

# TEAM GORILLA GIRLZ

## QUISHA HEARN

IFBB Wellness Pro

Age: 33

Owner/Founder: Bodied by Iron Bae

Trainer/Coach: Gilbert Ramirez, Desert Metro Fit

Social Media:  @\_ironbae

### COMPETITION HIGHLIGHTS:

- **2022 NPC Memphis Bodybuilding Championships** – Wellness, True Novice, 5th Place; Open Wellness, Class A, 7th Place
- **2022 NPC Daytona Beach Classic** – Wellness, Novice, 1st Place; Open Wellness, Class A, 1st Place
- **2023 NPC Daytona Beach Classic** – Open Wellness, Class A, 1st Place and Overall Winner
- **2023 NPC Worldwide Caribbean Grand Prix & Bahamas Pro Qualifier** – Open Wellness, Class A, 1st Place and Overall Winner, earned IFBB Pro League status

### SPONSORS:

- **Gorilla Labz Athletics Apparel**



## MY EARLY YEARS

I was an athlete growing up, I was a dancer and then a track & field athlete through college running 100, 200 and 400 meters. I went to state all four years in high school and still hold records at my high school that haven't been broken yet. A knee injury prevented me from continuing. I joined the military and ROTC at the University of Memphis.

Needless to say, I had always been in shape. In 2012, when I was in the military, I was engaged. My fiancé had been in Iraq, but when he got back, he committed suicide in our home. My now husband, John Hearn, Jr. and I were best friends. I can't begin to describe how my fiancé's passing affected me, but John never left my side. John and I eventually became a couple and the rest is history. I finally graduated from college in 2015. However, shortly afterwards my mom had a brain surgery causing her to be in a coma for almost two months. My mom and I are really close and at that time I was living in Deerfield Beach, Florida and unable get back to her. Ultimately, it all caught up with me and I fell into a really deep depression and put on close to 90 lbs. in less than a year. Then I experienced a mini stroke while at work. I had completed my military service and was working as a business banker in Boca Raton. Customers noticed right away what was happening and my manager contacted my husband. I was only 25 years old so it did not occur to me that this could be a stroke. My husband convinced me to get my blood pressure checked at the CVS down the street. They told me to get to the hospital right away where they confirmed I was having a stroke. I lost vision in my right eye and had to use a walker. I couldn't see, I couldn't drive, and couldn't do anything for myself. Fortunately, my vision came back and physical therapy helped me regain the ability to walk on my own. We got through this health crisis and just a few months later Hurricane Irma caused quite a bit of damage to our property. My husband and I decided this was our time to move back to Memphis and be close to our family.





## DISCOVERING BODYBUILDING

I lost a good bit of weight on my own and then I went to a gym. It was 2020 and right after COVID. I had used social media to find a local trainer in Memphis because I was at a plateau. During my very first session with her, the trainer literally stared at me and said, "Your legs are huge. Have you ever considered bodybuilding?" Unaware of any women's divisions other than women's bodybuilding, I was quick to answer a big "NO!" In my head, bodybuilders are really big women. She quickly pulled out her phone and showed me the other divisions, in particular the newest division Wellness, explaining, "This new category is all about legs. You will do great!" I went home that night and told my husband, "Oh, baby, I'm going to be a bodybuilder." He looked at me and said, "The heck you are." It took me a lot to convince him, but since then he has been my biggest fan and supporter. I don't think I know anybody who has been as supportive. He makes the travel arrangements, he's curled my hair, he's even embellished my posing suits with over 5,000 crystals. Anything I need, my husband is amazing!

At my heaviest, I was 240 lbs. When I started training, I was 205 lbs. My trainer Sammica Cash of Cash In Fitness in Memphis, TN agreed to prep me for my first show and was very confident I would do well. I stepped on stage for my first show at the NPC Memphis Bodybuilding Championships in April 2022 and placed dead last. In my mind, I knew I'd never looked that great in my life. When I walked off that stage I told myself, "Never give up." I'm competitive and I knew I could do better. I found another trainer that had a better understanding of this new division. That began my journey with Gilbert Ramirez of Desert Metro Fit in California. My coach @gilbeast777 has been the key to my success since May 2022. I competed at the Daytona Pro Am in September that year and that is where I met James and Jazmin Lord of Gorilla Labz Athletics Apparel. As I came off the stage as the Overall Wellness winner, they approached me saying, "We think you have a potential and we want to sponsor you."



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Next, I went to the NPC National Championships in Orlando and placed 12th at my first national show. It just fueled my hunger. We worked on the feedback I had received from the judges critiques, defended my title at the 2023 Daytona Pro Am and earned my Pro Card at the 2023 NPC Caribbean Grand Prix. It was a beautiful location and beautiful experience. I couldn't have been there without the sponsorship from James and Jazmin's Team Gorilla Girlz. They really showed up for me and I'm forever grateful for that.

I do understand that it takes a long time for many people to achieve pro status and for me it was a relatively short period of time. More importantly for me is people seeing that my fitness journey began with a mindset of believing that I am capable, competitive and determined. I've lost a total of 91 lbs., which could've been overwhelming, but I set goals and knew I could make it happen. I've enjoyed the process, even though there have been ups and downs and some days are easier than others. Now I have my sights set on going to the next level. For this year, my coach and I are aiming to compete in July or August. This first show will be my Pro debut so it's exciting and nerve wracking all at the same time.



## CAREER AND COMMUNITY

When we moved back to Memphis, I began teaching High School Business and Finance and earned a Master's Degree in December 2022. I've been accepted to the PhD program in Educational Leadership, but I am undecided when I will begin. In addition to teaching, I am a bartender and in January 2023 I began working with a non-profit organization that assists with non-academic barriers to education such as emotional and social learning skills. We seek to change the lives of at-risk children by helping to relieve stress from the family and the child so that academics can be their focus.

## MY SECRET

I get asked all the time, "What is your secret? How did you lose all that weight?" My response is, "If you want it, go and get it." I truly believe there's no such thing as you can't do it. You just have to put in the effort. No one's going to do it for you. There isn't a magic pill. No surgery. You're not going to wake up one morning and it's going to be different. There's going to be some days or even some weeks where you don't lose a pound. But the effort is still working and you have to trust that your hard work is paying off. Being consistent is what's going to get you where you want to be and I'm literally a product of that belief. There is a big misconception that to lose weight you just get on the treadmill and do as much cardio as you can. You may lose the weight, but your skin won't catch up. So, you need to lift weights at the same time. I'm not special, and I tell people there's nothing that I do that you can't do, too. Sharing my story, my recipe for being your best, is how I feel I can help people.



## VALUE OF SUPPORT

I've been fortunate enough to have a huge community to support me throughout, because everyone saw something in me that I didn't see, especially my husband. I wouldn't be where I am today without the support system that has helped me get through the rough times and are there with me to celebrate the good times. I've learned experiences don't have to weigh you down. You can still have dreams and goals and make them happen. You can overcome challenges and when you do, it's pretty incredible. When I'm serving in the community working with the inner city kids, I try to use my life experiences to help them, to let them know that there's nothing that they cannot do. I wholeheartedly believe that if you want something, you just got to get it. No one can tell you no, there is no such thing as no.

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## THE FUTURE

In terms of bodybuilding, I would love for this to be my full-time job. I suffer from depression and anxiety. This sport has helped me manage that and given me a purpose, not only for myself, but I want to be able to give back to newer competitors. I look back at my journey and all the people who took me under their wing to guide and help me. I couldn't have done it on my own and I want to be that person for others. I'm laying the groundwork by helping out at several workshops to help with posing and suggest resources especially for first-time competitors. Recently, I started doing one-on-one personal training, ironically in the same spot where it all started for me, Cash In Fitness. I train clients in the evenings with the goal of making it a full-time business in the future. I offer training for both lifestyle and competition training and posing.

*What an amazing story. I think it's so exciting that James and Jazmin selected you to be a part of Team Gorilla Girlz and are there helping you achieve these next steps. It's going to be really exciting to see what happens as you make that pro debut and establish your business.*

