*, *Transformers Revenge of the Fallen*, and *The Hangover*.

IAE sat down with IronE and learned his inspirational story; one that even caused Sandra Bullock to applaud his ability to focus and overcome.

IAE: Can you please tell us where you're from and what it was like growing up there?

IronE: Well, I'm from Atlanta. I spent the first 18 years of my life in two of Atlanta's worst housing projects. My mother succumbed to HIV/AIDS when I was a senior in high school, and I've only seen my father twice in my entire life. Funny thing is, he actually contacted me 3 years ago when he saw me on television [laughs]. I grew up in a home where there were drug dealers, pimps, and the list goes on. I ran the streets, sold drugs, and carried a pistol, so I was truly a product of my environment. I believe God speaks to us through our "conscience" so that we don't make certain decisions, and it's up to us to listen. Many times I listened, and sometimes I didn't, but I wouldn't be the man I am today had I not experienced those things. It was only by the grace of God that I didn't end up a statistic like some of my friends and family members, who are either dead or in prison. When I was 8, I would visit my father's parents and they lived in the suburbs. Unlike the projects, the trash was picked up daily, the grass was cut, and the air was clean. Totally different from where I lived. We stayed across the street

from the city dump, so all I smelled was trash. It was at that time that I realized, life wasn't supposed to be like that. All of the negative things in my surroundings growing up taught me what not to do as an adult. I'm the first of my family to go to college.

IAE: What college(s) did you attend and what was your major?

IronE: I initially attended Kentucky State University because the coach there sold me some dreams and had me thinking I had a sports scholarship, but I really didn't. So I ended up getting an academic scholarship instead because I maintained a 3.7 GPA while at KSU. I worked extremely hard and studied because college was my "out," it was my way of ensuring that I didn't have to ever live in the projects again. Ultimately, I transferred out of Kentucky State University to the University of Georgia, where I played four years of college football. I found out while talking to the coaches at UGA that there was a



CLICK PHOTO & WATCH IRON-E IN ACTION

IRONE SINGLETON AS 'ALTON' IN 'THE BLIND SIDE'

Success In spite of Adversity

IRON SINGLETON

ACTOR SHARES HIS TRIALS & TRIUMPHS ON THE ROAD TO BOX OFFICE SUCCESS

Theatre program, which was something I was interested in. So while at UGA I ended up being the President of the Black Theatrical Ensemble and performing in a number of shows. In my last year at UGA, I picked up another major in Speech Communications; so I graduated with a dual degree.

IAE: So how did you get your start in acting?

IronE: After graduating college, I went on the road for 16 weeks with a stage play called "Sugar Daddy," that had a number of recognizable faces and names in it. We had been invited by Prince to come to one of his parties, we had press conferences, and all kinds of things like that, so I thought things were really going to take off for me. But after the road show ended in 2000 nothing was going on, so I visited LA in 2001 to "get my feet wet" so-to-speak. I had a few friends out there, who I met on the set of 'Remember the Titans,' so I stayed with them. I had one audition in the 3 months I was in LA. The audition I'm speaking of was a "cattle call" audition where I stood in line for 7 hours on a Friday. So I got to the front of the line and they said, "Okay, we're shutting it down for the day, you'll have to come back on Monday" [laughs]. I showed up the following Monday and stood in line another 3 hours, and ended up getting a callback because of my audition. I was told that people don't normally get callbacks from cattle call auditions, but nonetheless, here I was on the lot of ABC studios reading for a part on the show 'Spin City.' That didn't pan out, but I had to remain persistent because I wasn't going to allow my family to experience what I went through growing up.

IAE: How instrumental has your agent been in your overall success in the business?

IronE: They've been awesome! I spent 10 years trying to get an agent. I finally got an agent in December 2008, and by February 2009 I got the audition for 'The Blind Side,' and it's just been all downhill from there. Houghton

Talent Agency has truly been a blessing in my career.

IAE: You played the character "Alton" in 'The Blind Side.' What was it like working on that project and how has that film led to more opportunities for you?

IronE: Yes, playing 'Alton' was great. I was able to tap into my past, and pull some things that helped me become that character. The cast and crew were great though. I networked while I was on the set of 'The Blind Side,' which led to me getting some key people to notice me. But, I'm not one who gets star struck so I wasn't really targeting people like "Oh, he looks like someone who's big in the industry, let me go talk to him." So I said, "Let me establish a connection with some of the people here," because in some way we're all connected through our different life experiences and I was going to be working with them anyway. Within an hour of being on the set, I had already met the entire cast and some of the crew. Just-so-happened that I ended up talking to Broderick Johnson, who is one of the producers of the film and also the founder of Alcon Entertainment, and he told me they were doing 'Book of Eli' with Denzel Washington as well as a film called 'Lottery Ticket' with Ice Cube. He said they had me in mind for a role in 'Lottery Ticket,' and so I was excited at that point, because all the stuff I had gone through in life led me to this moment. The casting directors, Fincannon & Associates, also have cast me in a number of films and TV shows. I am now shooting the film, 'The Hungry Rabbit Jumps,' as the character 'Scar,' next to Nicholas Cage, Guy Pearce, and January Jones. This is truly an exciting time for me.

IAE: If you could change anything about this business, what would it be and why?

IronE: Peoples' motives; their reasons for doing this. We're all artists, but sometimes people get so caught up in the bright lights of the business that, somewhere along the way they lose focus of what their real reason for

getting into the business was. I believe that God created us all in His image and likeness so we all have a specific purpose. So as actors we need to understand that we're placed in a unique position to make a positive contribution to society. We have to understand that it's not just about making money, it's about entertaining people but in the process moving them toward positive change. The money will come, and it'll really come. Take *'The Blind Side'* for example. John Lee Hancock, the director [written by Michael Lewis] wanted to tell a story that was about family, love, and helping your fellow man or woman; just helping someone from a different neighborhood who you don't even know. People identified with that because I think we

all long to have a positive connection with other people. In turn, people gravitated toward that, and that's why the movie has made \$235 Million so far. So when you do things for the right reasons and you put something positive out there, and you're not just doing it for the money, then the money will automatically come to you. In the movie *'Crash'* Don Cheadle said something to the effect that we're all longing to be close to somebody, but we end up just crashing into each other because of all the negative influences around us. So if we can make more movies like *'The Blind Side,'* and stop pumping out so much negativity, it might bring about that positive change that's needed in the business. O

IRONE SINGLETON'S WORK

The Hungry Rabbit Jumps (Nicholas Cage, Guy Pearce, & January Jones) - *'Scar'* (2010)

Lottery Ticket (Ice Cube, Terry Crews, Bow Wow) - *'Neighbor #4'* (2010)

The Blind Side (Sandra Bullock, Tim McGraw, Quinton Aaron) - *'Alton'* (2009)

One Tree Hill (TV Series on CW Network)

Somebodies (TV Series on BET) - *'Epitome'*

VISIT IronE Online - www.ironesingleton.com

