



**The 23rd Annual
FRANKLIN D. WATKINS MEMORIAL
Trophy Awards Dinner
May 18, 2014**

THE NATIONAL ALLIANCE OF AFRICAN AMERICAN ATHLETES

A 501c(3) non-profit organization
www.naaaa.com

Established in 1989

The National Alliance was organized to facilitate the development of African American men and boys in American Society. It is a working collaborative of three components: Programs and Public Education, The Black Male Athlete Economic Cluster, and The African American Male Information Initiative.



The Watkins Award—Since 1992, young men have been honored with the title “Premier African American Male Scholar Athlete.” Today the Watkins Memorial Trophy is considered the most prestigious award for any African American high school student.

Annual SAT Scrimmage—FREE SAT preparation program in conjunction with Kaplans is held in 5-50 cities annually. All high school students regardless of athletic, ethnic or other considerations, can attend for free.

Synergy Conferences—Our conferences cover topics of interest and concern to the sports community. Focusing on social and economic issues, we seek to highlight topics that affect the African American community.

Who We Are

The National Alliance of African American Athletes (The Alliance).

Professional athletes, business professionals, educators, and men and women of all races who want to make a positive impact on the lives of African American males.

Active and Retired professional athletes such as Darnell Dinkins, Robert Tate, LaVarr Arrington, Ted Ginn Jr, Lorenzo Alexander, Gerald McCoy, Arrelious Benn, Ben Tate III, Mercedes Lewis, Shane Battier, and many others, who believe in our vision.

Athletes Advisory Board



- *John Sally*
NBA Champion



- *Darnell Dinkins*
Cleveland Browns



- *Frank Thomas*
White Sox



- *Warren Moon*
Chiefs, Oilers



- *Clyde Simmons*
Eagles



Proclamation



NATIONAL ALLIANCE OF AFRICAN AMERICAN ATHLETES DAY

FEBRUARY 22, 2014

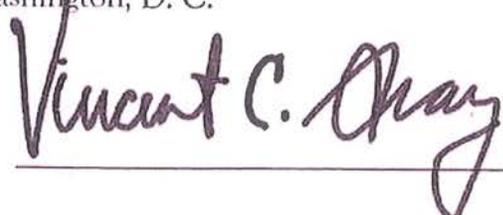
WHEREAS, the National Alliance of African American Athletes is hosting its 23rd Annual Franklin D. Watkins Award Ceremony in Washington, D.C. in recognition of the nation's 2014 top high school African American Scholar Athletes; and

WHEREAS, the National Alliance of African American Athletes consists of athletes who have played in major Intercollegiate Bowls, National Championships, and have been considered for the highest athletic and academic awards, including the Heisman Trophy, Rhodes Scholarship, and Phi Beta Kappa; and

WHEREAS, each 2014 class member has a current GPA between 3.7 - 4.2, and has been recognized by all the major athletic evaluators as being one of the top prospects in the country in their respective sport and position; and

WHEREAS, through dedication and commitment, the National Alliance of African American Athletes continues to encourage our youth by building basic human characteristics, overcoming challenges in life so that they may be successful:

NOW, THEREFORE, I, THE MAYOR OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, do hereby proclaim February 22, 2014 as "NATIONAL ALLIANCE OF AFRICAN AMERICAN ATHLETES DAY" in Washington, D. C.



Vincent C. Gray





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2014 WATKINS WEEKEND COMMUNITY SERVICE RECOGNITION

SHARON LOVE-RANSOM COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD



Maurice Hall, 2001 Watkins Finalist earns the Sharon-Love Ransom Community Service award. Pictured here with Alliance Executive Director J. Everette Pearsall.

The Sharon Love-Ransom Community Service Award is given annually to an individual in the United States who tirelessly serves his or her community to help others. Since 1995, Sharon Love-Ransom was a National Alliance of African American Athletes Board Member. She was a true champion for the organization since its inception in 1989. This award is symbolic of her commitment to promote important key issues that affect disadvantaged communities such as education, economic opportunities, healthy futures and the overall stewardship for a holistic community.

Additionally, the award addresses critical issues within the awardee's community, and our nation, through solution-driven service, a tenet of Sharon's commitment to improve the lives of others. The awardees, like Sharon, are everyday heroes and represent successful programs that improve lives, strengthen communities, and foster increased civic engagement through service and volunteering.

Both the Sharon Love-Ransom Community Service Award and the Franklin D. Watkins Memorial Trophy Award, which was initiated in 1992, were developed to promote academic excellence among young African-American males.

2014 WATKINS MAN OF THE YEAR AWARD

The Watkins Award has established a 23 year legacy of honoring the most elite African American men in the United States. The Watkins Award has established itself as the most coveted award for African American high school seniors. These men have gone on to become professional football and basketball players, gotten masters degrees, begun to work on doctorate degrees, become lawyers, actors, and entrepreneurs. More importantly, 98 percent have graduated from college. From this group of men, we select the Watkins Man of the Year which includes a long list of successful athletes, 21st century leaders, entrepreneurs and a cohort of socially responsible African American men.

The Watkins Man of the Year honors the volunteer and charity work as well as the excellence exhibited by the honoree. The honoree is a shining example of how to motivate, achieve growth, and expand into the community of young African American men extolling the virtues of knowledge and providing examples of success. This award establishes a precedent for widespread cultural change, impacts the political welfare our young African American men and serves as a symbol of empowerment for men who make a difference in the African American community.

In addition, the award embodies the values of the Watkins Award. The annual Watkins Award is a means for recognizing exceptionally talented African-American, high-school male athletes who, by their example, help promote high academic standards and a commitment to community service. But, most importantly, recognition and acknowledgement of these young men both destroy the perceived stereotype that African-American males are just athletes who do not value education. Recognizing both a community activist and an outstanding athlete is a synergistic effort to promote our commitment to this population of scholars and continue our commitment to making a holistic contribution to our community.



Coach Robert Headen wins the 2014 Watkins Man of the Year Award. Pictured here with Alliance Executive Director J. Everette Pearsall.



Watkins Award winner Bobby Okereke is the total package

Rahshaun Haylock

FOX Sports West

FEB 24, 2014 11:04p ET



Courtesy: Eric Wade/EW GEMS Images

Bobby Okereke holds a 4.4 GPA and was a Semper Fidelis All-American.

FOX Sports West Rahshaun Haylock

Today, Bobby Okereke can officially say he's a "Stanford Man" after signing his National Letter of Intent with the Cardinal earlier this month.

He can also call himself a "Watkins Man." Over the weekend, Bobby Okereke was in Washington D.C. where he was named the recipient of the 2014 Watkins Award.

The prestigious honor, presented by the National Alliance of African American Athletes, is given to the top African American football player in the country, who exhibits excellence in the classroom and on the field.

"I feel honored to be part of the Watkins brotherhood," Okereke said. "It's a very prestigious group and I'm pretty humbled to be a part of it."

Watkins Award finalists include national champion winning quarterback Jameis Winston, Rhodes Scholar Myron Rolle, Atlanta Falcons offensive lineman Justin Blalock, Georgia running back and 2012 recipient Keith Marshall, as well as current USC Trojans Zach Banner and Leon McQuay III.

Foothill head coach, Doug Case, calls it a "great culmination" of a tremendous high school career for Okereke, who holds a 4.4 GPA and was a Semper Fidelis All-American.

"It shows the type of commitment he has in all aspects in his life," Case said. "He's the total package."

Early in his high school career, Okereke found himself in a position many could only dream of.

As a freshman, in just his first season playing organized football, he was called up to the varsity football team. The following spring he was called up to play varsity baseball. During the summer, however, he made a decision with his future in mind.

Okereke marched into Case's office and told him he was dropping baseball and would be putting his focus on football. Okereke explained to his coach that he had goals. It was his desire to earn an athletic scholarship, but not just anywhere, it had to be at an high academic institution.

"When I picked up football freshman year, I fell in love with it," Okereke said. "It became a passion of mine and I saw that I could play this for a lot of years and I loved doing it. I just thought an athletic scholarship to a great university, that was something I wanted to do."

Mission accomplished. Okereke is slated to play inside linebacker for head coach David Shaw at Stanford. In the classroom, he will take up one of Stanford's unique majors -- Management, Science, and Engineering.

Okereke's parents hail from Nigeria. Academics were always stressed in the Okereke household and the 2014 Watkins Award winner is just falling in line.

"From day one, they've been stressing academics," Okereke said. "To them, academics was the main priority and to them I was always going to go to a good academic school and athletics was something I picked up myself and I decided I wanted to take on."

His oldest sister, Kimberly, is a finance major at USC. Jennifer, the second of the Okereke children is majoring in political science at Vanderbilt. Like his older sisters did for him, Okereke is providing an example for his 13-year-old, youngest sister Kristine.

In the same fashion he's fallen in line in the Okereke household, he's on par with the type of players Shaw recruits to Stanford.

"The guys Stanford recruits (are) guys who care about getting a solid degree and playing solid football," Okereke said. "They're multi-talented guys that work hard and they're disciplined and that's the kind of guys that Stanford goes after."

The latest Watkins Award winner fits the bill.

Watkins Award Finalists Visit D.C.

Rick 'Doc' Walker Serves as Keynote Speaker for National Ceremony

Elton J. Hayes | 2/26/2014, 3 p.m.



Robert Okereke of Santa Ana, Calif., a Franklin D. Watkins Award finalist, speaks during the awards ceremony at the Capitol Hill Hyatt Regency in D.C. on Saturday, Feb. 22. PHOTO BY [KHALID NAJI-ALLAH](#)

To call Bobby Okereke's route to a college football scholarship unconventional would be an understatement. The current high school senior never played in community youth leagues as a youngster, or donned football pads in junior high school.

His initiation into the sport came just three years ago as a freshman at Santa Ana, Calif.'s Foothill High School.

A lot has changed in three years.

Bobby Okereke is headed to Stanford University this fall on a football scholarship.

"I personally found Stanford to offer the best combination of academics and athletics," Okereke, 17, who carries a 4.4 GPA, said. "My ultimate goal is to become accepted into Stanford's business graduate school. I'm also interested in humanities, philosophy and political science. I either see myself going into the business world or becoming involved in politics."

Five of the country's most-decorated high school football players converged on the nation's capital the evening of Saturday, Feb. 22 to be honored by the National Alliance of African-American Athletes for their athletic and academic achievements.

Bobby Okereke walked away as the winner of the 2014 Franklin D. Watkins Memorial Award.

The five finalists – Okereke, Tony Brown (Beaumont, Texas), Zavier Carmichael (Mobile, Ala.), Christopher Register (Greensboro, N.C.) and Richard Yeargin III (Ft. Lauderdale, Fla.) – were considered for the award once they completed a rigorous application process that included providing three letters of recommendation, a pristine academic record and a 500-1,000-word essay.

"[We're] trying to break the mold and change the stereotypes that say African-American teens are just good athletes and not good, cerebral students," Bobby Okereke said. "The five of us here today are here to show the generation of kids who are coming after us that there are others who look like them, and who care about their academics just as much as they care about athletics."

Capitol Hill's Hyatt Regency, in Northwest, opened its doors to accommodate the more than 300 guests for the event, complete with a red carpet. Finalists, family, friends and coaches donned tuxedos and gowns for the elegant evening ceremony. The event, now in its 23rd year, is usually held in Los Angeles. But one local celebrity said he was excited to see his city take center stage for the evening.

"I'm proud of the District of Columbia. I've been here longer than anywhere on earth, so I consider this to be an honor. We should have the ceremony here," Watkins Award banquet keynote speaker and former Washington Redskins tight end Rick "Doc" Walker, 58, said. "This is the greatest city on earth and we should represent it that way."

Other Watkins Award alumni traveled to Washington to congratulate this year's finalists.

“It means a lot to be able to come back and stay connected with Watkins guys. I still stay in touch with the finalists who were in my class,” Olney, Md., native and current Miami Dolphins linebacker Jelani Jenkins, 21, said. “What the Watkins Award means for African-American youth and the community, is just amazing to me. I try to make it back each year. D.C. is home to me, so this is neat. I’m glad to see these guys following in our footsteps. We’re just trying to be role models to others.”

Carmichael is headed to Duke University this fall and hopes to one day have a career in orthopedic surgery. He said the fraternal feel of the group is humbling.

“One of the things that surprised me [since I arrived in Washington] is the brotherhood,” Carmichael, who carries a 4.2 GPA and is president of St. Paul’s Episcopal School’s National Honor Society, said. “Just to have all the former finalists here with us, who we can call and go to for help ... to know that there is someone out there, who is looking out for you, means a lot to me.”

Despite hailing from different cities and states, the five 2014 Watkins Award finalists all agreed on one thing: their families are primarily responsible for their success.

Kingsley Okereke slipped behind a small crowd in one of the Hyatt Regency’s conference rooms and watched his son stand on the red carpet and answer questions. The father pulled out his cell phone and quietly snapped a picture. The moment felt surreal.

“Our focus has always been on academics – do your homework and get good grades, and maybe you can go to a school like Stanford,” the elder Okereke, 55, said. “Football was something [Bobby] picked up as a freshman; it wasn’t something we focused on. It just happened,” he said with a smile.

Watkins Award Salutes Male Black Student-Athletes

February 28, 2012

by [Kelly Hawkins](#)



The 2012 Watkins Award class pose with Congresswoman Maxine Waters and National Alliance for African American Athletes Executive Officer J. Everette Pearsall.

Family and friends of some of the more distinguished scholar-athletes in the country gathered at the Millennium Biltmore Hotel in Los Angeles recently for the 21st Annual Franklin D. Watkins Award Banquet, which honors the nation's top African-American male high school students who just happen to be top-tier football stars. The six finalists for the annual award are all student-athletes that exhibit what the award is all about in the first place.

Zachery Banner, Alexander Carter, Jonathan Curry, Keith Marshall, Deion Williams and James Winston were selected by the Watkins Award committee for their standout play-on and off the field. "We want good men first," said Tom Carter in regards to all the student-athletes in attendance. Carter attended the ceremony to support son, Alexander, a rising prep star at Briar Woods High School in Ashburn, Virginia. As guests enjoyed tender filet mignon and chicken during their meal, the finalists take turns speaking about their ambitions and what they're about.

Banner, an All-American football star at Lakes High School in Tacoma, Washington, is a Washington State Academic Achiever and Distinguished Scholar. He carries an impressive 3.5 GPA with him. When he's not hitting the books or doing his thing on the football field, Banner mentors students at four different middle schools and volunteers for the Tacoma Sports Association.

"Do right when no one is looking," Banner told his comrades.



J. Everette Pearsall with 2012 Watkins Award winner Keith Marshall.

Alexander Carter was quick to give thanks to God and to his parents. Carter volunteers as a tutor, is a Little League baseball coach and reads to elementary students. His resume includes being a People to People Student Ambassador and member of his National Youth Leadership Council. He is also an all-state player in Virginia and was honored as an U.S. Army All-American football player, while maintaining a 4.1 GPA.

Jonathan Curry found himself to be at a loss for words when his turn to talk came around. "I'm not really sure what I'd like to say," said Alabama-Mississippi All American. Curry attends Central High school in Phenix City, Alabama, where he is a member of the National Honors Society, National Beta and National Junior Beta Club, National Society of High School Scholars. Curry has a 4.0 GPA and is on ESPN's Top 16 top player list. After receiving offers from 22 different colleges, Curry surprised his mother on her birthday by telling her he had decided to attend Purdue University.

Keith Marshall, considered to be the best running back in the country, has a practical approach to getting an education and playing football. "Football isn't forever," Marshall said. Aside from that title Marshall is also North Carolina Player of the Year, 100 Meter Dash Champion, All-State and All-American Champion and Under Armour All American. He also finds time to volunteer for Habitat for Humanity and to feed the homeless, while being a member of the National Honor Society at Millbrook High School in Raleigh, North Carolina where he acquires a 4.3 GPA.

There was some local flavor added to the awards show with Long Beach product Deion Williams being part of this unique class of student-athletes. Williams, one of the top linebackers in the nation, hails from Lutheran High School in Orange, California, where he is captain of the football and wrestling teams. He has a 3.7 GPA, is a member of the National Honors Society, National Leadership Forum and Honors Choir.

James Winston, the top-ranked quarterback in the U.S., according to USA Today, took his turn to speak about the balancing act of playing sports and getting an education. . "We come out here, play football, get good grades, it's what we do," said Winston. Winston is an Elite 11 MVP, Baseball All American, Under Armour All-American, all the while maintaining a 4.0 GPA that earned him a spot on Hueytown High School's Academic Excellence Honor Roll. He is also a Hueytown community tutor and baseball instructor,

Then, to everyone's surprise, a seventh star is introduced. Six-year-old Cassidy Dang stands up from her table, takes a seat the grand piano in the center of the room and proceeds to play "Ballad pour Adeline." The crowd watches in awe as her tiny fingers stroke each key with precision. She transitions into "The Entertainer" while two of the finalists begin to do the Charleston.

At the end of her performance, Cassidy is met with a standing ovation. Her father, Thomas Dang, welcomes her back to her seat with loving, open arms.

The night is filled with an array of speakers including Congresswoman Maxine Waters, ESPN's Stephen A. Smith and Alex Gabbin.

"Fair is where they judge pigs," said Smith. His motivational speech served to teach that no matter who won the award, life for the Watkins finalists would neither be fair nor easy.

"You're not here to be another Pharaoh," said Gabbin in hopes that the young men will use their opportunities to serve their people and not themselves.

Now, the ceremony is over and it is time to announce the winner. The finalists are called to line up in front of the room along with Watkins Award winners from past years. To represent the responsibility that comes with the honor, the trophy is passed down by each man.

Finally, Marshall's is announced the winner of the 2012 Watkins Award. The room applauds him and he takes the stage to make his final speech. The ceremony is over, but the celebration is just beginning.

Black Athlete Scholars Receive Recognition at Watkins Awards

<http://new.s4usonline.com/?p=2089>

March 5, 2011

i

1 Vote

Savon Huggins, James Vaughters, Ted Ginn Sr., Kendal Thompson, Everette Pearsall, Wayne



Lyons, Remound Wright at the annual Franklin D. Watkins Memorial Award ceremony in Los Angeles, California.

By Dennis J, Freeman

Los Angeles-Everything is not all doom and gloom when it comes to young black men. Contrary to what some major news media outlets are deceitfully trying to articulate to the public about young male athletes, particularly football players, there are plenty of good, law-abiding, high academic-achieving black male scholars roaming the country.

For two decades, the committee sitting on the Franklin D. Watkins Memorial Award board has reached out to find those student-athletes and honor them. Unlike one major sports media outlet's recent one-sided, negative pictorial on the state of college athletics, particularly in the sport of football, the annual Watkins Award is a breath of fresh air for black male student-athletes.

With a consistent push of negative stereotypes too easily thrust upon their character by national media outlets, black male student-athletes have a friend in those who make the Watkins Award happen every year.

This year is no different. In February, five of the nation's top black male student-athletes were feted at the Omni Hotel in Los Angeles for their achievements in the classroom and charity work as well as their athletic success.

The goal of the Watkins Award is to empower young black male student-scholars in education, athletics and public programs.

"As an organization we seek to empower all who are disenfranchised, however we have a higher affinity toward the African American male," said J. Everette Pearsall, executive officer of the National Alliance of African American Athletes (better known as the Alliance). "The African American male is the most endangered of all segments of America's population. We are purposed to attack the largest problem of this country at its core by helping to give them hope."

Founded in 1989, the Alliance has paid homage to this small group of young men since 1992. The list of past Watkins Award winners read like a Who's Who in the NFL. Former Florida State star and Rhodes Scholar Myron Rolle, Atlanta Falcons Justin Blalock, Tampa Bucs Gerald McCoy; San Fran 49ers Ted Ginn Jr., Arizona Cardinals Robert Tate and Jacksonville Jaguars' Pro Bowl tight end Mercedes Lewis are just a few of the past recipients of the Watkins Award.

The 2011 Watkins Award recipient is just as outstanding. Kendal Thompson, an-all-state football player at Southmoore High School in Oklahoma, and considered to be one of the top quarterback recruits in the country, was awarded the hardware this year.

Thompson, who maintains a 4.3 GPA, while also finding time to mentor other students and take part in the work of Fellowship of Christian Athletes, is taking his athletic prowess and academic focus to the University of Oklahoma.

"Kendal is a young man who exemplifies what it means to be a student athlete today. He maintains a balance in his life that addresses not only the demands of athletic excellence, but that of academic excellence." said Barry Switzer, former Oklahoma and Dallas Cowboy football coach.

The other four candidates for the national Watkins Award don't have anything to hold their heads down about. Their resumes and backgrounds are just as impressive as Thompson's.

Savon Huggins, Wayne Lyons, Remound Wright and James Vaughters all have grade point averages of 3.8 or better. Lyons had the highest GPA of all five student-athletes, carrying a whopping 4.96 grade point average as a football and academic star at Florida's Dillard High School.

Wright, a member of the National Honors Society, skates by with just a 4.4 GPA at Indiana's Bishop Dwenger High School. Huggins, an Under Armour All American and Max Prep All American, is a Pop Warner coach and helps out with the Special Olympics in his hometown of Jackson, New Jersey.

Huggins does all of this while maintaining a 3.8 GPA at St. Peters Prep High School. Vaughters, the Dekalb County Defensive Player of the Year in Georgia, received kudos from the Alliance for his outstanding work with Habitat for Humanity, while maintaining a 4.0 GPA at Tucker High School.



Actress Claudia Jordan and comedian Lamont King co-hosted the annual Watkins Award./Photo Credit: Dennis J. Freeman

Actress Claudia Jordan has been a part of the Alliance's work to improve the image of young black men for years. A well-known media personality, Jordan has played an integral part in spreading the word about importance of the yearly Watkins Award,



hitting the radio airwaves and using her Hollywood contacts to bring about more awareness to the work of the Alliance.

A co-host of this year's award ceremony with comedian Lamont King, Jordan said the Watkins

Award gives black male scholar-athletes a platform.

"This is something that I feel proud to be a part of," Jordan said. "All too often we hear when a black man is messing up, when they accidentally shoot themselves in the leg in a club or when they owe child support or when they tattoo different ice cream cones on their faces. But we don't hear when they have 4.96 GPA's or we don't hear when they are community activists or leaders or turning down peer pressure to hit the books.

"I get inspired when I come here. It is a great sight to see that this exists. Our media, and our own black media...we're more interested in glorifying the negatives. That's something I've been speaking about for a long time. I'm tired of it. If more young black men knew about stuff like this, I think they'd follow in their footsteps."

The Watkins Award is the nation's first and only award to recognize outstanding achievement in athletics, scholastics, and community service by black male high school seniors. Pearsall is excited about what the Alliance has done to recognize these young men.

"The Watkins Award has done an incredible job of aligning the largest group of leaders in America," Pearsall said. "These young men represent a group of 79 young men who are the nation's best athletes, but more importantly carry a graduation rate of over 98%.

"Many of these young men have also gone on to great works of philanthropy and continued community service. These works have been accomplished through their direct efforts and foundations. The world is already a better place. However, we have much more work to do."

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MAY 2, 2011

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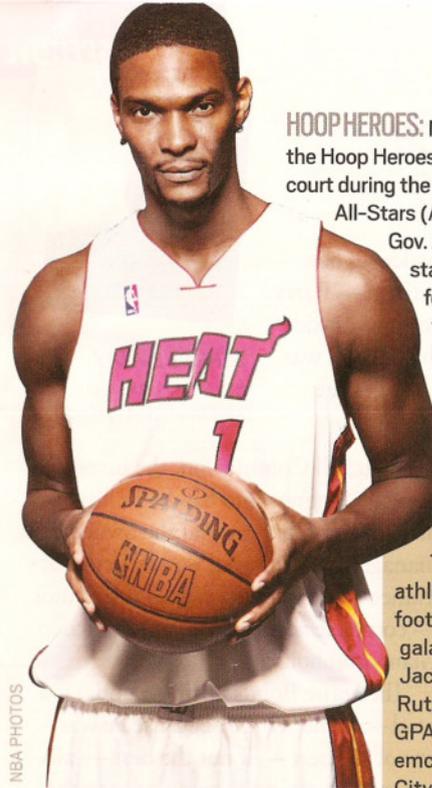
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NBA PHOTOS



JOND GAEDE



HOOP HEROES: NBA stars Chris Bosh (l) and Chris Paul are among the Hoop Heroes ambassadors whose rebounds and points on the court during the playoffs this year will benefit After-School All-Stars (ASAS), a nonprofit founded by former California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger that helps at-risk youth stay safe in after-school programs. Miami Heat forward Bosh has donated \$20 per rebound throughout the season and playoffs and Paul, the New Orleans Hornets guard, \$10 per point this season. Launched in 2009, Hoop Heroes raises funds to help bring more activities that incorporate academic support and physical fitness to children across the country.

▼ **PREMIER STUDENT-ATHLETES:**

The Watkins Awards Final Five premier scholar-athletes, who excel in the classroom and on the football field, were recently feted at a black-tie gala in Los Angeles. From left: Savon Huggins of Jackson, N.J., earned a 3.8 GPA and is headed to Rutgers; James Vaughters of Atlanta, earned a 4.0 GPA and has signed with Stanford; comedian and emcee Lamont King; Kendal Thompson of Oklahoma City, Okla., posted a 4.3 GPA and is headed to Oklahoma University; gala host and actress Claudia Jordan; Wayne Lyons of Ft. Lauderdale, Fla., earned a 4.96 GPA and has signed with Stanford, and Remound Wright of Fort Wayne, Ind., posted a 4.4 GPA and also is headed to Stanford.

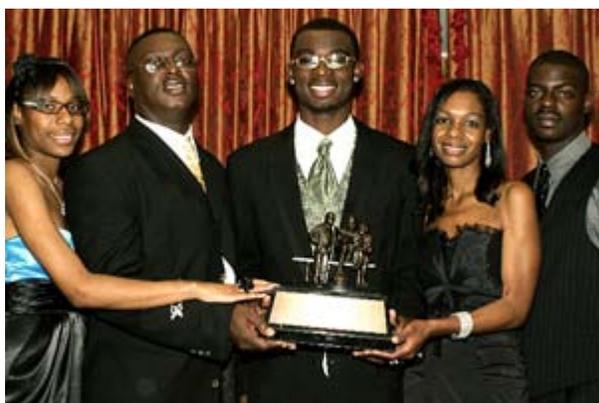
Patterson named top African-American athlete



By Greg Biggins
ESPNNRRISE.com
([Archive](#))

Updated: February 25, 2009, 12:40 PM ET

LOS ANGELES -- Henry County (McDonough, Ga.) wide receiver and Stanford commit [Jamal Patterson](#) was awarded the 19th annual Franklin D. Watkins memorial trophy Saturday in Los Angeles. The award is presented each year to the nation's top African-American male high school scholar-athlete.



Eric Wade

Jamal Patterson, center, is flanked by his family upon receiving the Watkins award.

The 6-foot-2, 200-pound Patterson was among the top receivers in the country and had a big senior season, catching 56 balls for 1,150 yards and 13 touchdowns. Over his four-year varsity career, Patterson caught 144 passes for 3,100 yards and 41 touchdowns and carried a 4.65 GPA.

The four other finalists were Georgia signee Christopher Burnette (LaGrange, Ga./ Troup County), Florida-bound Jelani Jenkins (Silver Spring, Md./ Our Lady of Good Counsel), Stanford signee Jemari Roberts (Long Beach, Calif./ Wilson) and Richard Wilson (Spanish Fork, Utah), who is headed to BYU.

"I really want to share this with the other four finalists who have become like brothers to me," Patterson said. "Even though I'm taking the trophy home, we're all winners here."

Patterson said he hoped to change the way African-American athletes are perceived.

"It seems like every time you watch the news or read a story online about a professional athlete, it's always negative," Patterson said. "There is a lot of good being done out there too, and I feel this award should be promoted everywhere to show how much we can accomplish together."

"I know I have a lot to live up to but I have big goals for myself. I use the term 'goals' not 'dreams' because dreams are what you do when you sleep and goals are what you attempt to achieve. I want to make the Watkins committee proud and I truly believe with God and my family at my side, all things are possible."

Patterson joins a list of other noteworthy national honorees including Florida State safety and Rhodes Scholar Myron Rolle, the 2006 recipient, Marcus Houston (Colorado State, 2000) and Ronald Curry (North Carolina/Oakland Raiders, 1998).

Several past winners and finalists were on hand, including Rolle, Houston, 2008 winner Matthew Daniels (Duke), 2008 finalist Covaughn Deboskie (Cal), 2001 winner Michael Craven (Stanford, L.A. Avengers), 1999 finalist Chris Lewis and 2006 finalist and current Oklahoma defensive tackle Gerald McCoy, who spoke earlier in the night.

"I didn't realize how important this award was until I got to college," McCoy said. "When my mother died, the first people who reached out to me were the Watkins committee. Once you're a finalist for this award, whether you win or not, you form a brotherhood with everyone associated with the award. That's a bond for life."

One of the biggest ovations of the night went to Rolle, who was awarded the Rhodes scholarship in November. He bypassed the NFL draft in April and will spend the year at Oxford, England, working on a master's degree in medical anthropology.

The Watkins Award, selected by the National Alliance of African-American Athletes, honors founder Franklin D. Watkins, a coach and mentor in Harrisburg, Pa., with a unique gift for communicating and relating to African-American youth.

Greg Biggins is a regular contributor to [ESPN.com's West recruiting blog](#) and handles player personnel for the [NIKE Football Training Camps for ESPNRISE.com](#).

[5 comments](#) on "Patterson named top African-American athlete"

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United States
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Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 110th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

House of Representatives

Vol. 154

WASHINGTON, Tuesday, April 8, 2008

No. 55

TRIBUTE TO MATTHEW DANIELS

**HON. LYNN WESTMORELAND
OF GEORGIA
IN THE HOUSE OF
REPRESENTATIVES**
Tuesday, April 8, 2008

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a young man from Fayetteville in Georgia's 3rd Congressional District who has excelled in the classroom and on the playing field.

For more than 17 years, the National Alliance of African American Athletes has honored young men who exemplify the best in sports and education.

This year, the top honor, called the Franklin D. Watkins Award, will go to a constituent of mine, Matthew

Daniels, a senior at Fayette County High School.

Considered one of the best defensive backs in the country, Matthew has maintained a perfect 4.0 grade-point average. He is a member of the Beta Club, the National Honor Society, the Fellowship of Christian Athletes and other worthy community groups.

"This remarkable young man is unquestionably a premier scholar-athlete in a time when very few kids in the country can barely stay academically eligible," said a spokesperson for the National Association of African American Athletes. "Matthew lends inspiration to a younger generation that it is possible to achieve perfection in sports and in the classroom."

Matthew will represent Fayette County High proudly next year as an alumnus when he enrolls at Duke University on a full athletic scholarship.

"Among all my achievements and honors in high school, this award is the most memorable I must say," Matthew said after receiving the award earlier this year at the InterContinental Hotel in Century City, Calif. "This is the only award that acknowledges me for both my academic and athletic achievements."

Winners of the award are highly encouraged to use their time and talent to give back to the less fortunate in their communities.

"On the field, I want to work to become a freshman All-American next season," Daniels told a reporter. "Off the field, I want to leave a path so others know it can be done."

On behalf of everyone in Georgia's 3rd Congressional District, I want to congratulate Matthew Daniels on this prestigious award. We're proud that he's part of our community.

Lynell [Signature]
GA 3





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February 24, 2008

Matthew Daniels: 2008 Watkins Award Recipient

Ronnie Flores

Special to StudentSportsFootball.com

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Century City, Calif. -- Among five distinguished finalists, Fayette County High School (Atlanta, Ga.) standout safety Matthew Daniels, who will continue his academic and athletic career at Duke University, was named the winner of the 17th annual **Franklin D. Watkins Memorial Trophy Award** Saturday evening at the Inter Continental Hotel in Century City, California. The award is presented each year to the nation's top African American male high school scholar athlete.



Ronnie Flores

Matthew Daniels, who will continue his academic and athletic career at Duke University, was the 2008 recipient of the prestigious Watkins Trophy Award.

The Watkins Award, selected and presented by the National Alliance of African-American Athletes, is named in honor of **Franklin D. Watkins**, a coach and mentor in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania with a unique gift for communicating and relating to African-American youth. Watkins was the founder of the National Alliance and over the years the award presented to Daniels has become the most prestigious award for African-American male high school students.

"Among all my achievements and honors in high school, this award is the most memorable I must say," an elated and relieved Daniels stated among his parents and well-wishers after Saturday night's banquet. "This is the only award that acknowledges me for both my academic and athletic achievements."

Focus is placed on honoring the academic excellence and community service of young African-American males by the Alliance since not enough effort has been placed on motivating African-American males to pursue higher education in stark contrast to the constant efforts by institutions of higher learning to recruit collegiate sports stars. The Watkins Trophy Awards program recognizes those that place a high value on both their academic and athletic achievements. Each year's winner carries with him the expectation that he will strive for academic excellence and embrace community service and all the finalists are expected to encourage other young African-American men to pursue this balance of success.

"On the field, I want to work to become a freshman all-american next season," remarked the 6-

foot, 183-pound Daniels, who carries a 4.0 G.P.A. and is a member of the National Honors Society, Beta Club and the Fellowship of Christian Athletes. "Off the field, I want to leave a path so others know it can be done."

The highlight of Saturday's award banquet was the message delivered by keynote speaker **William C. Rhoden**, a sports journalist for the New York Times since 1983. Rhoden has voiced his concern in his books *\$40 Million Slaves* and *Third and a Mile* that the African-American athletes of today, and African-Americans in general, have forgotten the difficult path the athletes of yesteryear took to gain opportunities to empower themselves and their community through athletics. Rhoden compared the importance of knowing the history of African-American athletes to studying game film.

"A coach once asked me, 'Why do you study the past? It's about now and what we can do today,'" Rhoden recalled. "I asked him, 'Why do you study game film?' It's the same concept. You study what happened in the past to learn from your mistakes so you don't repeat them. If the past wasn't important, then why would you study game film? You feel stronger when you enter a game prepared. As far along as we've come as a dominant force in athletics, we've stopped studying game film."

"I took Mr. Rhoden's message to heart," Daniels told guests as he accepted the 17th Annual Watkins Trophy. "My role model is not real famous. It's my brother William. He just graduated from Clemson University and has a real good job. I always inspired to be like him and be better than him. I really appreciate everything everyone has done for me. The other four finalists are not losers. They are winners as well."

The other four finalists were Covaughn DeBoskie (Hamilton, Chandler, Ariz.), Brandon Moore (Trotwood, Ohio), Kenneth Page (A.C. Flora, Columbia, S.C.) and DeVier Posey (LaSalle, Cincinnati, Ohio).

Similar to Daniels, DeBoskie and Moore are members of the National Honor Society. Posey carries a 3.4 G.P.A. and Page a 3.8 G.P.A. while both are known to volunteer countless hours towards community efforts. Moore carries a 4.25 G.P.A. and DeBoskie a 4.1 G.P.A. During the media reception and during his introduction, DeBoskie graciously thanked Rivals.com West Coast Recruiting Analyst **Rick Kimbrel** for nominating him for the Watkins award.

The 2007 recipient of the Watkins Trophy Award was Andrew Davis, a freshman at the University of Oregon. Past winners include Florida State safety and pre-med student Myron Rolle, the 2006 recipient, and former Student Sports Magazine cover subjects **Marcus Houston** (Colorado State, 2000) and **Ronald Curry** (North Carolina/Oakland Raiders, 1998).

To learn more about the Alliance, the Watkins Award or to learn how to nominate a student-athlete for the Class of 2009 award, please visit www.NAAAA.com.



Myron Rolle, the 2006 Watkins Award winner, attended the Hun School of Princeton, New Jersey before enrolling early at Florida State University.

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Friday, February 22, 2008

Watkins Award gives honor to academic excellence

By Christopher Lawlor
ESPN.com

Covaughn DeBoskie-Johnson, less than a month into his academic career at the University of California-Berkeley, is still adjusting. He's writing a paper for his Standard American English class at one of the nation's true brain wave schools. A few weeks ago, he experienced a setback by his standards.

"I received a 79 (percent) on my first paper in that class, it near killed me; I have to speak with him (the instructor) about it and find out what I need to do," DeBoskie-Johnson said.

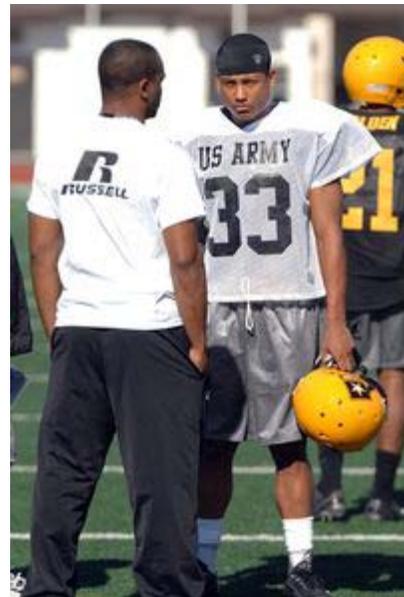
Understand, DeBoskie-Johnson is not your average student-athlete. Rather he's an exceptional one who graduated with a 4.1 grade-point average (on a scale of 4.0) in December from Hamilton High in Chandler, Ariz., and enrolled early in college after signing a national letter-of-intent to play football for the Golden Bears.

DeBoskie-Johnson, with an iron-clad will to succeed, is self-driven, emblemizing the Franklin D. Watkins Memorial Trophy Award.

Like the rest of the finalists, he looks for an edge, continually striving for excellence.

"(The Watkins Awards) is like winning the Heisman Trophy for high school football players," said DeBoskie-Johnson, one of the five finalists for the award presentation Saturday in Los Angeles honoring the top African-American male student-athlete in football, basketball or baseball.

The award, sponsored by the National Alliance of African American Athletes (or The Alliance), was initiated in 1992 to promote academic excellence among young African-American males. It was named after an unsung football coach from Harrisburg, Pa., who worked miracles with black inner-city males, giving hope and direction, before succumbing to cancer in 1989.



Covaughn DeBoskie graduated from high school with a 4.1 grade-point average.

Saturday night's black-tie affair is traditionally emotional. The keynote speaker is sports columnist William Rhoden of the New York Times and co-emcees are actress Claudia Jordan and comedian-radio personality Lamont King (a.k.a. Lazee Lamont).

The road to Los Angeles begins at the onset of a candidate's senior year when the nomination packets are mailed. Candidates must submit an essay and provide at least three referrals from a school official, media member and community leader.

Shane Battier, a Watkins finalist in 1997, penned an essay which encapsulated the award's core beliefs. Battier, who attended Detroit Country Day School in Michigan and later earned a bachelor of arts from Duke. "My stature and character have always set me apart. Some call me an inspiration, a leader, and pillar in the community. Being a 6-8, intelligent, articulate, black man, I know I defy many stereotypes that modern society places upon me," Battier said. "I believe that along with my success on the basketball court, comes the responsibility of being a role model and teacher for not just today's youth but society as a whole. A responsibility that does not end with the end of my basketball career, but one that I will continue to uphold throughout my life"



Before starring at Duke, Shane Battier was a Watkins Award finalist in 1997.

Battier's words still resonate a decade later and for the finalists Saturday will be an initiation into an exclusive fraternity.

DeBoskie-Johnson will be joined by Matt Daniels, Brandon Moore, Kenneth Page and DeVier Posey at the Century City Intercontinental Hotel. All five have signed their national letters to play football in college.

"Even though the trophy goes to one of them, he (the recipient) represents them all because they are all winners and now a part of the Alliance," said Everette Pearsall, the executive director of the Alliance.

Matt Daniels, a senior from Fayette County High in Fayette, Ga. (near Atlanta), agrees as he looks to the future.

"Being an (Watkins) finalist is an honor because you are recognized for your abilities and intelligence from millions of candidates," said Daniels, who will attend Duke in the fall. "I'm looking forward to meeting people in the Alliance, sitting down with successful businessmen for their advice and talking with NFL players.

"Networking with successful people is always important; I want to hear how they did things," he said.

Brandon Moore, who attends Trotwood-Madison High in Trotwood, Ohio, was tipped off by a coach in October and completed the paperwork before the Nov. 1 deadline.

"I wasn't familiar with the (Watkins) Award but it honors African American student-athletes," he said. "It's a blessing to be considered one of the five finalists."

The finalists are proven student-athletes with impressive dossiers:

- Matt Daniels, Fayette County High, Fayetteville, Ga.: Daniels, an all-state safety, still found time to record a 4.0 GPA while claiming the highest grades at his school in chemistry, Spanish and World History; and was a Georgia Merit Scholar (top 5-percent of the state's scholars).

"I chose Duke because I want to make a difference in their program," he said. "Leaders are born; I'm comfortable leading others."

He also did several community services projects, delivering food and gifts to the homeless, mentored local fourth graders and was a member of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes.

- Covaughn DeBoskie-Johnson, Hamilton High, Chandler, Ariz.: Graduated early and is enrolled at California-Berkeley. He maintained a 4.1 GPA at Hamilton and was presented the Arizona Principals Award of Excellence.

DeBoskie-Johnson was a teenager with influence in Chandler. He tutored and read to elementary school children and was named volunteer of the year. He started several fundraisers including one to benefit a teammate who was paralyzed from the waist down following a football injury. He also coached in the Chandler Youth Football League.

"He was always committed in the classroom," former Hamilton coach John Wrenn said. "He's a class individual with goals. Academics were always a priority and he always found time to help out (in the community)."

- Brandon Moore, Trotwood (Ohio)-Madison High: Moore will graduate with a 4.25 GPA and attend Michigan with the goal of becoming an ophthalmologist or optometrist. He is a member of the National Honors Society.

An All-American tight end and one of the state's top shot putters, Moore enjoyed volunteering with children. He countless hours spent the last two summers coaching kids with the Northwest Track Club.

- Kenneth Page: A.C. Flora High, Columbia, S.C.: Page holds a 3.8 GPA and will attend Clemson in the fall. He nominated for the Wendy's Heisman Award.

Page, a talented offensive guard who played in the Under Armour All-American Football Game, found time for numerous activities.

He was the named captain of the Carolina Panthers Community Award and president of SECME and FCA. He was role model for local youngsters, speaking at several grade schools and served as a peer tutor. He also volunteered at local churches and coached youth football.

"This award encompasses mainly what you do off the field," he said. "I like working with younger kids and tutoring my teammates in math. I connect with helping others."

•DeVier Posey: LaSalle High, Cincinnati: Posey is a powerhouse in the classroom with a 3.4 GPA in a demanding college preparatory setting.

Posey, an All American who was named the Maxwell Award (nation's top high school wide receiver), will attend Ohio State. Posey is considered one of Ohio's top sprinters this spring.

He helped coordinate food drives in Cincinnati to feed the homeless and took it upon himself to mentor three neighborhood boys. He also assisted senior citizens, aided a project to restore and beautify a rundown cemetery and was a church volunteer. Last fall he was a LaSalle ambassador welcoming the incoming freshman class.

"I'm not too heavy in one area (of life), I like to think I'd be comfortable in any environment," he said. "Sports, academics, volunteering and my belief in God make me well rounded."

Goal-oriented

The Alliance's goal is simple: is to facilitate the development of African-American males in American society and is a working collaborative of three components -- Programs and Public Education; The Black Male Athlete Economic Cluster; and The African American Male Information Initiative.

"We want to change how African American athletes are viewed," said Pearsall, who played football at Geneva College in Pennsylvania and is currently the director of sales for a startup computer technology company. "There are great athletes who have 4.0 GPAs and we hope others will pattern themselves after them.

"We're trying to highlight these athletes and present them in a positive light. These are good people and we're rewarding them for being good servants to their communities," he said.

Dr. Alexander L Gabbin, a professor of accounting at James Madison University, chairs the executive committee and says the award is two-pronged.

"It recognizes the effort to help young black males, who if you look at all the statistics are at high risk in the inner cities. It also uses athletes who have credibility and visibility as

roles models to address the problem; a problem that has not been fully addressed in this country," he said.

Previous Watkins Award winners have set a high standard.

Andrew Davis (2007) and Myron Rolle (2006) graduated early leaving for Oregon and Florida State, respectively. Twelve finalists have reached the NFL or NBA.

Several have received scholarships to high academic schools such as Notre Dame, Penn State, Stanford, Michigan and Northwestern.

The first recipient, Robert Tate, matriculated from Cincinnati. Ronald Curry of the Oakland Raiders, a two-sport star, went to North Carolina; and the 2003 recipient, Sam Cheatham, currently attends Northwestern.

Watkins finalists include LaVarr Arrington, Lorenzo Alexander, Justin Blalock, Mercedes Lewis, Ernie Sims III and Ted Ginn Jr.

"About 95 percent of them finish school, unless they've declared early for the pro, and many have earned master's degrees," Pearsall said.

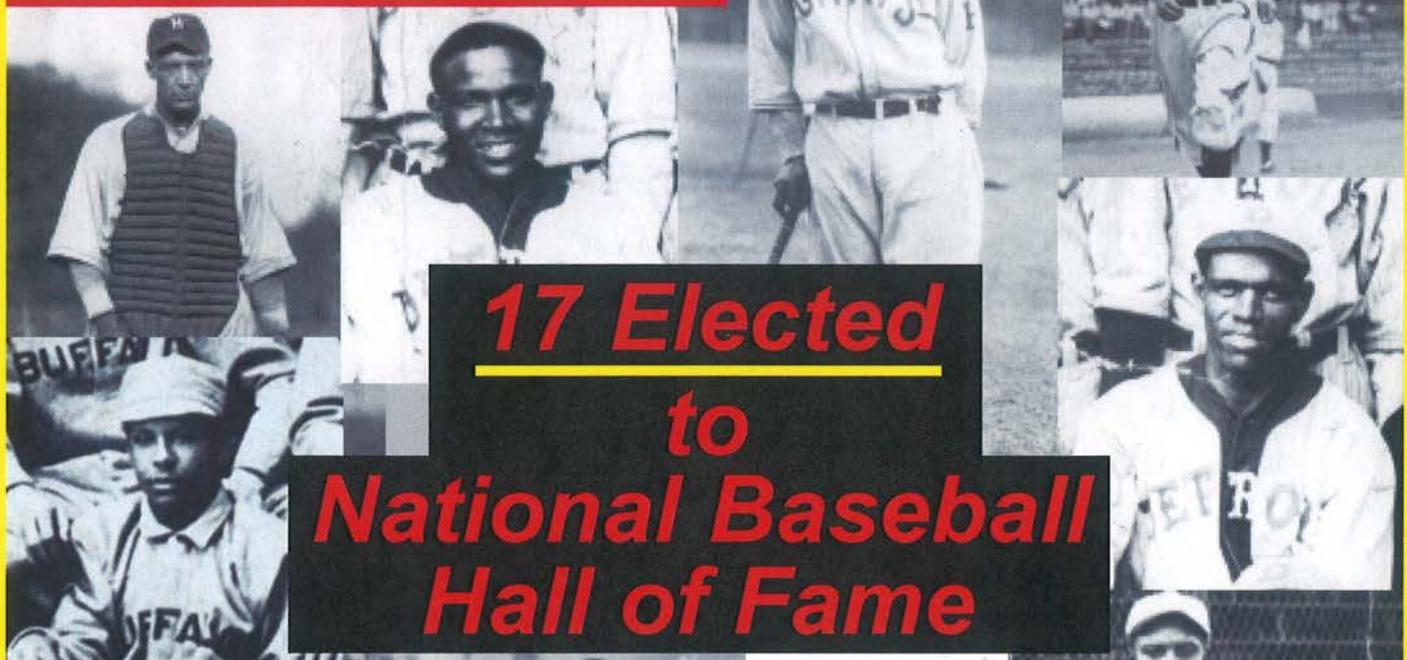
Julie Posey, whose youngest son is a finalist, was "flabbergasted" when DeVier was named a finalist in December. She also noted the Alliance's portrayal of young African American is refreshing.

"To think my son is a role model for other African American males is a little intense for a parent," she said.

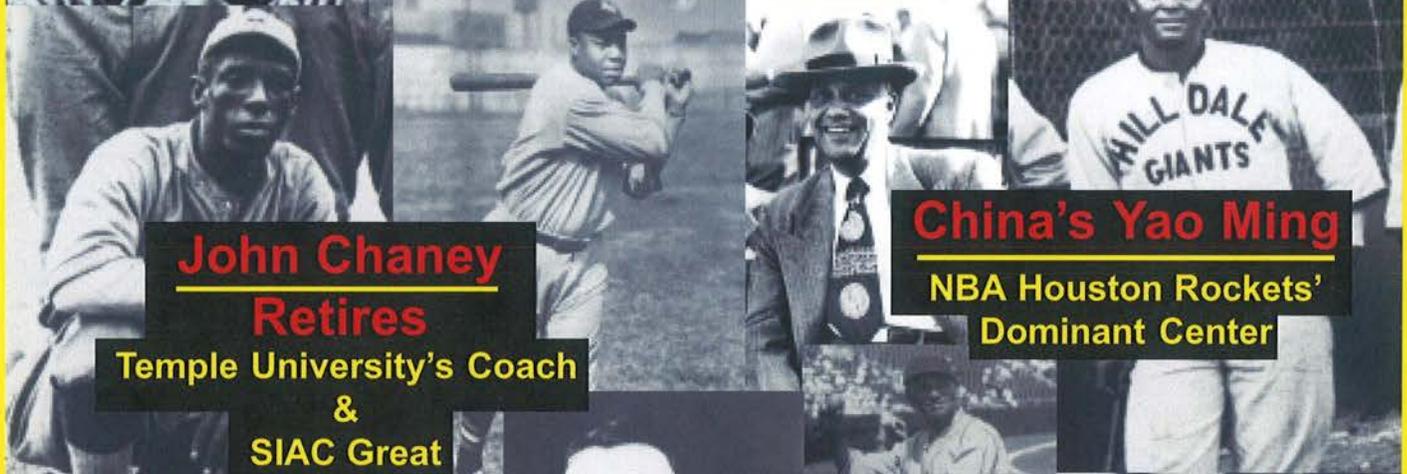
Page, a 6-4, 300-pound with a selfless demeanor, is still digesting the magnitude of the honor but he hopes "an award like this shows African American males should not be stereotyped as 'gangsters' rather as trail blazers who want to change the way people think."

Christopher Lawlor has covered high school sports for more than 20 years, most recently with USA TODAY, where he was the head preps writer responsible for national high school rankings in football, baseball and boys and girls basketball. He also for worked for Scholastic Coach magazine, where he ran the Gatorade national player of the year program for nine years. Lawlor, a New Jersey resident, grew up in Rochester, N.Y. and is a graduate of St. Bonaventure University.

BST M



17 Elected to National Baseball Hall of Fame



**John Chaney
Retires**
Temple University's Coach
&
SIAC Great

China's Yao Ming
NBA Houston Rockets'
Dominant Center



Myron Rolle
High School Scholar/Athlete
Wins NAAAA Watkins Award

HBCU Track
St. Augustine's College
Lincoln University
FAMU Relays

Myron Rolle

[The Hun School of Princeton - Atlantic City, New Jersey] Wins NAAAA Watkins Award

By Leland Stein III

LOS ANGELES - The National Alliance of African American Athletes (NAAAA) established in 1989, has as it's stated goal: "Empower young African American males through athletics, education and public programs."

To this aim, recently at the Le Meridien Hotel in Beverly Hills, the premier African-American high school scholar/athlete award in America, the Franklin D. Watkins Memorial Trophy Award, was announced at a Black-Tie Gala.

Emerging from the "Elite Four" Watkins Class of 2006 as the 15th annual winner was All-American running and defensive back, Myron Rolle. The graduate of The Hun School of Princeton in Atlantic City, New Jersey, carries a 4.0 GPA.

"I see the benefit of valuing education," Rolle told me. "Sports have afforded me visibility and I have met people from all over and I see the impact education has had in their lives."

He beat out a fine class that included offensive guard Bryant Browning, 4.0 GPA, Cleveland, OH, Glenville High School; running back Terry Grant, 3.5, Lumberton, Miss, Lumberton High School; and defensive tackle Gerald McCoy, 3.5, Oklahoma City, OK, Southeast High School.

All have received athletic scholarships to the following universities: Rolle is headed to Florida State, Browning to Ohio State, Grant to Alabama and McCoy to Oklahoma.

Rolle, Grant, Browning and McCoy join an eclectic mix of men that are at universities achieving in the classroom and on the fields of play at Texas (Justin Blalock), Stanford (JR Lemon, Michael Craven, Jason Evans, Emeka Nnoli, Allen Smith and Emeka Udofia), UCLA (Mercedes Lewis, Robert Kibble, and Shawn Oatis), Washington (Shelton Sampson), Tennessee (Cody Douglas), Georgia (Mohammed Massaquoi and Mario Riley), Florida State (Ernie Sims III), Virginia (Kai Parham), Duke (Vincent Oghabaase), Notre Dame (Darius Walker), Northwestern (Sam Cheatham), Ohio State (Ted Ginn Jr.) and Michigan (Douglas Dutch).

Other Watkins Award Alumni include Darnell Dinkins, Ravens; Ronald Curry and Grant Irons, Raiders; Robert Tate, Cardinals; Shane Battier, Memphis- NBA; Deryck Toles, Colts; Lorenzo Alexander and Nick Maddox Panthers; Chris Lewis, Cardinals; Lavar Arrington, Redskins, and of special note are Marcus Houston, Maurice Hall, Aaron Henderson, Raki Nelson, Jason Capel among others.

At the Awards Gala in Beverly Hills, where former Piston and Laker, John Salley, was the keynote speaker and the emcees were actress/model Claudia Jordan and actor Alphonso McAuley, the memory that sticks in my mind is that almost all of the former Watkins Award winners were in attendance and they collectively welcomed the class of '06 at the Black Tie dinner.

It was a powerful sight to see some of the top athletes in America celebrating their status as scholars as well as athletes.

There is an old saying and it goes: "Show me the company you keep and I'll tell you who you are!"

Grant noted: "I did not realize there were so many African-American athletes that are motivated and value education like me."

McCoy concurred: "I had no idea it was this big. I'm elated to be a part of this incredible group of scholar athletes."

Browning interjected: "Seeing this group of men has only motivated me more. The Watkins Family is unlike any group of men I've been around."

The Alliance, a non-profit organization, boasts an athlete advisory board consisting of Salley, the new Chairman of the Athletes Advisory Board, taking the place of the late-great NFL Hall of Famer Reggie White. Teyo Johnson, Clyde Simmons,



Photo by Reginald Grant

The Four Finalists at the Press Conference
 (Left ot right) Terry Grant, Myron Rolle, Bryant Browning and Gerald McCoy

(Retired); Warren Moon, NFL (Retired); Frank Thomas, A's; Mario Elie and Charlie Ward-NBA (retired) and others.

The Franklin D. Watkins Memorial Trophy Award was initiated in 1992 to promote academic excellence among young African-American males. As unavoidable role models on the "image" front lines, talented athletes-especially in football, basketball and baseball-define what the emerging generations of African-American males will value, and the aspirations they will have.

Since the first award in 1992 was given to Tate, it has evolved into a truly special undertaking. The applicants complete a comprehensive packet that includes an essay, four letters of recommendation, official transcripts, athletic awards, extra-curriculum activities and community service. From 100 or so applicants, a nation-wide selection committee narrows the field to the final five or four young men.

"We have come from very humble beginnings," explained Everett Pearsall, the Executive Director of the NAAAA. "We did the first Award in an auditorium and it was just a plaque.

But we did envision it would become what it has today."

From a plaque, to one of the finest hand crafted trophies I've ever seen, Jostens Inc., through its Renaissance program, produces an elegant Franklin D. Watkins Memorial Trophy for the winner and plaques for the runner-ups.

After being held in Charlotte, N.C. in recent years, the Gala moved to Beverly Hills for '06 and will return for the '07 Watkins Award presentations, Teen Summit and Synergy Sports Conferences.

"It was phenomenal having the Watkins in L.A.," said Reggie Grant, Watkins Award Co-Chairperson, former NFL player and the linchpin behind the L.A. effort. "I think the black-tie, seeing the families and the over 30 Watkins alumni welcome the Class of '06 into the family was an awesome thing."

The true significance of the Watkins Award can be captured in one word- "EXPECTATION". We expect Watkins finalists to be leaders in school, on the field and in their communities, and these young men have proven to be more than up to the task.

A BRIEF HISTORY

The Watkins Memorial Award is presented each year by The ALLIANCE, to an outstanding African American male high school senior student athlete. The ALLIANCE is the largest and best known African American male organization in America. The organization features such sports stars as Reggie White (Carolina Panthers-deceased), Greg Lloyd (Carolina Panthers-retired), Royce Clayton (Milwaukee Brewers), and Heisman Trophy winner, Charlie Ward (Houston Rockets-Retired). The main focus of The ALLIANCE is to network with Black Male Athletes and send positive messages to Black male youths.

In 1992, The ALLIANCE demonstrated their commitment to the Black community by creating an award to honor the outstanding African American male senior student athlete. The ALLIANCE decided to make the first award presentation at the Third Annual African American Male Empowerment Day Program.

The National ALLIANCE later found itself at an organizational cross-road. Stunned by the death of co-founder Franklin D. Watkins, The ALLIANCE was committed to continuing the work Watkins had begun. We are also equally committed to never forget the many contributions he had already made. It was decided that Franklin D. Watkins' memory would be perpetuated by The ALLIANCE by annually honoring a model student with a trophy bearing his name.

Leon Snell received our first award on February 1, 1992. Robert Tate also received a special award in 1992. The Award has been presented annually since then: in 1993, to Ahmad Collins; in 1994, to Shawn Lee; and in 1995, to Darnell Dinkins. In 1996 and 1997, the respective recipients were Raki Nelson and Grant Irons.

However, in 1995, the Trophy Committee decided that the traditional trophy was too commonplace and lacked distinction. A symbol of the important social commitment to youths and the community was needed. The committee decided that the trophy should be a sculptured athlete in uniform giving back to the next generation. A replica of a football player reading to young Black males after a game would convey the complete message.

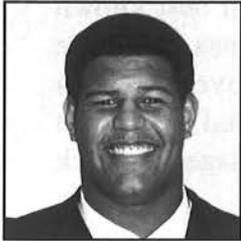
Jordan Scott of Bishop McDevitt High School, Harrisburg, PA, was selected as the athlete model. Scott, a 5'9", 180-pound senior, had to play quarterback by default. A natural halfback, he responded by leading his team to the PIAA-AA State Championship. He was also named First - Team offense by the Patriot News. This provided a unique transition, because Scott's number one receiver was Pennsylvania Small School Player of the Year, Raki Nelson, who would receive the last regular trophy.

The young Black males posing for the new trophy are Allen L. Wilkins, Jr. and Alexander Gabbin Wilkins. They are the two sons of Glue Wilkins, who is the co-founder of the ALLIANCE.

Slivy Edmonds Cotton funded the development of the award in 1997, and Jostens, Inc. cast the award in 1998. The first newly designed award was presented to Ronald Curry.

21ST ANNUAL WATKINS AWARD FINALISTS

The six Watkins Award Finalists were recognized on Saturday, February 18, 2012 at the Millennium Biltmore Hotel in Los Angeles, CA. The Alliance was proud to announce these outstanding young men and recognize them for their numerous academic, athletic, and community achievements.



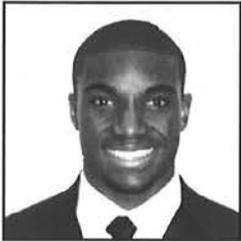
Zachery Samuel Banner - Lakes High School, Lakewood, WA

GPA: 3.44

Football: Offensive Lineman Basketball: Center

As a teacher, every once in a while, a young man comes along who so embodies the qualities and characteristics of the best of American ideals that your eyes well up with pride and gratitude. You exhale with a sense of renewed hope for the future and relax with a warm feeling of inner peace. Such a young man is Zach Banner.

- Mrs. Merry Farrington, English Teacher, Lakes High School



Alexander Rhys Carter - Briar Woods High School, Ashburn, VA

GPA: 4.1

Football: Defensive Back & Receiver

Mr. Carter's credentials include the "A" Honor Roll, a rigorous academic schedule, junior captain of the state champion football team, and community servant. What separates Alex Carter from his peers is the ability to maintain a rigorous athletic and academic schedule while achieving high results in both.

- James Wyatt Whitehead V, Social Sciences Dept Chair, Briar Woods High School



Jonathan David Curry - Central High School, Phenix City, AL

GPA: 3.96

Football: Tight End Basketball: Forward

Jonathan epitomizes what the awards stand for- a young, respectful student athlete that has the maturity to make decisions that not only affect his life but also others in the community in a positive way.

- Wallace B. Hunter, City Manager, City of Phenix City, AL



Warren "Keith" Marshall - Millbrook High School, Raleigh, NC

GPA: 4.3

Football: Running Back Track & Field: 100 m

As an athlete, Keith will not let anybody outwork him. In the classroom, Keith demonstrates discipline and thoroughness. It is the only way a High School Senior can achieve a 4.3 GPA and graduate a semester early. Keith is an exceptional person.

- Nate Taylor, Sports Report, Raleigh News & Observer, Raleigh, NC



Deion DeVon Williams - Lutheran High School of Orange County, Orange, CA

GPA: 3.65

Football: Linebacker Wrestling: Heavyweight

To say that he is a hard hitter and he plays football well doesn't do him any justice. To accept an offer to an ACC school like Duke University, is an accomplishment in itself, but there is so much more to him. During my first encounter with him, I came to the conclusion that so much of him was about helping others.

- Rahshaun Y. Haylock, Writer, Foxsports West, Los Angeles, CA



Jameis Lenaed Winston - Hueytown High School, Hueytown, AL

GPA: 4.0

Football: Quarterback Baseball: Pitcher

Jameis is a well-rounded and versatile individual. He is an exceptionally talented African-American athlete. He places academic excellence among his priorities. Jameis is recognized as a conscientious, hard-working, and willing leader at our school.

- Elizabeth A. Trammel, Teacher, Hueytown High School

20TH ANNUAL WATKINS AWARD FINALISTS

The five Watkins Award Finalists were recognized on Saturday, February 26, 2011 at the Omni Hotel in Los Angeles, CA. The Alliance was proud to announce these outstanding young men and recognize them for their numerous academic, athletic, and community achievements.



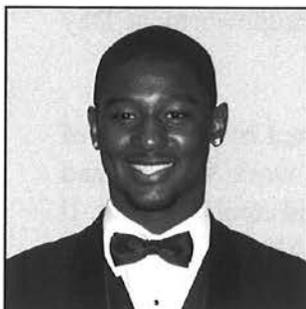
Savon Huggins - Saint Peters Prep, Jersey City, NJ

GPA: 3.8

Football: Running Back Track and Field: Sprinter

Savon is someone who takes pride in his social values. He accepts responsibility for his role in helping develop confidence and pride in others, especially youngsters. He is intellectually competent, socially aware and personally interested in projecting himself as a positive role model.

- Rich Hansen, Director of Athletics/PE and Head Football Coach,
Saint Peter's Prep, Jersey City, NJ



Wayne Lyons - Dillard High School, Ft. Lauderdale, FL

GPA: 4.96

Football: Safety Track and Field: Hurdles

Wayne Lyons is a phenomenal young man with exceptional traits, which are needed in leadership and all academic pursuits. He is organized and determined, thus he follows through on his designed plan of action. Wayne's goals are clear and concise and since he has been a student at Dillard High, he has forged toward fulfilling his goals. In addition, he demonstrates initiative by his chosen course of study and commitment to his technological efforts.

- Merceda R. Stanley, Principal, Dillard High School, Ft. Lauderdale, FL



Kendal Thompson - Southmoore High School, Moore, OK

GPA: 4.28

Football: Quarterback

Kendal is an extraordinary young man. He has a strong desire for doing the best in everything he attempts. Kendal is a well-rounded young man in that besides his classroom success and football achievements, he has been involved in a reading program with students at Oakridge Elementary School in Moore, Oklahoma. Kendal is a young man that certainly has exhibited the attitude, drive, and determination that make him an excellent role model for other African-American athletes throughout the country.

- Jeff Brickman – Sabercat Offensive Coordinator, Southmoore High School, Moore, OK



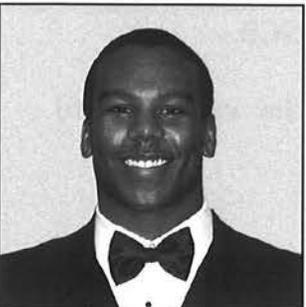
James A. Vaughters - Tucker High School, Tucker GA

GPA: 3.96

Football: Linebacker

James Vaughters is the complete package and above all else, he is guaranteed to be an impactful role model to young Black men in his community, in the state of Georgia, and soon throughout the nation when he reaches the national stage as a standout college football scholar-athlete. I understand well and hold in the very highest esteem the precise values of the Watkins Award and James fits the bill like a hand in a glove.

- Jim Harbaugh – Head Football Coach, Stanford University



Remound Wright - Bishop Dwenger, Fort Wayne, IN

GPA: 4.42

Football: Running Back, Team Captain

Remound is a complete and well-rounded young man – academically gifted, athletically talented, and spiritually grounded. He has thrived in his course of preparatory study at Bishop Dwenger High School, been accepted to Stanford University on a full scholarship, and has been a positive and affirming role model for his peers and younger children who are aspiring to achieve their dreams.

- Karl R. LaPan, President and CEO, Certified Dream Manager, Ft. Wayne, IN

JET

APRIL 5, 2010

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SPORTS



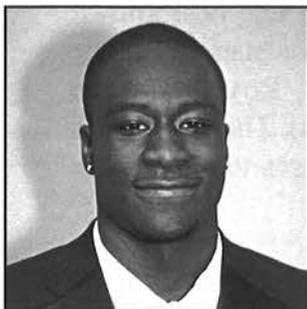
HIGH ACHIEVING SCHOLAR-ATHLETES: The National Alliance of African American Athletes recently recognizes the nation's supreme high school scholar-athletes during the annual Franklin D. Watkins Memorial Awards Gala. The Elite Five are (l to r) Evan Washington, Dallas; Devin Gardner, Detroit; Eric Reid, Baton Rouge, La.; ESPN's Jemele Hill, keynote speaker; Brandon Willis, Duncan, S.C.; and David Yankey, Atlanta. Each will be attending top universities in the fall. The Watkins Award, named for a former football coach in Harrisburg, Pa., recognizes exceptionally talented African-American male athletes who, by their example, help promote high academic standards and a commitment to community service.

NEW CAREER FOR JONES: Olympic sprinter Marion Jones announces her signing with the WNBA's Tulsa Shock in Tulsa, Okla. Jones, 34, was signed to at least a one-year contract but terms were not disclosed. Jones was the starting point guard on North Carolina's national championship team in 1994. She was drafted by the Phoenix Mercury in 2003 but never played in the WNBA. During the news conference, Jones took questions about her troubled past when she was a star at the 2000 Sydney Olympics but admitted two years ago that she was using performance-enhancing drugs at the time of the games. Jones was stripped of her medals and spent about six months in a Texas prison for lying to federal prosecutors about doping and her role in a check-fraud scam.



19TH ANNUAL WATKINS AWARD FINALISTS

All five finalists were formally announced on Saturday, February, 20, 2010 at the Los Angeles Marriott Hotel. The ALLIANCE was proud to present these five outstanding young men and recognize them for their numerous academic, athletic, and community achievements.



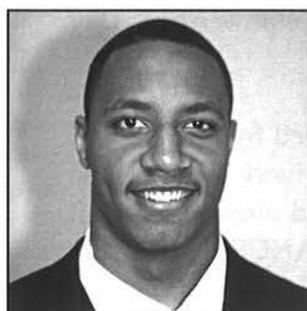
Devin Jaymes Gardner – Inkster High School; Inkster, Michigan

GPA: 3.4

Football: Quarterback

Devin understands that achievement isn't just about physical ability and that success isn't a given. He understands that scholastic achievement is an essential part of everything he will do. I have watched Devin grow over the years, both on and off the field, and I don't hesitate in saying that even if his athletic endeavors ended tomorrow, he would still go on to achieve great success.

- Samuel Webb, Recruiting Columnist, The Detroit News



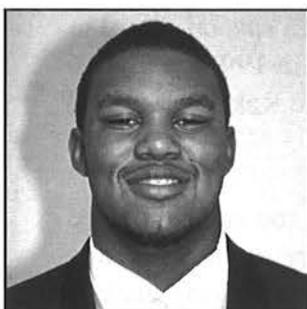
Eric Todd Reid, Jr. – Dutchtown High School; Geismar, Louisiana

GPA: 4.75

Football: Defensive Back Basketball: Forward Track & Field: Sprint, Hurdles, High Jump

Eric has been a model student by excelling in the classroom throughout his primary and secondary years. Eric's athletic career has been equally as impressive as his academic achievements. He has earned the respect of fellow students by assisting them with difficult subjects and he is a role model and leader on the team.

- Clarence J. Lymon, C.P.A., Undersecretary of the Louisiana Dept. of Revenue



Evan Washington – DeSoto High School; DeSoto, Texas

GPA: 3.9

Football: Offensive Tackle Basketball: Center

By every standard, Evan is a remarkable student with clear goals and purpose. He is a well rounded individual, who has also been actively involved in school and community activities throughout his school career. Evan is a member of the football team and the State champion basketball team. Additionally, he volunteered at a shelter for the homeless during the summer. This academically sound student is a leader who will be an asset to the post secondary school of his choice.

- Cheyrl M. Ensley, Ed.D., Principal, DeSoto High School



Brandon Monroe Willis – James F. Byrnes High School; Duncan, South Carolina

GPA: 4.0

Football: Defensive Lineman

I have seen Brandon in the camp setting, practice setting, and on the field, leading the Rebels in battle with their opponents. In all three settings, Brandon displays leadership skills among his teammates and peers no matter if things are going good or bad. Brandon is not only exceptional on the field but he is focused in the classroom. I have seen it far too many times - that a physically gifted youngster rests on his laurels on the football field and fails to handle his business in the classroom. That isn't the case for Brandon.

- Christopher Nee, Rivals.com/Warchant.com Staff/Recruiting Writer



David Famiyekyi Yankey – Centennial High School; Roswell, Georgia

GPA: 4.0

Football: Offensive Tackle

David is driven by creative, original thought and his intellectual curiosity has only deepened his cognitive ability and academic achievement. David Yankey is an exceptional student with amazing potential. His ability to successfully balance difficult classes along with athletics and social activities makes him a great candidate for this honor.

- Jessica M. Taylor, Science Teacher, Centennial High School

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Recession Rescue

Kirk Franklin

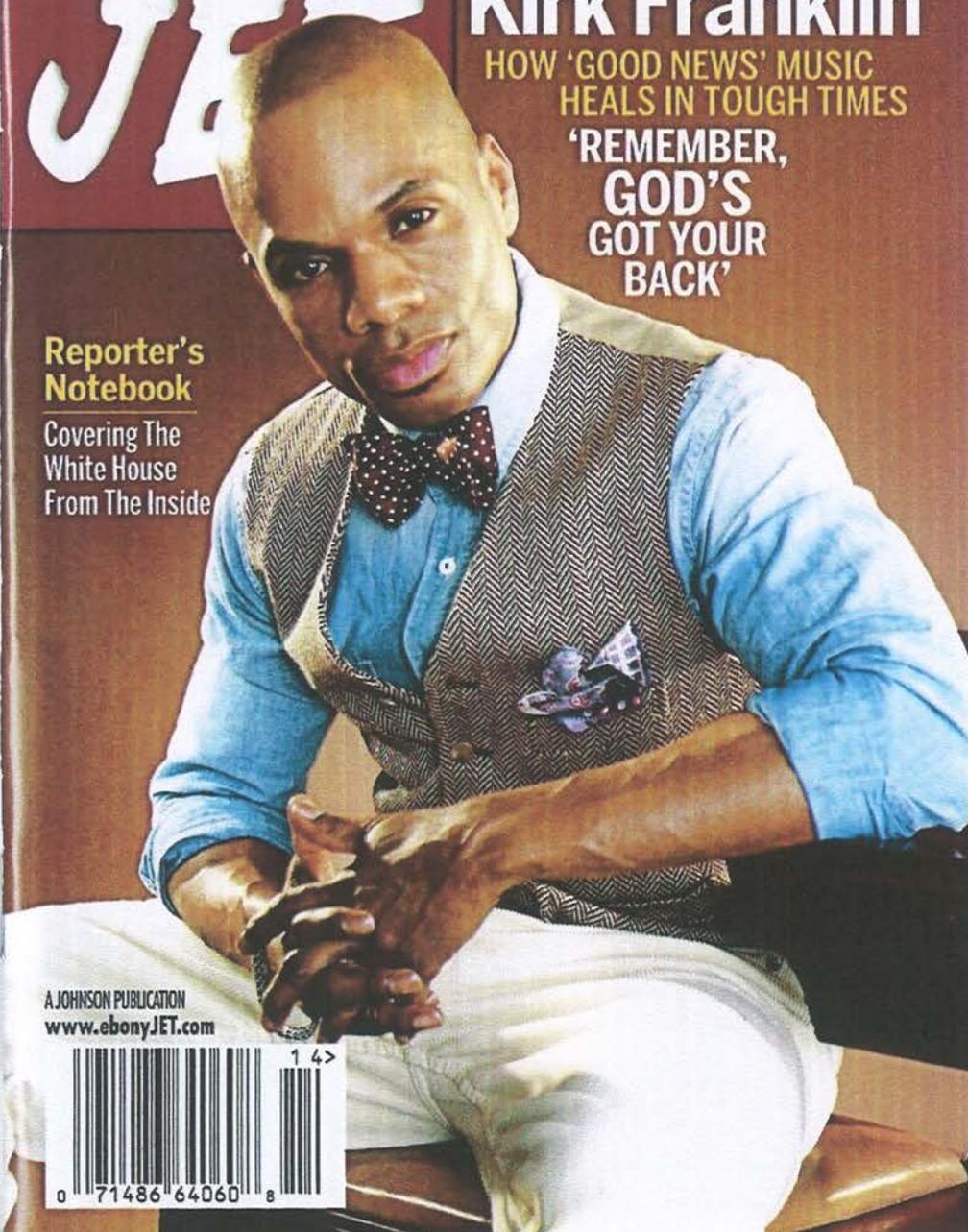
HOW 'GOOD NEWS' MUSIC HEALS IN TOUGH TIMES

'REMEMBER, GOD'S GOT YOUR BACK'

Reporter's Notebook

Covering The White House From The Inside

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SPORTS

Shani Davis Speeds To Two World Skating Records

Olympic gold medalist Shani Davis ended the World Cup season claiming two world speed skating records in two days. It took the 26-year-old Davis about a year to reclaim the speed skating world record in the 1,500 meters. He became the first skater to go 1,500 in less than 1 minute, 42 seconds, finishing with a time of 1:41.80 at the World Cup meet at the Utah Olympic Oval.

It was the fifth world record of Davis' career and the fourth time he set a new mark in the 1,500, the distance for which

he won an Olympic silver medal three years ago. "It's nice to have the record back," Davis said.

He then set a world record for the second straight day when he won the 1,000 meters, solidifying his place as the fastest mid-distance skater in the sport. He finished in 1:06.42.

The Chicago native won Olympic gold in the 1,000 and silver in the 1,500 in 2006 and also took a second world all-around title that year.

-Melody K. Hoffman with AP reports

OUTSTANDING STUDENT-ATHLETES: The National Alliance of African American Athletes hosted its 18th Annual Franklin D. Watkins Memorial Award gala where top Black male scholar-athletes were honored. All-American wide receiver Jamal Patterson (c) from Henry County H.S. (McDonough, Ga.) is the 2009 Watkins Award winner. Patterson carries a 4.65 GPA and has already committed to play football at Stanford. He is joined by finalists (l-r) Christopher Burnette, of LaGrange, Ga.; Jelani Jenkins, of Silver Spring, Md.; Jemari Roberts, of Long Beach, Calif.; and Richard Wilson of Spanish Fork, Utah. All of the winners have been All-Americans with high GPAs, and each student is set to play at top universities. The Watkins Award, named for a former football coach in Harrisburg, Pa., recognizes exceptionally talented African-American male athletes who, by their example, help promote high academic standards and a commitment to community service.

Eric L. Wade/20CEMS Images



18TH ANNUAL WATKINS AWARD FINALISTS

All five finalists were formally announced on Saturday, February, 21, 2009 at the Millennium Biltmore Hotel in Los Angeles, CA. The ALLIANCE was proud to present these five outstanding young men and recognize them for their numerous academic, athletic, and community achievements.



Christopher James Burnette – Troup County Comprehensive High School; LaGrange, Georgia

GPA: 5.12

Football: Offensive Guard / Track & Field: Shot Put

Chris has all the physical qualities of an All-American football player, but what separates him from so many others is his true passion for learning and his drive to lead others to be their very best.

- Lawrence S. Jeter, Head Football Coach/Athletic Director, Troup High School, La Grange, GA



Jelani Malik Jenkins – Our Lady of Good Counsel High School; Olney, MD

GPA: 3.9

Football: Fullback, Runningback, Linebacker / Track & Field: 100 & 200 meter individual and relays, shot put, discus

I have witnessed Jelani's rapid development in athletics, academic achievements, spiritual growth, and moral development. His gifts, talents and attributes are rarely embodied within a single person, but his humbleness, humility, and the manner in which he carries them are exemplary, particularly for a 16 year old African-American male.

- Johnnie R. Jackson, Ph.D., Diabetes Informatics, Inc., Ft. Washington, MD



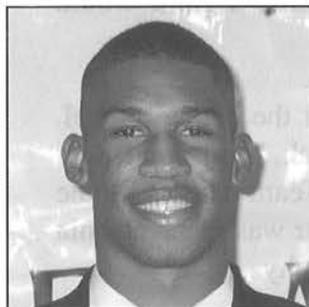
Jamal-Rashad Dondirick Patterson – Henry County High School; McDonough, GA

GPA: 4.56

Football: Wide Receiver / Track: 110H, 300H, 4x100, 4x400

[Jamal] is dependable, respectful, and a great student. It goes without saying that Jamal is exciting to watch on the football field but when you match with that his off field accomplishments, you have quite a gifted and driven student athlete.

- David Harvey, AP Environmental Science Teacher, Henry County High School, McDonough, GA



Jemari Anthony Roberts – Woodrow Wilson Classical High School; Long Beach, CA

GPA: 4.0

Football: Wide Receiver / Track: 100 & 200 meter, 4x100 relay

Jemari is one of our shining stars on campus. He is always willing to help out another student-stranger or not.... He is an outstanding athlete and student.

- Lew Kerns, Co-Principal, Wilson Classical High School, Long Beach, CA



Richard D. Wilson – Spanish Fork High School; Spanish Fork, UT

GPA: 3.8

Football: Tight End / Track: Sprinter

The impressive thing about Richard is his humility and personality. He has a great work ethic, and as a result has found tremendous success on the field... He has been a leader and encouraged teammates to work hard not only during the season, but equally hard all year round.

- Brandon Condie, Coach, Spanish Fork H. S., Spanish Fork, UT

17TH ANNUAL WATKINS AWARD FINALISTS

All five finalists were formally announced on Saturday, February, 23, 2008 at the InterContinental Hotel in Los Angeles, CA. The ALLIANCE was proud to present these five outstanding young men and recognize them for their numerous academic, athletic, and community achievements.



Matthew Lamar Daniels - Fayette County High School, Fayetteville, GA

GPA: 4.0

Football: Running Back / Safety Track and Field: 100m, 200m

Matthew is a multi-talented individual who excels in many areas. As one of the most outstanding athletes in the state, he has lettered for four years in football. He has received numerous local, state, and national awards for his athleticism and college recruiters from across the nation have visited our school in hopes that he will choose their school to attend. ... He tutors both elementary and high school students in Math, Science, Social Studies and English. He is an active member of Angel Tree. As a result of his participation in this organization, Matthew works in the food bank and provides gifts for the less fortunate. I believe that his academic record, athleticism and his character exemplify the type of student who is deserving of this award.

- Jan Daniel, GA National Board Certified Teacher, Fayette County High School



Covaghn Sinclair DeBoskie - Hamilton High School, Chandler, AZ

GPA: 4.0

Football: Running Back Track and Field: Sprinter

As a student-athlete, Covaghn DeBoskie embodies the spirit and priorities that are reflective of a young man with extensive potential and an extremely bright future, a stellar candidate for the 2008 Franklin D. Watkins Memorial Award. Throughout his time at Hamilton, he has excelled in the classroom as well as on the field. While competing at the highest level in Arizona's football arena and placing as a sprinter in the 5A State Track & Field Meet two years in a row, Covaghn has taken rigorous courses and thrived in this intellectually demanding environment. Covaghn is a tremendous candidate for the Franklin D. Watkins Memorial Award. He will be one of tomorrow's change agents within his university, his community and our society.

- Roseyn.N. Hood, Assistant Principal, Hamilton High School



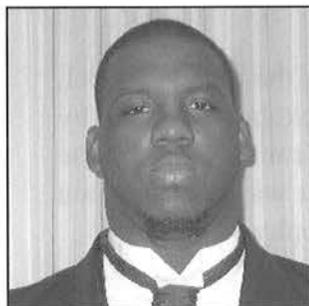
Brandon Keith Moore - Trotwood-Madison High School, Trotwood, OH

GPA: 4.452

Football: Tight End Track and Field: Shot Put

In his four years at Trotwood High School, Brandon has made an excellent reputation for himself as a student and as a person. He has been on the Honor Roll throughout his high school career. Brandon is seen by his teachers as a student who is serious about school and his education. He has also participated in a rigorous football schedule and has maintained his grades while taking part in this activity. I recommend him as an excellent candidate.

- Hortense Lumpkin, Teacher, Trotwood-Madison Senior High School



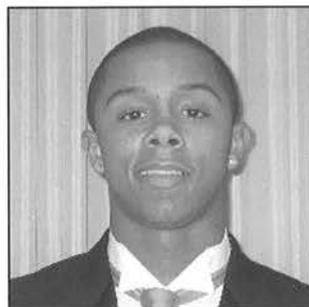
Kenneth Rashaan Page - A. C. Flora High School, Columbia, SC

GPA: 3.8

Football: Defensive Tackle

The level of commitment that Kenneth shows as a young athlete is very admirable. What a refreshing honor it is to see a young African-American male show forth such talent, while keeping a positive focus on his academic development. This is so critical in this day and time, that we see young Black leaders with character and spiritual substance coming into their own as they mature. I believe that Kenneth Page has all these qualities.

- Reverend Carolyn E. Brailsford, Assoc. Minister, Bethel A.M.C. Church



DeVier Stewart Posey - LaSalle High School, Cincinnati, OH

GPA: 3.338

Basketball: Guard, Football: Linebacker, Track & Field

Athletically, DeVier has been a member of and heavy contributor to our football, basketball and track programs for four years. Mr. Posey has been recognized multiple times by multiple people and organizations as an outstanding athlete and team player on the local, state, and national levels. His stats are outstanding but not the reason he participates in competitive sports. DeVier is a very "DRIVEN" and "GOAL-ORIENTED" individual.

- Brian P. Heidorn, Math Department Chair and Varsity Football Coach, LaSalle High School, Cincinnati, OH



KWAME M. KILPATRICK, MAYOR
CITY OF DETROIT
EXECUTIVE OFFICE

COLEMAN A. YOUNG MUNICIPAL CENTER
2 WOODWARD AVE., SUITE 1126
DETROIT, MICHIGAN 48226
PHONE 313•224•3400
FAX 313•224•4128
WWW.CL.DETROIT.MI.US

November 17, 2006

The Watkins Award Selection Committee:

I am pleased to recommend Joseph Brennen Barksdale to be nominated for the Frank D. Watkins Trophy Award. I believe it is important to recognize bright young men, by acknowledging their accomplishments and encouraging their pursuit of excellence.

Joseph has participated in the Motor City Makeover initiative in the City of Detroit, for the past three years. He is an intelligent, tenacious and hard working individual who enjoys the challenge of achievement.

Joseph is currently a senior in the Chemical Engineering curriculum at Cass Technical high school. His cumulative GPA is 3.5 and he is a member of the national Honor Society. He is currently on the Honor Roll, as he has been all of his life! He attended Bates Academy from kindergarten through eighth grade at which time he was nominated for the Wade H. McCree scholarship. Joseph has successfully met all of the criteria specified in order to receive the full four-year, tuition-only scholarship for use at a public Michigan university. In addition, Joseph has received Full-Athletic scholarship offers to most of the major universities across our country.

Aside from school and football, Joseph is a well-rounded young man. He attends church regularly at the Northend Church of God in Christ. At Northend COGIC, Joseph is an active member in the youth auxiliary, the Purity Class and served as the Youth President for two years.

Joseph has only played football during his high school years (during his Bates years, the football season coincided with the beginning of the school year and the academics always took precedence). He plays dual positions on Cass Tech's team – Offensive lineman and Defensive tackle. He prefers the defensive role and his jersey number is 76. He is 6'6" tall and weighs 315 lbs. He can run the 40 in 4.8 sec. and can bench press 430 lbs. Joseph has been a force to be reckoned with against Cass' opponents during this football season. In addition to his nomination for the Watkins Award, he has been recognized as the #3 DT in the country and has been invited to play in the 2007 U. S. Army All-American game. He is the only player from Michigan invited to play in the upcoming game and only the second Michiganiaan to ever have been invited to play.

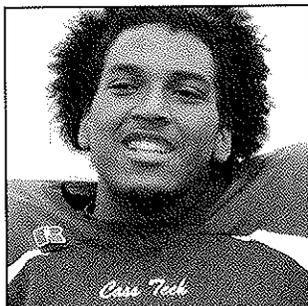
Please consider this exceptional nominee, Joseph Brennen Barksdale. I truly believe he is worthy of the Frank D. Watkins Trophy Award. He is an exceptional African American athlete and scholar. I am confident that he will continue to exemplify excellence and work to positively impact the future.

Sincerely,


Kwame M. Kilpatrick
Mayor

16TH ANNUAL WATKINS AWARD FINALISTS

All five finalists were formally announced on Saturday, February 24, 2007 at the Le Meridien in Los Angeles, CA. The ALLIANCE was proud to present these five outstanding young men and recognize them for their numerous academic, athletic, and community achievements.



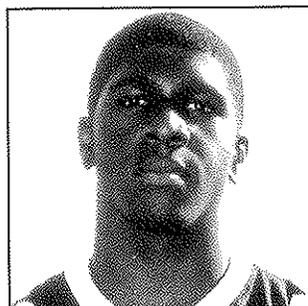
Joseph Brennan Barksdale - Lewis Cass Technical High School, Detroit, Michigan

GPA: 3.5

Football: Defensive Tackle

Joseph has been a force to be reckoned with against Cass Tech's opponents during the football season. At Cass Tech he is currently on the Honor Roll as he has been all his life. Aside from school and football, Joseph is a well-rounded young man. He attends church regularly at Northend Church of God in Christ. Joseph is an exceptional African American athlete and scholar. I am confident that he will continue to exemplify excellence and work to positively impact the future.

- Kwame M. Kilpatrick, Mayor, City of Detroit



Andrew Davis - Montbello High School, Denver, Colorado

GPA: 4.0

Football: Wide Receiver, Baseball: Pitcher, Catcher, Outfielder

Andrew Davis possesses the fiber of a winner and the character of a champion. He has a history of community activism, a 4.0 GPA, and numerous full athletic scholarship offers to attend premier universities. Andrew's lineage will only add strength to the culmination of talent, intelligence, and dignity embodied in this award.

- Marcus Houston, Director, Just Say Know, Inc.



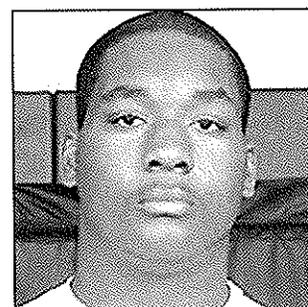
Bradley Stephens - McAllen Memorial High School, McAllen, Texas

GPA: 3.7

Football: Running Back, Track & Field

Bradley is a key player on the Varsity Football team. The most impressive thing about Bradley is not that he led the valley in rushing yards last season and broke a valley record or that he has broken a lot of football records at our school. Instead, the most noteworthy quality is that he is a young man that you would love for your child to look up to. He stands out, not just because of his skills on the football field, but because of his impeccable character. Bradley has definitely committed himself to excellence. I am confident that he will represent this prestigious award well.

- Renee Huddleston, Peer Assistance Leadership Teacher



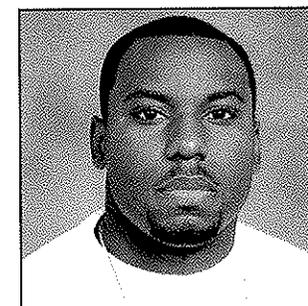
Trinton Sturdivant - Anson High School, Wadesboro, North Carolina

GPA: 4.1

Basketball: Center, Football: Offensive Tackle

Football and academics both seem to come naturally to Trinton but he really strives to be the best at both. He worked extremely hard academically to get where he is and he trained hard over the summer to be recognized as one of the top lineman in America on Rivals.com. He really exemplifies the true meaning of student-athlete. He is a class act all the way through and he is a young man that will succeed at anything he sets his mind to.

- Chad Simmons, Rivals.com, Recruiting Analyst



Charles White - Blythewood High School, Columbia, South Carolina

GPA: 3.9

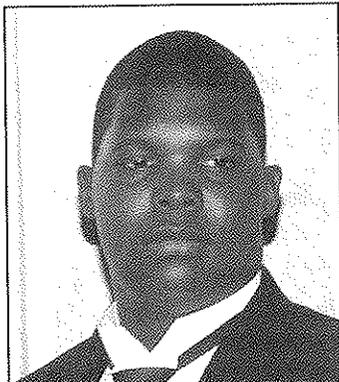
Basketball: Guard, Football: Linebacker, Track & Field

Charles is a proven leader. He exhibits impeccable leadership skills both on and off the field. He is equally talented in basketball, football, track and field and excels in all three venues. Charles constantly performs at a very high level, he is the ultimate competitor. Charles is a quality student-athlete, who will represent the Watkins Award in a most worthy and honorable manner.

- Keith T. Bailey, Mayor Pro Tem, Blythewood, SC

15TH ANNUAL WATKINS AWARD FINALISTS

The 2006 Watkins Award Finalists are shown below. The winner and other finalists were formally announced on Saturday, February 25, 2006 at the Le Meridien Hotel in Los Angeles, CA. The ALLIANCE was proud to present these four outstanding young men and recognize them for their numerous academic, athletic, and community achievements.



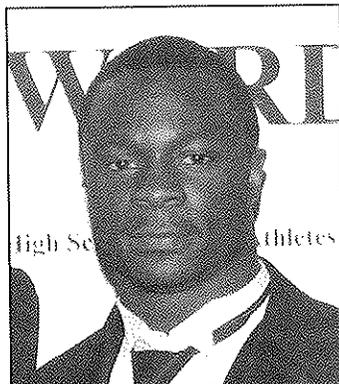
Bryant Browning – Glenville High School, Cleveland, OH

GPA: 4.0

Football: Offensive Lineman

(Bryant's) outstanding scholarship, character, leadership, and service easily qualify him for this prestigious award. His kind, warm spirit has touched the hearts of community and the staff. Our school enjoys a reputation for academic and athletic excellence largely due to the efforts of this student. I wholeheartedly believe he is worthy and will proudly dignify the honor and integrity of this award.

– Jacqueline W. Bell
Campus Administrator, Glenville High School



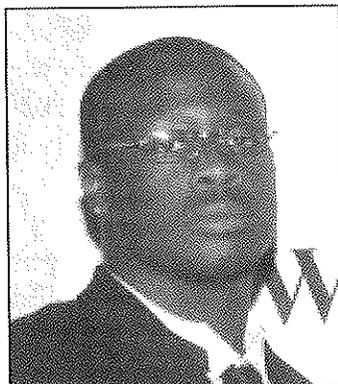
Terry O. Grant – Lumberton High School, Lumberton, MS

GPA: 3.33

Football: Running Back // Track: 100m / 200 m

Terry is a young man with high morals, values, and strong character. He has shown himself to be a leader in school as well as in the community. He is constantly excelling in academics. This young man doesn't mind going the extra mile to be a better person or a better student. He is genuinely kindhearted, positive, and a respectable young man who will not give up until his goals are obtained. This young man has been a model student and he would be an excellent choice for the Franklin D. Watkins Memorial Trophy Award.

– Dennis E. Holder
Principal, Lumberton High School



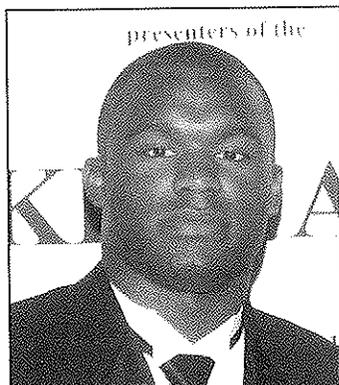
Gerald Keith Brian McCoy – Southeast High School, Oklahoma City, OK

GPA: 3.5

Football: Defensive Tackle // Track & Field: Shot Put

Academically, GK is disciplined and excels in his studies on a regular basis. He is well-rounded socially, emotionally, physically, and spiritually, and is able to relate to all types and classes of people without losing his own personal identity. GK is strong in character, sound in judgement, and exemplifies those principles that are essential for successful living. I recommend Gerald K. McCoy without reservation for the Franklin D. Watkins Memorial Trophy Award.

– Michael E. Johnson, Pastor
The Refreshing



Myron L. Rolle – The Hun School of Princeton, Princeton, NJ

GPA: 4.021

Football: Defensive Back / Running Back // Track & Field: 100 m / 200 m / 400 m

Myron arrived (at the Hun School of Princeton) last year and immediately established himself as a superior athlete with the football program, as well as an excellent student in the classroom. His academic and athletic talents place him among the most elite students in the country and yet he's a very humble and polite young man. Myron is a superior individual in more ways than can be described. Myron receives my highest recommendation and is worthy of your honors.

– Cornelius E. Raiford
Advisor and Teacher

14TH ANNUAL WATKINS AWARD FINALISTS

The 2005 Watkins Award Finalists are shown below. The winner and other finalists were formally announced on Saturday, February 19, 2005 during the annual Watkins Award Announcement Dinner at the Adams Mark Hotel in Charlotte, NC. The ALLIANCE was proud to present these five outstanding young men and recognize them for their numerous academic, athletic, and community achievements.



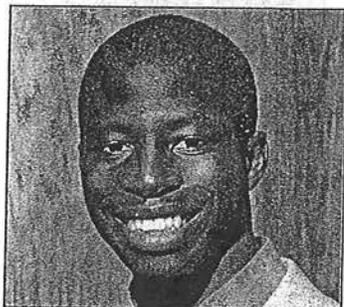
Robert Kibble – Westfield High School, Houston, TX

GPA: 3.8

Football: Free Safety

Robert is one of the best students I have had the pleasure of teaching and knowing. It is my opinion that Robert Kibble encompasses all of the attributes that would make him the perfect addition to the impressive list of recipients of your exceptional award.

– David J. Schnettler, Jr., United States History Teacher
Westfield High School, Houston, TX



Mohamed Massaquoi – Independence High School, Charlotte, NC

GPA: 3.75

Football: Wide Receiver / Punt Returner

Mohamed is an outstanding student, athlete, and parishioner, who always responds to praise with utmost humility. He is genuinely grateful for the many gifts and talents God has given him. Yet in all aspects of his life, he constantly strives to improve and grow his abilities and talents. He is a model for all young athletes, scholars, and citizens and I am honored to recommend him for this award.

– Barbara Gaddy, Spiritual Director
Our Lady of the Assumption Catholic Church, Charlotte, NC



Shawn Oatis – Chino High School, Chino, CA

GPA: 4.1

Football: Safety / Running Back

Shawn Oatis embodies the American spirit of hard work, honesty, and integrity. There is no doubt in my mind that Shawn Oatis is a “Premier African-American Male Scholar Athlete.” While I know that Shawn would be honored to receive this illustrious award, the Franklin D. Watkins Award would also be honored to have Shawn as its latest recipient.

– Chris Bonney, Football Writer/Recruiting Analyst
GOAZCATS.com



Vincent Oghobaase II – Hastings High School, Houston, TX

GPA: 3.96

Football: Defensive Tackle

Vincent Oghobaase II has become a role model for his schoolmates, friends, and parents. He has the discipline of balancing honors and advance placement classes with his outstanding performance in football, basketball, and track and field activities. I strongly recommend Vincent Oghobaase to your selection committee for the award.

– Egbe Kingsley Ikhinmwini, President & CEO
LeisureQuest Vacations, Houston TX



Ekom-Abasi Udofia – Chaparral High School, Scottsdale, AZ

GPA: 4.2

Football: Defensive Tackle

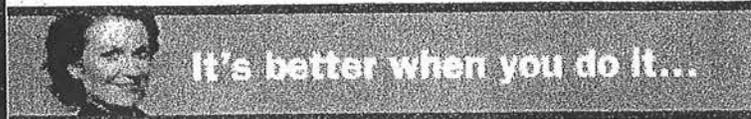
Mr. Udofia is a positive, strong individual with well-placed values and ethics. He maintains a constant awareness of the necessity for change to accommodate the growth which will be necessary to fulfill his career aspirations. It is with enthusiasm and confidence that I recommend Ekom Udofia as a fine candidate for your consideration.

– Carolyn Herring, English Educator
Chaparral High School, Scottsdale Arizona

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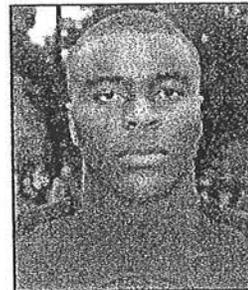
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LATEST HEADLINES **football**

Watkins Award winner announced in N.C.

by Brentt Eads

The Watkins Award, first given in 1992, honors the top African American high school male athlete. This year's winner was announced over the weekend at a banquet held in Charlotte, N.C. The five finalists were all football players, listed in alphabetical order: Robert Kibble (Texas), Mohamed Massaquoi (N.C.), Shawn Oatis (Calif.), Vincent Oghobaase (Texas) and Ekom-Abassi Udofia (Ariz.). One hint to who took home the trophy: had one of the best SPARQ Ratings in the country. And the winner is... [more]



Last Los Angeles NIKE Combine of season is HUGE

by Brentt Eads

The last of the three SoCal NIKE Combines, the one held at West L.A. College Sunday morning, went out with a bang and showed that California and other football players in the West are as equally dedicated to working out and improving as their counterparts in Florida and Texas (locations of previous events). At today's NIKE Combine, 743 participants worked out, many coming from as far away as Utah, Nevada and Arizona. Obviously, with that many attendees it'll take a bit longer to compile SPARQ Ratings and top marks, so look for extensive info starting on Monday. Still, we did "discover" some interesting things...[more]



West's top fullback comments on Jr. Day

by Greg Biggins

Our early choice as the top fullback prospect in the West region is Mission Viejo's (Calif.) **Chane Moline**. Moline attended UCLA's Junior

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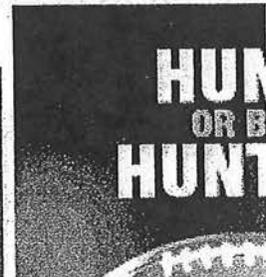
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Covaughn Deboskie Chooses Cal

by Floyd Alvin Galloway

Chandler Hamilton High School football standout Covaughn Deboskie has chosen the University of California Golden Bears as the place to lace up his cleats and cast his academic and football fortunes.

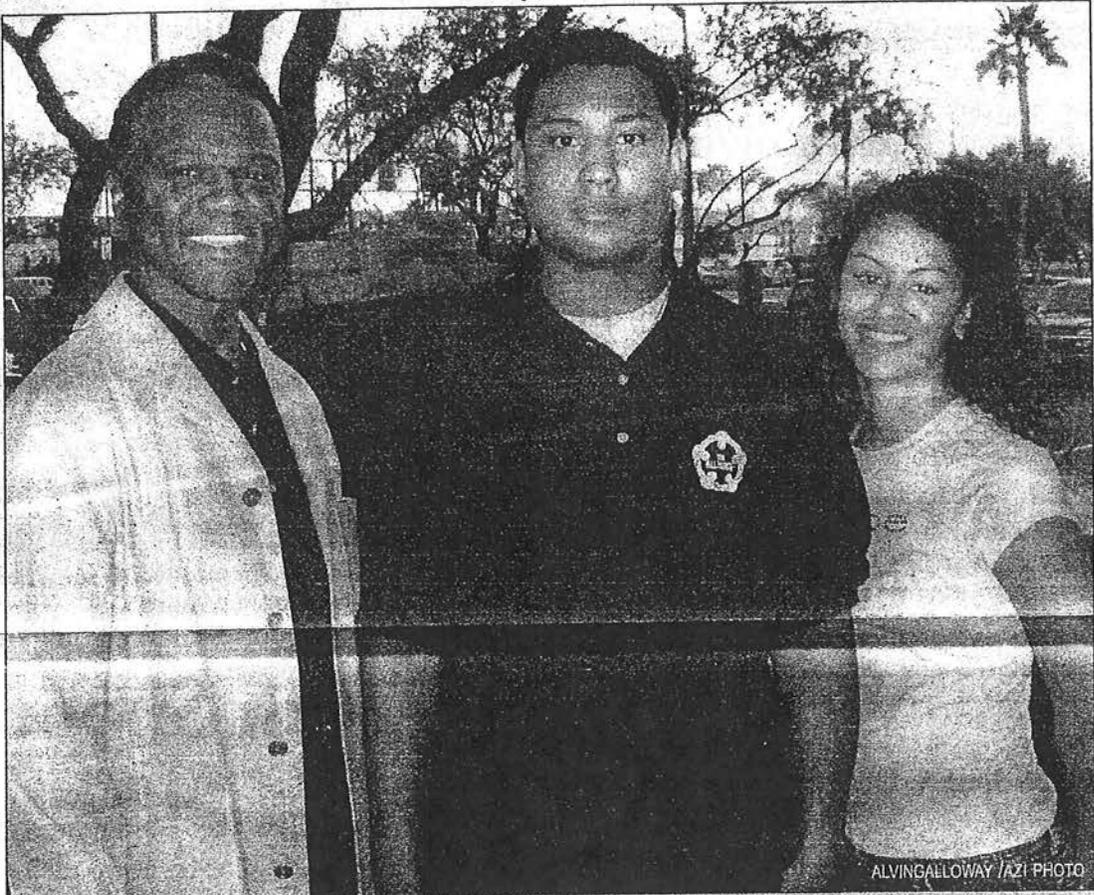
Passing Arizona State University and Stanford, Deboskie liked what he saw at Cal and Cal liked what they saw in Deboskie. He chose the Golden Bears because of their academic and athletic reputation.

With a 4.16 GPA, the 5-11 185 lbs. Deboskie is a U.S. Army All-American and is rated by scout.com as a four star running back, Deboskie will study business at the Pac-10 school.

A member of the two-time state 5A Champion Hamilton Huskies, he is one of five African-American student-athletes nationwide chosen as a finalist for the National Alliance of African American Athletes' Franklin D. Watkins Memorial Trophy.

Excelling on the field and in the classroom Deboskie understands the responsibility of the term student-athlete.

The Phoenix Chapter of the NAAA, led by president Edward L. Ransom, nominated the talented Hamilton senior for the award.



ALVINGALLOWAY / AZI PHOTO



Edward Ransom (left) of the Phoenix Chapter NAAA congratulates Hamilton High School's Covaughn Deboskie on a successful high school football career. The U.S. Army All-American and academic scholar has chosen the University of California at Berkeley. He is joined here by his girlfriend Vanessa Gray.

The Watkins award winner will be announced February 23, in Los Angeles during a weekend gala event that will feature a host of current and retired professional athletes.

Named after the co-founder of the National Alliance of African-American Athletes, the Franklin D. Watkins Memorial Trophy award

was initiated in 1992 to promote academic excellence among young African-American males.

As unavoidable role models on the "image" front lines, talented athletes—especially in football, basketball and baseball—define what the emerging generations of African-American males will value, and the aspirations they will have.

The Watkins Trophy Award is a means for recognizing exceptionally talented African-American male athletes who, by their example, help promote high academic standards and a commitment to community service. Since 1992, the top high school seniors have been honored with the title "Premiere African-American Male Scholar Athlete."

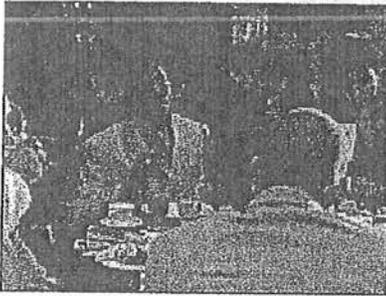
Award recognizes top student athlete

2/20/2005 11:19 AM

By: News 14 Carolina

CHARLOTTE, N.C. – Five of the best student athletes in the nation competed Saturday night for a very prestigious award in Charlotte.

The Franklin D. Watkins Memorial Trophy award is the nation's only award recognizing an outstanding African-American male high school senior for athletics, scholastics and community service.



Independence High School's Mohamed Massaquoi was a finalist. He joined four others – two from Texas, one from Arizona and another from California.

Massaquoi says he wants people to know he excels in the classroom as well.

Independence High School's Mohamed Massaquoi was a finalist for the Watkins award.

"A lot of athletes are also great students and they do apply themselves. And if they didn't play a sport, they would be able to qualify at a major college."

Ekem Udofia was the eventual winner of this year's Watkins award. He will play football for Stanford University in the fall.

2004

THE FINALISTS

HONORING ACADEMIC & ATHLETIC EXCELLENCE



DARIUS WALKER
Buford High School
Lawrenceville, GA
GPA: 4.0
Tailback



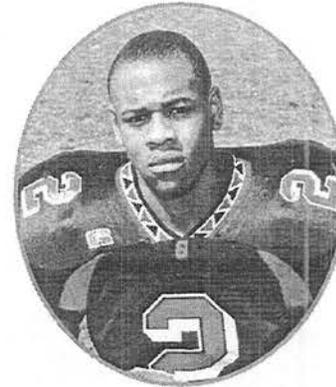
DARRYL RICHARD
Destrehan High School
Destrehan, LA
GPA: 4.0
Defensive Lineman



ALLEN SMITH
Corona del Sol High School
Tempe, AZ
GPA: 3.52
Offensive Lineman



DOUGLAS DUTCH, JR.
Gonzaga College High School
Bowie, MD
GPA: 3.8
Wide Receiver



THEODORE GINN, JR.
Glenville High School
Cleveland, OH
GPA: 3.6
Quarterback

The Watkins Award Weekend

Saturday, February 22, 2003

Featuring Guest Speaker Dennis Green

Former Head Coach of the
Minnesota Vikings



Watkins Award Summit

Cochrane Middle School
Auditorium 10am-12pm
Open to the public

Watkins Award Media Reception

Ballantyne Resort 5pm

Watkins Awards Banquet

Ballantyne Resort 7pm
Honoring the finalists
& awarding the 2003
Watkins Award Winner.

Guest Speaker
Dennis Green

Special Guest
Grant Irons, Buffalo Bills

Ticket Information

704- 569-8350

2003 Finalists



Sam Cheatham
GPA 3.98
San Leandro, CA
Wide Receiver



Jason Evans
GPA 3.78
Acworth, GA
Tailback



Aaron Henderson
GPA 3.92
Colorado Springs, CO
Cornerback



Jonathon Hubbard
GPA 3.7
Charlotte, NC
Running Back



Emeka Nnoli
GPA 3.97
Sacramento, CA
Full Back

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Panel explodes myths of young black males



Student-athletes honored for achievements

By Shirley Hawkins
OW Staff Writer

Despite prevailing media reports that depict young black males as thuggish, criminals or slackers, a number of community advocates are working to dispel the myths that young African American males are pariahs in society.

"Most of the images you see in the media are negative about our people," observed Earl Ofari Hutchinson, founder of the Los Angeles Urban Policy Roundtable who hosted 'Was Bill Cosby Right: Are Young Black Males Crime-Prone, Rap-Addicted, Underachievers?--Young Black Males Explode the Stereotypes' Saturday at Lucy Florence Coffeehouse in Leimert Park.

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- Inadequate inventory
- Outdated inventory
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A panel of black high school student-athletes were guests of the National Alliance of African American Athletes (NAAAA), a national non-profit organization that recognizes excellence and awards scholarships to African American males. Also participating in the panel discussion were Torrence Brannon Reese of the youth mentoring group "See a Man, Be a Man" and Reginald Grant, national chairman of the board of NAAAA.

"The NAAAA seeks out and awards scholarships to athletes who exhibit excellence in sports as well as in school," said Grant. The scholar-athletes participating in the discussion were Christian T. Browne-Frazier, 18, who holds a 3.0 G.P.A. and attends Verbum Dei High School; Ryan Scarrlett, 18, who holds a 3.2 G.P.A. and attends Santee Educational Complex and Lairin K. Taylor, who holds a 4.0 G.P.A. and attends Narbonne High School.

"My back yard faces the Nickerson Gardens housing project in Watts, so I see the negativity that goes on a daily basis," said Frazier. "What helped me stay out of trouble was that my parents kept me busy before and after school. I set goals for my life, and I stuck to those goals," said Frazier, who hopes to major in physical therapy or journalism when he attends college.

Taylor agreed, adding that his family encouraged him from a young age. "I believe that the first step is having goals. I'm sure you've heard the adage 'It takes a village to raise a child, well, I had that village,'" said Taylor.

Monique Brown, Frazier's mother, said that as he was growing up, she constantly tried to encourage her son. "I let him know everyday that he was worth the effort," said Brown. "I constantly told him that he could accomplish anything he wanted in life."

Hutchinson chided a stereotype prevalent among some African American students who looked down their noses at education. "If you try to learn and study in school, there's this attitude of 'Oh, you want to be white. You're acting white because you have a 4.0, you're not normal,'" said Hutchinson.

Frazier agreed. "We're trying to do something positive, and other students try to hate on us," he observed.

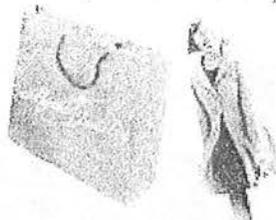
Reese, who works with at-risk youth at Audubon Middle School, said that the community needs to embrace young people who might veer into trouble. "It's important that we grab these people at an early age, because they're being assaulted like you wouldn't believe," said Reese. "The most important thing we can do as adults is to be there for these black males and show them that we care."

An audience member felt that teaching black youths African American culture was important. "Everytime a child learns his culture at an early age, they succeed," he observed.

Hutchinson was incensed that media outlets routinely continue to shun the positive accomplishments of young black males in lieu of 'sensationalistic' stories that depict them in a negative light. "I told the Los Angeles Times that we want to talk about positive young men. I asked them, 'Will you send a reporter?' I sent them four e-mails. The managing editor is an African American woman. If I had sent a press release stating that we were going to have the Bloods and the Crips meeting here at

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Dorothy Taylor Cobb, Esq.
ATTORNEY AND COUNSELOR AT LAW

Lucy Florence's, the news trucks and camcorders would have been lined up and down the block," maintained Hutchinson. Reese noted that positive black males needed to 'step forward' to mentor other young black males. "I know we have a huge problem trying to save these young black males and I don't see black men meeting the challenge," observed Reese. "These young men (in our community) are smoking weed, they're having sex, and there's racial tension in the streets and in the schools. We need to have solutions and strategies," said Reese. Turning to the student athletes, Reese said, "I hope that when these brothers become millionaires, they will come back to the community and empower these other young men."

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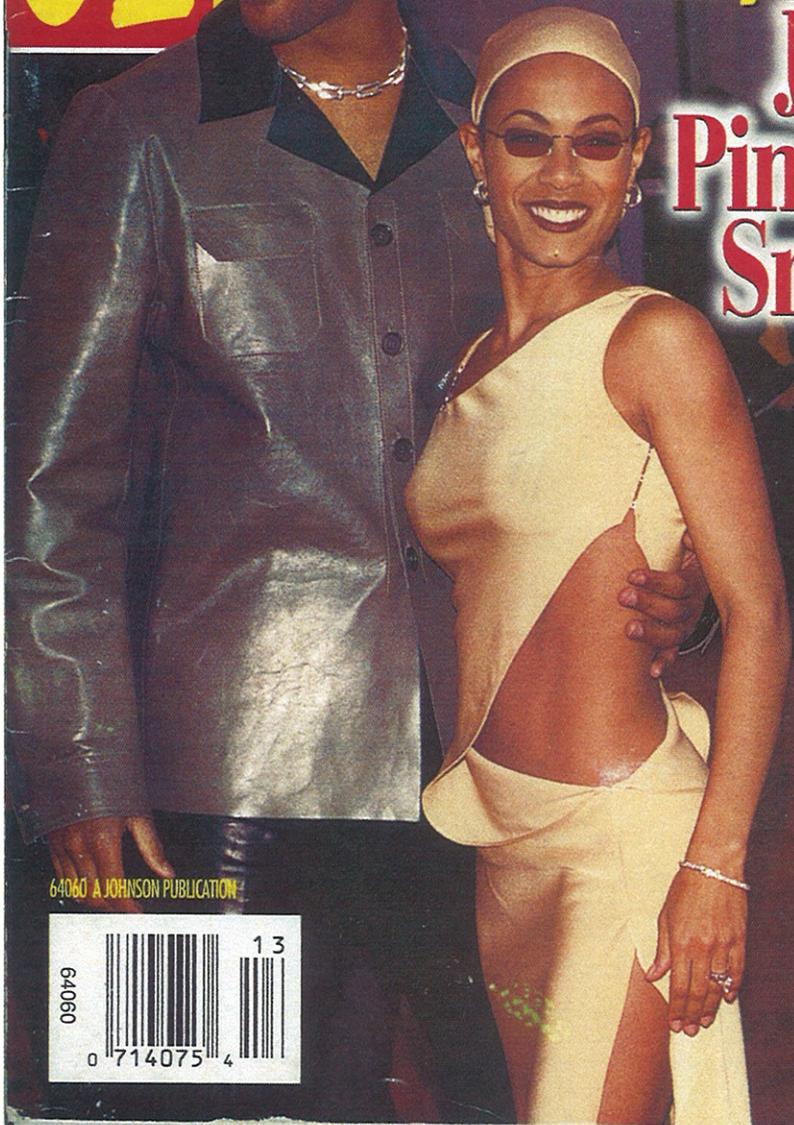
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SPORTS

▲ **TOP SCHOLAR-ATHLETE:** Deryck Toles (2nd, r), winner of the 1999 Franklin D. Watkins award, poses with the award's finalists (l-r), Christopher Lewis of Long Beach, CA, Luke Powell of Smyrna, TN, and Nicholas Maddox from Kannapolis, NC. The Watkins award is presented each year by The National Alliance of African-American Athletes to the top Black male scholar-athlete in the nation. Toles, a senior football standout at Warren G. Harding High School in Warren, OH, has a 3.95 grade point average and is a member of the National Honor Society. He has committed to attend Penn State and will play football there.

White Coach At Tenn. High School Suspended Over Racist Comment To Black Student

A White high school baseball coach in Hendersonville, TN, held up a chain to one of his Black students and asked if he wanted to go for a ride, an apparent reference to the dragging death of a Black man in Jasper, TX, school officials said.

John Decker Jr. was suspended for three days without pay after Beech High School senior Carlos Jarrett complained about the remark to school officials.

"This type of action will not be

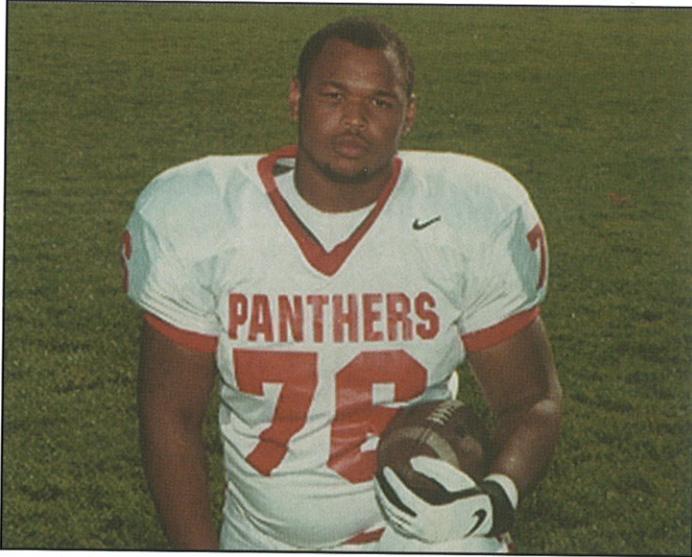
tolerated in any manner," Jeff Helbig, assistant director for Sumner County schools, wrote in a disciplinary letter to Decker.

Decker said the incident "was all a misunderstanding," and he has apologized to Jarrett.

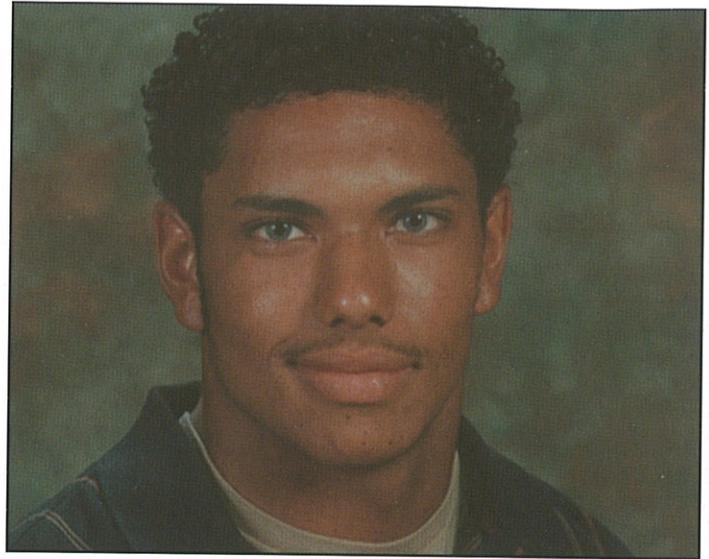
According to Jarrett's father, Willie Jarrett, Carlos and a group of boys were leaving school when Decker, standing by his truck and holding a piece of chain, said, 'Carlos, do you want a ride?'

The coach was apparently referring to the torture killing in Jasper, TX, of James Byrd Jr., a Black man who was chained to a pickup truck and dragged to death by three White men.

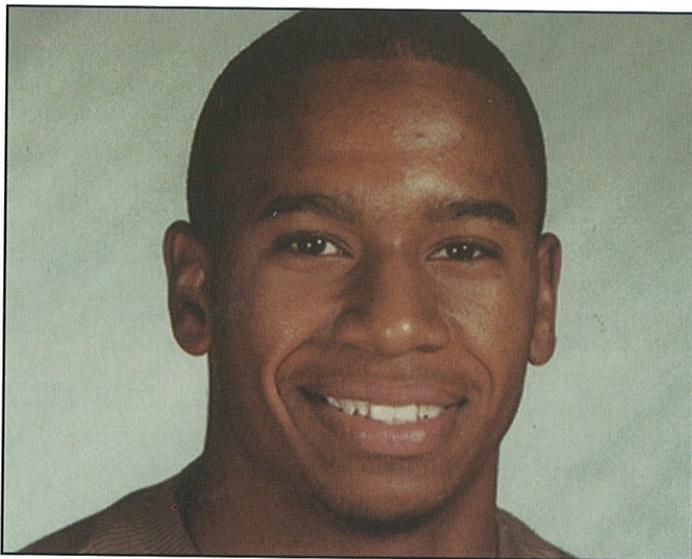
The 2000 Franklin D. Watkins Award Trophy Finalists



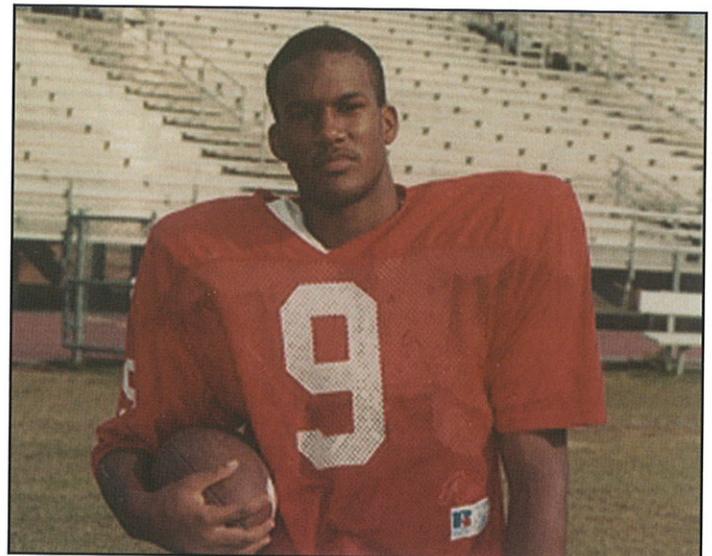
Lorenzo Alexander (3.57 GPA)
Oakland, CA



Michael-Jordan Craven (3.91 GPA)
La Quinta, CA



Maurice Hall (4.0 GPA)
Columbus, OH



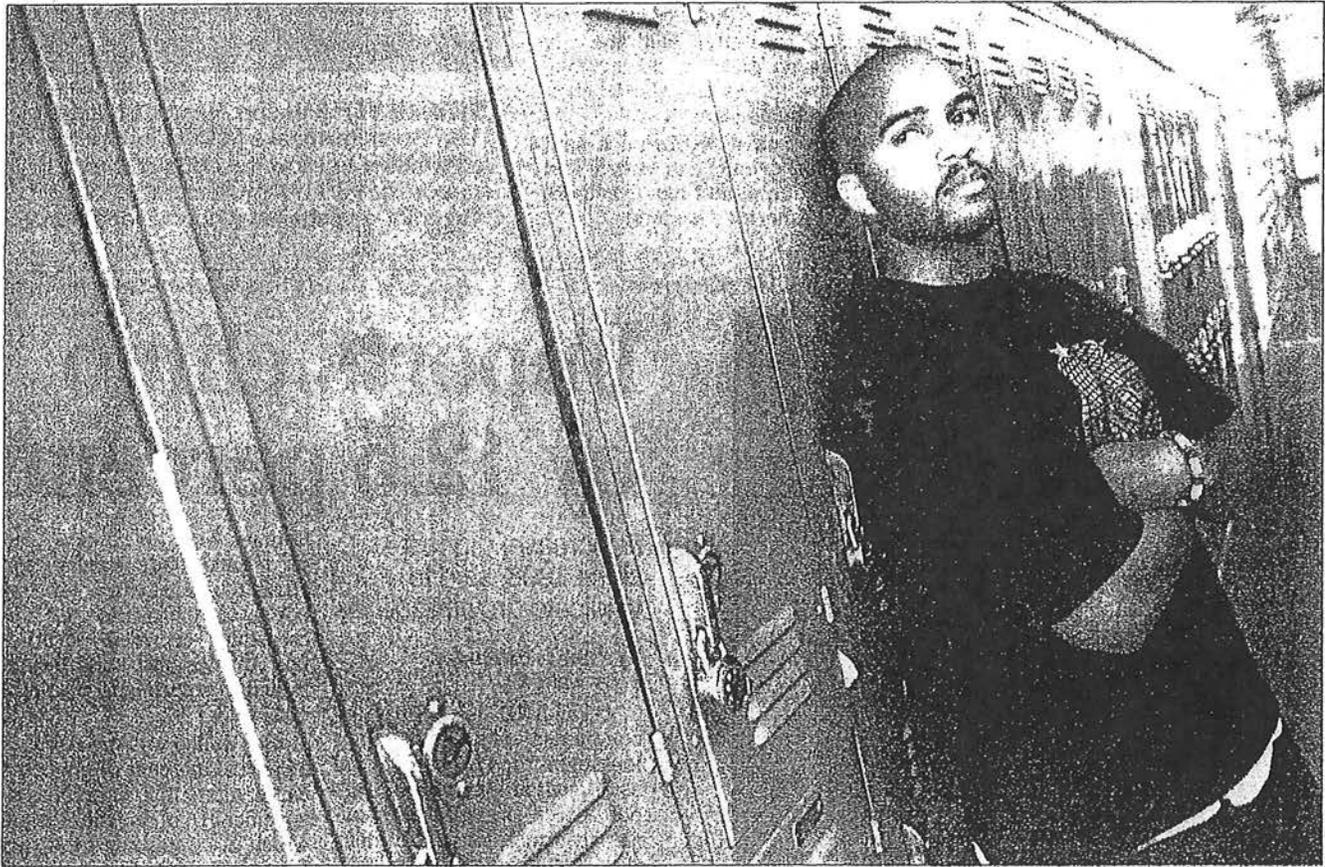
James Lemon (3.86 GPA)
Fayetteville, GA

PREVIOUS WINNERS OF THE FRANKLIN D. WATKINS AWARD

Darnell Dinkins	.....	.University of Pittsburgh
Raki Nelson	.....	.Notre Dame University
Grant Irons	.....	.Notre Dame University
Ronald Curry	.....	.University of North Carolina
Deryck Toles	.....	.Penn State University
Marcus Houston	.....	.University of Colorado

The Daily Review

#1 San Leandro High senior stars on and off the field



ARIC CRABB — Staff

SAN LEANDRO HIGH senior Sam Cheatham, a football and track star who has a 3.94 grade point average, has been named the "premier African-American male scholar-athlete" in the nation by the National Alliance of African-American Athletes. The award is based on outstanding achievement in athletics, scholarship and community service. **Local 1**

MONDAY

March 17, 2003

San Leandro senior wins national award

■ Cheatham named nation's top black male student-athlete

By Jason Bono
STAFF WRITER

SAN LEANDRO

SAN LEANDRO HIGH senior Sam Cheatham has been named the "premier African-American male scholar-athlete" in the country by the National Alliance of African-American Athletes.

The Franklin D. Watkins Award is based on "outstanding achievement in athletics, scholarship and community service by African-American male high school seniors," according to the Alliance.

The top 1,000 such athletes in the country, as identified by Alliance board member and sports editor Leland Stein, are eligible for the

award. Cheatham, 17, played football and runs track for the high school, carries a 3.94 cumulative grade-point average and recently accepted a scholarship to Northwestern University in Chicago.

He has volunteered in San Leandro, Oakland and San Francisco by mowing lawns for the elderly and working with children in summer camps.

Last month, the Alliance flew Cheatham and four other finalists for the award to Charlotte, N.C., where it gave the top honor to Cheatham.

Cheatham won the Watkins trophy — a hefty prize featuring a uniformed adult athlete reading with a child — and the chance to hand off a \$500 scholarship to a peer.

See **CHEATHAM**, Local 2



"A lot of friends always want to go out, and you have to stay home and get your studies done. You have to understand, you have to take care of yourself first."

Sam Cheatham

.....



SAM CHEATHAM rushes for his second touchdown of the night Nov. 15 during San Leandro's game against Hayward High.

Local

MONDAY, March 17, 2003

Award recipient says mother helped

► CHEATHAM, from Local 1

He chose his friend and classmate Raymar Crosby, 17.

"It's good that I have a good friend who would think of me like that," said Crosby, who is waiting to hear from several colleges. "I was touched."

The value of giving back is carefully interwoven with the Watkins award.

"The Alliance expects and demands that (winners of the award) be leaders in our quest to empower the African-American community," the group states on its Web site. Recipients agree to speak to future nominees and report

"(The award) makes me feel that I'm on the right track. I'm just going to keep doing what I'm doing."

Sam Cheatham

.....

back on their community service.

In Charlotte, Cheatham and the other finalists spoke to a group of inner-city children, many of whom are from low-income and single-parent

families. Cheatham, whose parents are divorced, emphasized the need to work hard and make time for studying.

"A lot of friends always want to go out, and you have to stay home and get your studies done," he said. "You have to understand, you have to take care of yourself first."

He credits his mother, Linda Matade, who nurses cancer patients in San Francisco, with keeping him on track by asking him daily what work he had and offering to help.

"She just said she wanted me to go to a good college. I knew that financially she wasn't there," he said. "I

keep him on track

wanted to do that for her for all that she did with me."

Cheatham said he does not feel pressured by the high profile and responsibility that come with his award.

"It makes me feel that I'm on the right track," he said. "I'm just going to keep doing what I'm doing."

That means excelling. As a Pirate football player, Cheatham set Hayward Area Athletic League records for single-season touchdowns (13) and career touchdown receptions (22), and single-season receiving yards (813) last season.

And he made the league's All-Aca-

demic Team in each of his three years as a varsity player. Before entering San Leandro High, Cheatham earned A's at Bancroft Middle School and Washington Elementary.

"Sam is an outstanding person far beyond his abilities as a student and scholar," said San Leandro High Principal Dan Spence. "He's a campus leader respected by everyone — students and staff."

Jason Bono covers schools in San Leandro, San Lorenzo and Castro Valley. He can be reached at (510) 293-2479 or at jbono@angnewspapers.com.

'He's a campus leader respected by everyone — students and staff'

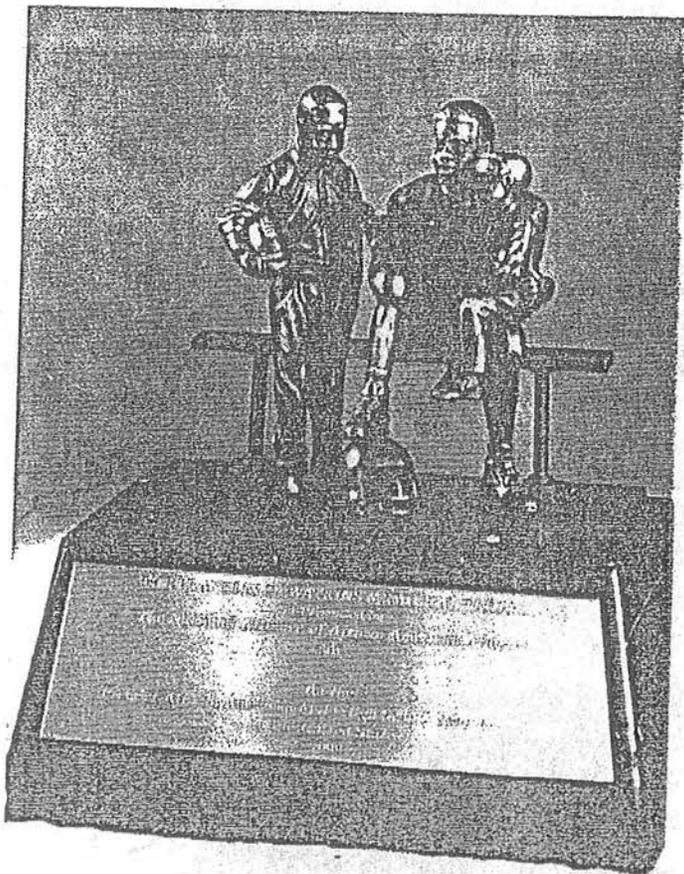


ARIC CRABB — Staff photos

SAM CHEATHAM shares a laugh at his own expense with teammate Dennis Dixon in the athletic office at San Leandro High School. Cheatham was recently named the nation's top African-American male scholar-athlete.

Franklin D. Watkins had an exceptional talent in communicating with African-American youngsters. This award acknowledges his efforts by recognizing the academically gifted athlete. Like the Uptown Rhythm Parade, this presentation will now become a featured event of the Carolinas Football Classic Weekend!

Franklin D. Watkins Award honoring talent



The Franklin D. Watkins Memorial Trophy Award, produced by Jostens Renaissance, will be presented to the top African-American scholar-athlete who exhibits in his personal life a commitment to high academic standards and service to his community. This year's nominees participate in either football, basketball and/or baseball.

The Watkins Memorial Award is presented each year to the top African-American male high school senior student scholar-athlete. The award is named after Franklin D. Watkins, a 1978 graduate of Harrisburg Area Community College. Watkins coached many championship teams in football and basketball in Pennsylvania. He had an exceptional talent in communicating with African-American youngsters. Watkins was also a founding father of the National Alliance of African-American Athletes.

The Alliance, as it is commonly known, was created as a network vehicle with African-American athletes. The organization directed its efforts in creating positive messages and images for Black youths.

After Watkins sudden death in the Persian Gulf, the Alliance created the award in his name as a testimonial to his untiring commitment to African-American youths.

Past winners of this prestigious award have been:

Darnell Dinkins, University of Pittsburgh

Raki Nelson, Notre Dame University

Grant Irons, Notre Dame University

Ronald Curry, University of North Carolina

Minneapolis Sports

50 Cents • Volume 65 No. 25

THE FIRST CHOICE FOR COMMUNITY

16th Annual MN Human Rights day Conference nears

Maybe you remember - maybe you were even there - when John Lewis, at age 23, helped lead the historic march on Washington in August 1963. Or perhaps you recall the landmark voter registration drives during "Mississippi Freedom Summer," which Lewis, as founder and chairman of SNCC, helped to organize in 1964.

It's no wonder that the words of John Lewis are riveting, even to his peers in the U.S. Congress. Described as "one of the most courageous persons the Civil Rights Movement ever produced," Lewis has been in the fore-

front of the struggle for human rights for more than three decades. Congressman John Lewis, one of the Civil Rights Movement's most celebrated and influential leaders, will share his insights on the theme of "Unfinished Business in Human Rights" at the Minnesota Human Rights Day Conference on Friday, December 3, 1999.

The conference, sponsored by the Minnesota Department of Human Rights, will explore a wide variety of human rights issues through workshops, seminars and other presentations. The conference will be held from 8:30 A.M. to 4 P.M. at Earle Brown Heritage Center, 6155 Earle Brown Drive in Brooklyn Center, MN.

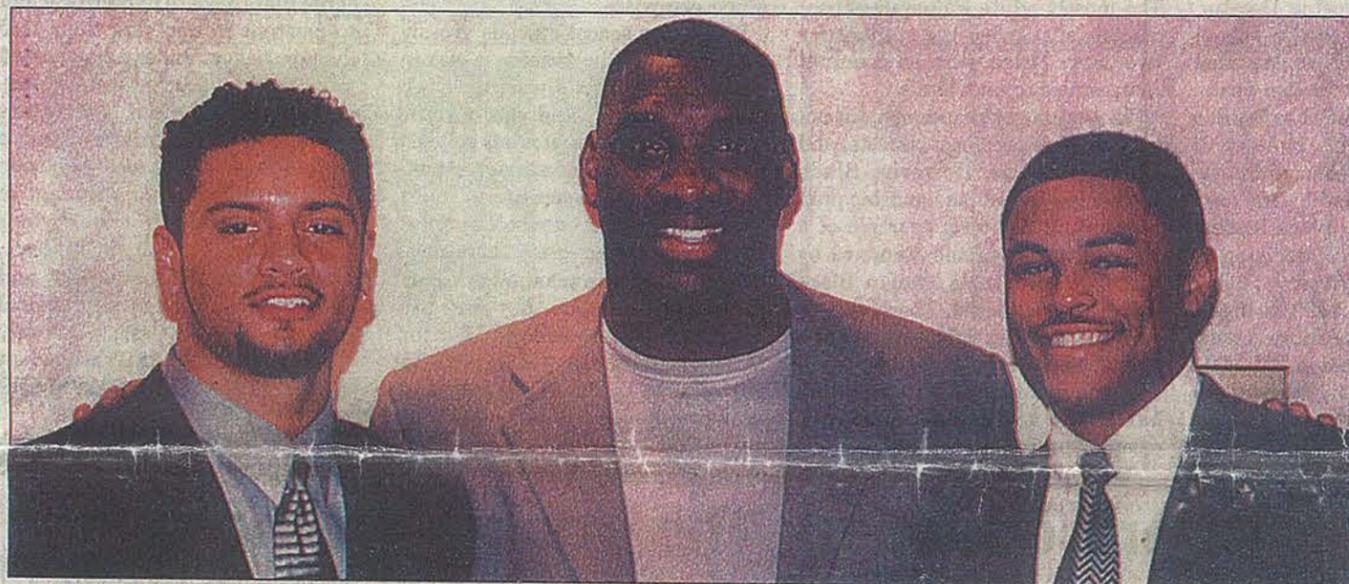
The conference will also feature former undercover operative John Craig, who will share his remarkable first-hand research into the beliefs and tac-



John Lewis

tics of white supremacism. The coauthor of "Sold White Supremacists and War for America," Craig says their numbers are growing in prisons, churches and communities across America.

Other conference sessions will address a variety of issues, including: •How discrimination in housing is being affected in the rental market. •What schools must do about sexual harassment of students. •How to prove age discrimination. •How stereotypes may affect the press. •How to deal with state EEOC disability and how recent court decisions will affect these issues.



Dominique Sims, Doug Williams and Adam Boone

Student athletes finalists for Watkins' Award

The Franklin D. Watkins Memorial Award Trophy Award named after a former high school coach in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania was created in 1992 to promote academic excellence among young African American males. The Watkins Award, considered the most prestigious award for any African American high school student, is a means for recognizing exceptionally talented African American male athletes who, by their example, help promote high academics standards and a commitment to community services.

The Watkins' Award Banquet was held November 21, 1999 at the Hilton Hotel in Charlotte, North Carolina. The guest speaker was Doug Williams, a former NFL star quarterback and now the Grambling State University coach. In his keynote address, Mr. Williams stressed the importance of academics to be successful.

Minnetonka's Adam L. Boone and DeLaSalle's Dominique L. Sims were recently selected as finalists for the Watkins' Award. Mr. Everette Pearsal, the Executive Director of the National Alliance of African American Athletes and Chair of the Selection Committee for the Watkins' Award, stated that: "In the history of the award there has never been a student athlete from the state of Minnesota nor has there ever been two finalists from the same city." Mr. Pearsal also stated, "What's going on in Minneapolis? You have two finalists out of over 1,000 student athletes nominated from around the country for this award."

The two other finalists for the award were Marcus Houston from Denver, Colorado and Brandon Royster from Fairfax, Virginia. Both played football and are being nationally recruited. Mr. Houston was selected as the winner of the 1999 Watkins' Award. Mr. Houston is his high

school class president with a G.P.A. of 3.6, editor of the school's paper and founder and president of Just Say Know, Inc., a program for which he has received international recognition.

Mr. Boone was selected as a finalist based on his strong academic background. He maintains a 4.1 G.P.A., while also being the top recruited basketball player in the state of Minnesota. Contributing to his selection, Mr. Boone was also a member of the Minneapolis All-City Orchestra as the first violinist for four years. Also, Mr. Boone who plans to major in pre-med has observed over 100 surgeries first hand. Mayor Sharon Sayles Belton stated, "One of the inspiring things about Mr. Boone is that he is a multi-dimensional person. He is gifted in the arts, academics and athletics."

Mr. Boone received a standing ovation from the partisan crowd when it was announced that he had decided to attend the University of North Carolina on a basketball scholarship.

Mr. Sims was selected as a finalist for the Watkins' Award based on academics, athletics and community service. Mr. Sims is ranked fourth in his senior class at DeLaSalle High School in Minneapolis with a cumulative G.P.A. of 4.23 while leading the Islanders to State Championships in football and back to back State Championships in basketball. Mr. Sims was also a state finalist in track as a long jumper. Mr. Sims received recommendations from Vikings Coach Denny Green and former Twins Star Kirby Puckett.

Kenneth White, the Executive Director of the Minneapolis Department of Civil Rights, who attended the Awards Program on behalf of the City of Minneapolis, stated: "Mr. Sims has proven without a doubt that he can compete with the best in the

classroom and on the athletic field, whether it is football, basketball or track. Someday, he will be competing with the best in the medical profession. He has aspirations for a career in medicine."

Mr. White also stated, "It was an absolute pleasure and fantastic experience to see these two student athletes from Minneapolis being nationally recognized for their excellence in academics and athletics while the academic fraud scandal continues at the University of Minnesota."

Mr. Al Nuness, Vice President of Jostens Renaissance and a member of the selection committee said, "This is a remarkable feat for Minneapolis."

While in Charlotte, the finalists were treated like royalty. They were chauffeured around town in a limousine; attended a concert by K.Ci and JoJo; rode in a parade and were introduced along with Grambling State University Coach. Doug Williams during the "Carolina's Football Classic Battle at the Border" football game between North Carolina A&T and South Carolina State.

Kevin Patterson, President of the 100 Black Men of Charlotte stated, "The true significance of the Award can be captured in one word: Expectation. Award finalists are expected to be leaders in efforts to empower and improve disadvantaged communities. It brings young men face to face with the reality that through sports, they have an opportunity and an obligation to do more for their communities. What they do and say will transcend sports and have a major impact on society."

Mr. Boone and Mr. Sims will be awarded their finalist plaques in a ceremony in Minneapolis scheduled for sometime in February 2000.

Turn A vision

By Jerry Freeman

Dabala Rikitu, director of the East Africans Common Effort, has a vision. He sees all of the East Africans — Ethiopian, Sudanese, Ugandans and others — coming together in the Twin Cities to provide mutual support and share their traditional cultures while creating new ways.

Rikitu's vision includes a community of full members of this P.E.A.C.E. who can help East Africans adjust here while recapturing their identity during slavery and its aftermath. "It should be very easy for us to come together," says Rikitu, "through our common African descent."

But there are obstacles. PEACE, a five-year-old organization of volunteers operating without funds, struggles daily to address the needs of East African immigrants in the Twin Cities. With problems growing more severe and more people asking for their help, one of two PEACE computers has broken down and they worry how they'll be able to keep it open.

Adding to their worries on their voice mail by racial epithets and urging them to go back where you came from."

They have no desire to "America is a wonderful place in the world" for people coming here who have no nations. He routinely Luther King Day buttons so they will understand for their right to enjoy America.

Even here, though, immigrant people are scared and confused by prejudice, language barriers and customs, but by becoming increasingly familiar to the culture of color. They cannot find their families or jobs that their dreams meet.

Landlords collect \$20 a month from immigrant applicants and back. Very soon the resources are exhausted and they cannot afford the transportation

FRANKLIN D. WATKINS AWARD

The Franklin D. Watkins Memorial Trophy Award, named after a former high school coach in Harrisburg, Pa., was created in 1992 to promote academic excellence among young African-American males. As unavoidable role models on the "image" front lines, talented athletes – especially in football, basketball and baseball – define what the emerging generations of African-American males will value and the aspirations they will have. The Watkins Trophy Award, considered the most prestigious award for any African-American high school student, is a means for recognizing exceptionally talented African-American male athletes who, by their example, help promote high academic standards and a commitment to community service.

Since 1992, eight high school seniors have been honored with the title "Premiere African American Male Scholar Athlete." Two of them received athletic scholarships to play for Penn State (Ahmad Collins and Shawn Lee). Three more accepted athletic scholarships to Notre Dame (Raki Nelson and Grant Irons) and the University of Pittsburgh (Darnell Dinkins). The first scholar athlete to receive the Jostens trophy, Ronald Curry, selected the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. The eighth Watkins Award winner, Deryck Toles, is now a freshman at Penn State.

The Franklin D. Watkins Award reinforces the 100 Black Men commitment of recognizing the value of education, and the need for parent and business involvement throughout the community. The Franklin D. Watkins Memorial Trophy for the winner and plaques for the runners-up are produced by Jostens Inc. through its Renaissance program. The prestige of the Watkins Trophy Award forcefully demonstrates that academic excellence and community service are valued and rewarded.



1999 Watkins Award Winner, Marcus Houston, third from left, is congratulated by (left to right): Kevin Patterson, 100 Black Men of Charlotte; Everette Pearsal, Watkins Award Selection Committee Chair; his parents Mr. & Mrs. Houston and David Taylor of MetLife.

There have been all-out efforts to recruit collegiate sports stars, but there has been little focus on developing opportunities at the high school level to motivate African-American males to seriously pursue higher education. The Watkins Trophy Award program recognizes the expressed value of education in the pursuit of athletic goals and serves to encourage young men to pursue this balance of success.

By the time a high school senior is a finalist for the Franklin D. Watkins Memorial Trophy Award, he will have received numerous awards, dominated the attention of high school recruiting magazines and appeared regularly in the media. What, then, does the Watkins Trophy Award bring to a young man's life?

The true significance of the award can be captured in one word: Expectation. Award finalists are expected to be leaders in efforts to empower and improve disadvantaged communities. It brings young men face to face with the reality that through sports, they have an opportunity and an obligation to do more for their communities. What they do and say will transcend sports and have a major impact on society.

FRANKLIN D. WATKINS AWARD
Sunday, November 19, 2000
Reception: 5:00PM • Dinner: 6:00PM
Adams Mark Hotel
Tickets: \$100 • Table: \$1,000
For Tickets, call 704-375-7300

MetLife®

Salutes The 1999 Franklin D. Watkins Award Trophy Finalists

Adam L. Boone
Minnetonka, Minnesota

Adam is a senior basketball star at Minnetonka High School with a 3.96 GPA. He ranked first in his class of 333 in the spring of 1998. He is involved in numerous school and community activities including the All City Orchestra and Minnesota Human Rights Day Conference. He is planning to attend the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.



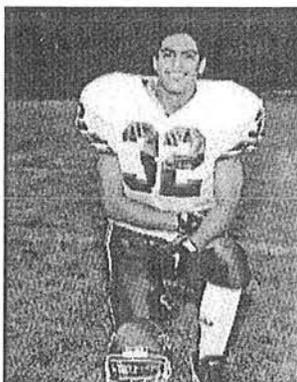
Marcus T. Houston
Denver, Colorado

Marcus is a senior honor roll student with a 3.6 GPA at Thomas Jefferson High School in Denver. His leadership is evident in many areas of his interests. He's captain of the football team, class president, school magazine's editor and reporter, and founder and president of Just Say Know, Inc., a program for which he has received international recognition.



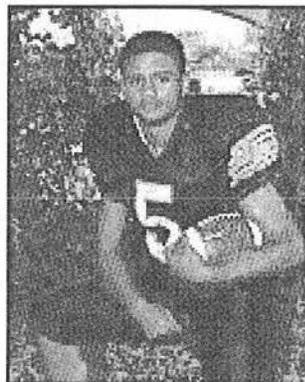
Brandon Royster
Fairfax, Virginia

Brandon is a straight A student with a 4.02 GPA at Fairfax High School in Virginia. As a running back, he has started and lettered since his freshman year. He has also attained many indoor and outdoor district records in track and field. He serves the community through coaching Youth League Athletics and volunteering.



Dominique L. Sims
Minneapolis, MN

Dominique is a senior at DeLaSalle High School and has maintained excellent grades (3.87 GPA) while participating in three different sports. He has been a distinctive academic achiever, champion athlete and has completed more than 150 hours of volunteering and Christian service.



PREVIOUS WINNERS OF THE FRANKLIN D. WATKINS AWARD

Darnell Dinkins	University of Pittsburgh
Raki Nelson	Notre Dame University
Grant Irons	Notre Dame University
Ronald Curry	University of North Carolina
Deryck Toles	Penn State University

Are Young Black Comedians

Talking Too Dirty?

JET



Steve Harvey

Chris Rock

Sinbad

Adele Givens

Chris Tucker

INSIDE:

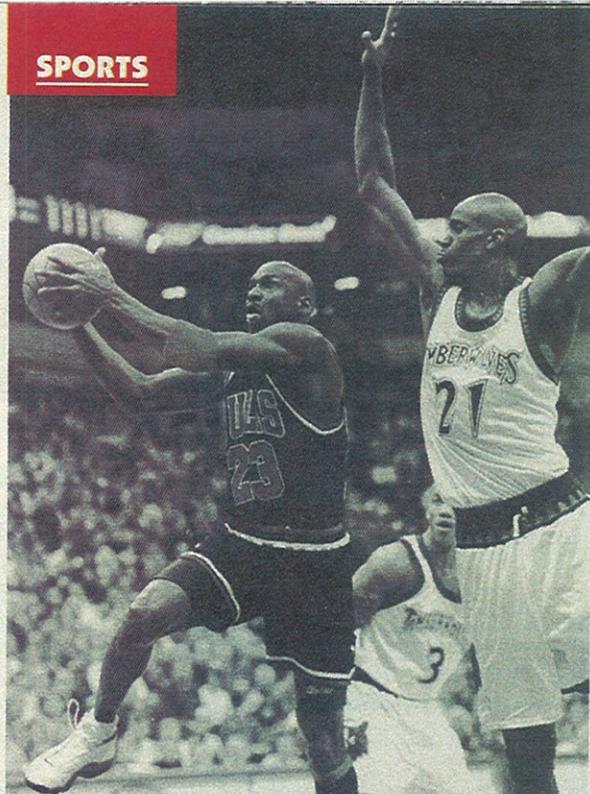
Siblings Who Are Also Celebrities

USA \$1.25/
CANADA \$1.60
JAN. 19, 1998



64060 A JOHNSON PUBLICATION

SPORTS



◀ **ANOTHER MILESTONE FOR MICHAEL:** Chicago Bulls star guard Michael Jordan drives to the basket against Minnesota Timberwolves forward Kevin Garnett. With his total 33 points in the game against the Timberwolves, Jordan surpassed Kareem Abdul-Jabbar's record for the most consecutive games played with at least 10 points. It was Jordan's 788th straight game with double digits. The Bulls lost to the Timberwolves 95-99.

Ronald Curry Named Watkins Award Winner For Top Black Male High School Scholar-Athlete

Ronald Curry, a two-sport standout at Hampton High School in Hampton, VA, was voted winner of the seventh annual Franklin D. Watkins Memorial Trophy, presented by The National Alliance of African-American Athletes.

The award goes to the nation's premiere Black male high school scholar athlete. It is named after the late coach who was dedicated to shaping the lives of young Black men through sports.

Sportswriters and media person-

alities from across the nation voted after reviewing the student-athletes' personal essays.

Curry, who is said to be the nation's No. 1 high school quarterback, is also a dominant point guard on the basketball court. He maintains a 3.55 grade point average and plans to attend the University of Virginia.

This year he led the unbeaten football team to its fifth consecutive state title. In 1995-96 he led Hampton to the State Basketball championship in its division.

Getting there took encouragement, but once-disappointed Deryck Toles is smiling again amid national recognition

Watkins Award lands at Harding

By ED PUSKAS
Tribune Chronicle

WARREN — The entry forms collected dust in Deryck Toles' bedroom for three months. If the Warren G. Harding senior had his way, they might still be there.

But at the insistence of grandmother Judi Toles and football coach Gary Barber, Toles filled out the necessary forms, wrote a 1,000-word essay and collected seven recommendations just in time to become eligible for the Franklin D. Watkins Award.

How close was it?

"Deryck did it the day before the deadline," Judi Toles said. "The deadline was Oct. 2, and I over-ruled it on Oct. 1. He had me running all over the place."

It was worth it. Deryck won the award, presented annually to the top African-American scholar-athlete in the nation by the National Alliance of African-American Athletes. Thousands of students were nominated, then the field was narrowed to 1,000 and finally to four finalists.

Toles was named one of those four last month. His academic credentials include a 3.94 grade-point average. He is a member of the National Honor Society, honor roll and the President-Superintendent's Advisory Council.

Toles has also committed to attend Penn State and play football for Joe Paterno's Nittany Lions.

See **Athlete** Page 9A



Tribune Chronicle/Gary W. Green

Warren G. Harding senior Deryck Toles says he owes a debt of gratitude to his grandmother, Judi Toles, for insisting he write a 1,000 word essay to become eligible for the nationally recognized Franklin D. Watkins Award. Deryck won the award, presented annually to the top African-American scholar-athlete in the nation by the National Alliance of African-American Athletes.

hlete

Page 1A

ryck said he wasn't inter-
in the Watkins Award,"
Toles said. "He said, 'I have
olarship. Why do I need to
is?' I told him, 'This is an
r.'"
t she didn't stop there.
ck's grandmother enlisted
elp of Barber, the second-
Harding coach, to change
oung man's mind.
sure did," she said. "I said,
'listen to you. He won't lis-
) me.'"
rber knew Judi Toles meant
less.
randma said I had to make
do it," Barber said.
atever Grandma says, I lis-
o. ... She's a very special
n."
award was presented two
s ago in Charlotte, N.C., at
ss conference.
organization brought the
finalists and their families
icsson Stadium for the cer-
y at Carolina Football
ic, pitting North Carolina
against South Carolina
on Saturday, Nov. 21.
es says he is glad he finally
mbed to the pressure of his
lmother and coach.
got a letter in the mail that
i was nominated, then one
officials called and told me
about it," he said.
first I wasn't going to do
t my grandmother told me
as a really prestigious
d. So I wrote my essay real-
ickly, and we sent it in. I
'expected to win."
award has helped lift
' spirits after an injury-
ed senior season with the
rs. He severely sprained
ght ankle in Harding's 28-12
o Ursuline on Oct. 9 and
a nonfactor the rest of the
n.
es went through aggressive
py on the ankle and tried to
n in Week 9 against How-
but re-injured the ankle in
irst quarter of a 62-0 win
aw his high school career
es finished what was ex-
d to be a stellar senior sea-
with 94 carries for 460 yards
(9.9-yard average) and 10
downs. More than half of
ardage came in Harding's
win over Rayen on Oct. 3.
carried 41 times for 250
; and five touchdowns
st the Tigers.
t as a whole, his numbers
a far cry from his Steel
y Conference-leading 1,102
; 186 carries and 13 touch-
s as a junior last season.

Toles, who committed to at-
tend Penn State on a football
scholarship after the 1997 season,
was devastated.

"It was real rough," he said. "I
was really down about it. I tried
to hide it a lot, but it really got to
me. It hurt to watch everyone
out there practicing and playing.

"I felt like I wasn't there for
my teammates. I couldn't con-
tribute, and that's what hurt the
most."

Barber says the pain in Toles'
heart will fade with time, much
like the pain in his ankle.

"Right now, the most impor-
tant thing in a 17-year-old's mind
is the present," Barber said.
"Deryck worked real hard to get
himself ready for this season, so
the injury is a real disappointing
thing for him.

"But I think five or six years
down the road, Deryck is going
to look at that, and it's going to
seem like a little bump in the
road. ... He's going to go on and
be healthy. His best playing days
are ahead of him. He's got a lot

going for him academically, ath-
letically and socially."

Penn State thinks so. Toles
will make an official visit to the
Big Ten university next week-
end. He said the Nittany Lions'
coaching staff has contacted him
weekly and offered support as he
dealt with the injury.

Toles is not concerned that the
72-year-old Paterno might not be
at Penn State for his entire col-
lege career.

"Coach Paterno is a great guy
... as far as I know, he'll be
there forever," Toles said. "After
last season, I visited there twice,
and they had everything I need-
ed, both academically and ath-
letically. The people were great
and I just felt really comfortable
there."

Toles' right ankle feels more
comfortable, too, thanks to con-
tinuing physical therapy as he
prepares to run track in the
spring. But winning the Watkins
Award was therapy for his heart
and mind.

"It made me feel better about

Winning truly is believing

Deryck Toles was content to be a star athlete and honor student.

It took encouragement and a dose or two of nagging from his grandmother for the Warren G. Harding High School student to get up the gumption to enter a prestigious, nationwide essay contest.

His grandmother, Judi Toles — who also enlisted the help of Deryck's football coach, Gary Barber — was right: Deryck ended up winning the Franklin D. Watkins Award presented each year to the top African-American scholar-athlete in the nation by the National Alliance of African-American Athletes.

This was no small accomplishment. Deryck emerged the winner from a field of 1,000 applicants nationwide.

Deryck's accomplishment certainly is a reflection of this young man, but it also shows that parents, grandparents and mentors play a vital role in the lives of even the top students. His grandmother's and coach's belief in Deryck likely inspired him to put together the award-winning essay.

It came at a good time for Deryck, who was having a discouraging football season because of injuries. Deryck said the award lifted her grandson's spirits and gave him the experience of winning on yet another playing field.

Parents, grandparents, coaches and teachers are key to helping students be all they can be. Their guidance is invaluable on so many levels. Parents and grandparents have the task of showing their children their options and encouraging them to take advantage of the right things at the right time. Adults have to be there when kids are both up and down.

Sometimes it's a difficult job and sometimes it seems like a thankless job. But in the end, when a goal is attained — whether big or small — it all seems worthwhile.

Just ask Judi Toles.

THE WATKINS AWARD: Not Just Another Trophy

The Franklin D. Watkins Memorial Trophy is the nation's first and only award to recognize outstanding achievement in athletics, scholarship and community service by African American male high school seniors. Since 1992, seven young men have been honored with the title "Premier African American Male Scholar-Athlete."

Today, the Watkins Memorial Trophy is considered the most prestigious award for any African American high school student.

By the time a young black male student-athlete is a finalist for the Watkins Award, he has arrived both athletically and academically. The average finalist will receive between 25 and 50 awards, many of them from nationally respected media outlets like this one.

So what does this award bring to a young man's life already bursting with accomplishments and recognition?

The true significance of The Watkins Award can be captured in one word: expectation. Recipients are expected to become leaders by example in the quest to empower the African American community.

Bear Bryant, the legendary Alabama football coach, once stated, "Sam Cunningham did more for integration at Alabama than anyone else, including Martin Luther King."

The comment refers to the day Cunningham ran for three touchdowns to lead USC to a 42-21 rout of the Crimson Tide in Birmingham in 1970 when the southern school was not yet integrated.

The media would have our athletes embrace this performance effect. An example is the thinking that the success of golfer Tiger Woods has changed America.

Not so, says former Green Bay Packer great Willie Davis.

Like millions of Americans, he savored the athletic moment of Woods winning the Masters. But when commentators began to speculate on Woods' impact on race relations and his position as a role model, Davis had to do a reality check.

"There wasn't any evidence that on the Monday morning after the Masters that people went back to work and acted any differently toward one another," Davis said. "There was little evidence on Monday to suggest that black kids were in a better position to play golf. Black children woke up to the same misery. It was like that Sunday was a dream and the next day they had to go back to the nightmare."

The purpose of the Watkins Award is to bring the top 1,000 African American male high school athletes in contact with educational and social resources that will enhance their personal growth and better prepare them for college and life. A key component of this program is encouraging black professionals to mentor these young men.

The Watkins Award brings these young men face-to-face with the reality that through sports they have an opportunity and an obligation to do more for their people. What they do and say can transcend sports and have a major impact on society.

So now, before the potential money and fame arrives, a male black athlete must decide—in the face of coaches, agents and schools—whether he will become a black male role model or simply another athlete basking in the temporary adulation of the public.

SPEAKOUT

By Glue Wilkins



Showcasing the Watkin's Award are (l-r): Dr. Alexander Gabbin, Chairman of the Award Committee; '96 winner Raki Nelson; '97 winner Grant Irons; and Ken Wilcox, National Board member.

Will he speak for his people, about his people and to his people or will his athletic prowess, and the fortune and fame it brings, allow him to ignore his heritage and relinquish his obligation?

NOMINATION PROCESS

Each year Leland Stein, sports editor for the Black Voice and a member of the U.S. Olympic Committee, selects "Stein's 1,000," the nation's top 1,000 African American male high school athletes who will be considered for the award.

The nomination begins a three-month selection process that raises the consciousness of not only the student-athlete, but also of the sports community and the entire African-American community.

If you are a black male student-athlete in high school (any grade) or know of someone you'd like to nominate for this year or in the future, send your information to:

Dr. Alexander L. Gabbin, CPA

James Madison University

Harrisonburg, VA 22807

Fax to: 540-568-3010 or e-mail gabbinal@jmu.edu

Past winners of the Watkins Award, given to the nation's premier African-American male scholar-athlete:

1992 Leon Snell, Cheyney University

1993 Ahmad Collins, Penn State

1994 Shawn Lee, Penn State

1995 Darnell Dinkins, University of Pittsburgh

1996 Raki Nelson, Notre Dame

1997 Grant Irons, Notre Dame

1998 Ronald Curry, North Carolina at Chapel Hill



Joe Paterno

PENNSSTATE

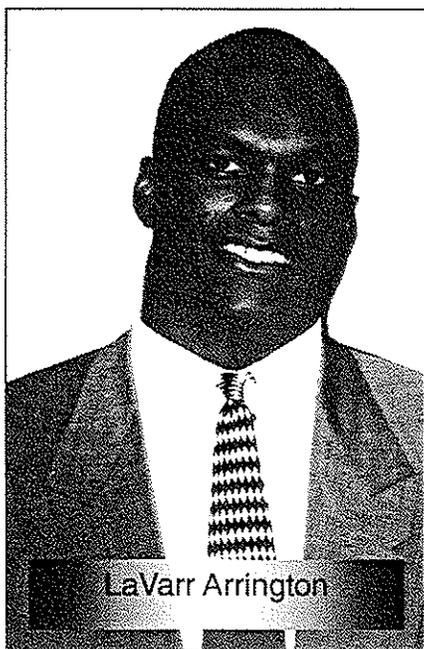


November 20, 1996
Ms. Karen Parker, Chairperson
Watkins Award Selection Committee
3338 Westdale Court
Waldorf, MD 20601

Dear Ms. Parker:

It is with great pleasure that I am writing to recommend LaVar Arrington for the 1197 Franklin D. Watkins Memorial Trophy Award. There is no doubt in my mind that he would be a terrific selection for your organization's award.

I am completing my 47th season in coaching here at Penn State. During that time I have been honored to have coached some of the finest African-American scholar-athletes that have ever played college football. Young men such as Lydell Mitchell, Lenny Moore, Franco Harris, Curt Warner, Bobby Engram, O.J. McDuffie, Wally Richardson, and Ki-Jana Carter, are but a few of the shining examples of the scholar-athletes we've had here.



LaVarr Arrington

LaVar Arrington is a young man that certainly has the character, attitude, drive and determination in both the academic and athletic arenas to stand with those great names.

Since I have gotten to know LaVar and his family during his frequent visits to our campus, I am more and more impressed with him each visit. His maturity and devotion to fulfilling his potential in every aspect of his life has seemed to increase every time we've seen him. My coaches have also told me that at recruiting events, he is helpful, outgoing and friendly to the other young men we are recruiting. He has really shown that he is a class act and a team player.

Earlier this season, during a tough loss to a bitter rival this fall, he passed the 4,000 yard career rushing mark. After the game, despite his personal milestone, he sought out the opposing coach to congratulate him on the team's win.

LaVar is an example to all who relish the spirit of competition and sportsmanship. During his contest, whether it's football, basketball or track, you can see the fierce competitor that he is. He has carried over that competitive attitude to the classroom.

Next year LaVar plans to join us here at Penn State, and I am looking forward to his arrival. In the years to come, I hope to write you and recommend a future young man by comparing him to the 1997 Watkins Award Winner, Penn State graduate and a man who has placed his name, LaVar

Arrington, among the great scholar-athletes in Penn State history.

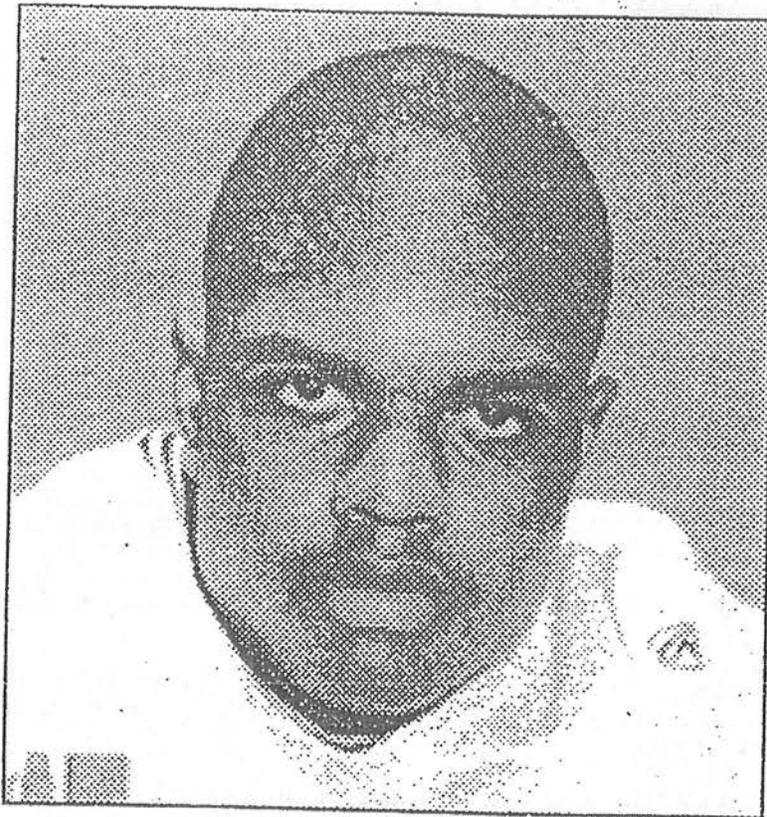
Thank you for your time and consideration of LaVar Arrington. It is my belief that you and your organization can take great pride in selection this young man for this very meaningful award.

Sincerely,
Joe Paterno
Joseph V. Paterno
Head Football Coach

USA
TODAY

Sports

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 18, 1996

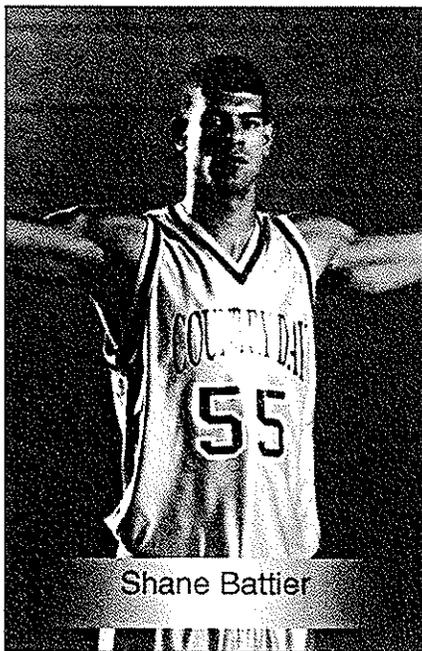


Quick study: Grant Irons wins the Franklin B. Watkins Memorial Trophy.

Irons honored: Linebacker Grant Irons of The Woodlands (Texas) High won the Franklin B. Watkins Memorial Trophy, presented to the premier African American male scholar-athlete in the USA. The award is sponsored by National Alliance of African American Athletes. Previous winners were Notre Dame wide receiver Raki Nelson and Pittsburgh quarterback Darnell Dinkins. Irons will be honored Feb. 23 in Washington, D.C.



Mike Krzyzewski



Shane Battier



DUKE UNIVERSITY BASKETBALL

November 18, 1996
Karen Parker, Chairperson
Selection Committee
3338 Westdale Court
Waldorf, MD 20601

Dear Karen:

Thank you so much of giving me the opportunity to write a letter on behalf of Shane Battier and his consideration for the 1997 Franklin D. Watkins Trophy Award. It is certainly a great honor for Shane to be considered.

Karen, it pleases me that the National Alliance of African-American Athletes has taken such a responsible role in honoring young people who can serve as role models for other African-American male athletes throughout the country. In that regard, the Duke Basketball Program is a strong ally of the National Alliance. We believe that much can be done through the power of example. With the hi-profile that our basketball program has, the young men who represent us are afforded many, many opportunities to display their skills both on and off the court. We encourage them to provide positive examples in everything that they do. Of course, they displayed their first of all, in their ability to be true sportsmen while they are playing the game. Secondly, when interviewed they are able to display the ability to speak at the highest level and get a positive message across to the viewers. Finally, we believe that their work in the community is of utmost importance.

As the basketball coach at Duke University for the past seventeen years, I have had many top quality role models from the African-American community: Tommy Amaker, Johnny Dawkins, Brian Davis, Antio Lang and Grant Hill are just a few of the many. In Shane Battier, I believe, I have found an extraordinary young man. His leadership skills are at the highest level I have seen of any youngster in high school. He has an insatiable appetite for doing the best in everything he attempts. His list of accomplishments in the classroom, on the court and in the community are unmatched. He truly believes that he been blessed and has the responsibility to give back to others. His maturity level matches that of most college seniors. I am excited about the opportunity of working with Shane.

Karen, Shane would, indeed, be a most worthy recipient of the 1997 Franklin D. Watkins Memorial Trophy Award. I believe if he is given the award you will look back at as one of the best decisions your committee has

ever made. Take care and I will look forward to hearing from you, if you need any additional information. My best wished always.

Sincerely,

Mike Krzyzewski
Head Coach Basketball



GENERAL COLIN L. POWELL, USA (RET)
909 NORTH WASHINGTON STREET, SUITE 767
ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA 22314

February 23, 1997

Mr. Grant Irons
The Woodlands, TX

Dear Grant,

Congratulations on winning the 1997 Franklin D. Watkins Memorial Trophy Award. This is an especially prestigious honor that has been bestowed upon you and I want to add my name to the list of those who salute you.

Although I have not met you, I know through your father and the many news clippings I've seen about you that you are an extraordinary young man. This award names you as the premier African-American male scholar-athlete in the nation and from what I know, you are worthy of that high acclaim. Your success on the football field and in the classroom as well as your outstanding work in the community demonstrate a commitment to excellence for yourself and a dedication to compassion for others that is truly remarkable and admirable. You can be proud of yourself for you are a credit to the Irons name and a wonderful example for others to follow.

As you move on to college this Fall, you will need to stay focused on what it takes to succeed. Remember that success requires a clear goal, a commitment to do your very best, and a lot of hard work. There are no shortcuts. It all starts by believing in yourself. If you believe that you can succeed at anything you attempt, then the extra time and work it takes to be truly successful will be fulfilling. First and foremost, however, success begins with a good education. I challenge you to commit yourself to finishing your studies, because a good education will be the cornerstone for achieving your goals in life.

Grant, I join your friends and family in congratulating you once again for winning this award. It is a tribute to you as an athlete and a student. You give me tremendous hope as you continue to contribute much to the America of tomorrow and help keep the American dream alive for all of us.

With best wishes for every future success,

Sincerely,

TUESDAY
November 25, 1997
Harrisburg, Pa.

The Patriot-News

SPORTS

Curry Watkins Award winner

FROM STAFF REPORTS

Two-sport standout Ron Curry of Hampton (Va.) High School has won the seventh annual Franklin D. Watkins Memorial Trophy.

The award, presented by the National Alliance of African American Athletes (The Alliance), goes to the nation's premier African American male high school scholar-athlete.

Curry, the USA TODAY's first team All-America quarterback, edged out forward Jason Capel of St. John's at Prospect Hall by four votes — 243-239.

Steel-High basketball ace Duke McKamey, also a finalist, finished with 97 votes.

Sports writers and media personalities from across the nation voted after reviewing the student-athletes personal essays.

Curry was named Gatorade Basketball Player of the Year in Virginia and Virginia Group AAA Basketball

Player of the Year as a junior. He was also Sports Illustrated Football Player of the Month (September 1997).

He led Hampton to the 1995-96 State Group AAA basketball championship and the 1996 football USA Today's year end No. 1 ranking in the country.

Curry, who will attend the University of Virginia, maintains a 3.55 grade point average.

McKamey, 6-8 center, led Steel-High in scoring, rebounding and blocked shots last year.

The Rollers, who advanced to the District 3-AAA and state playoffs last season, are regarded as one of the top teams in the area again this year.

Previous Watkins Award winners include: Leon Snell ('92), Ahmad Collins ('93), Shawn Lee ('94), Darnell Dinkins ('95), Raki Nelson ('96) and Grant Irons ('97).

Curry, Capel and McKamey will all be on hand for the official presentation ceremonies in Washington D.C. on Feb. 22.



Office of the City Council

October 28, 1997

Mayor:
James L. Eason

Vice Mayor:
Ross A. Kearney, II

Council:
Mamie E. Locke
Linda E. McNeeley
Joseph H. Spencer, II
Turner M. Spencer
Paige V. Washington, Jr.

**Mr. Everette Pearsall
c/o Karen Parker
3338 Westdale Court
Waldorf, Md. 20601**

Dear Mr. Pearsall,

I have been asked to submit a letter of recommendation on behalf of Ronald Curry to the National Alliance of African American Athletes. It is indeed a pleasure for me to do so and I strongly encourage you to make Ronald a recipient of your award.

I have known Ronald for several years. My background in athletics is very rich. My father was a high school football coach for 34 years, the last 20 at Hampton High School; coincidentally the same school Ronald is currently attending. I also played football for Hampton High School and later at the University of North Carolina. There is no doubt in my mind that Ronald Curry is the best high school football player I have ever seen. I am sure you have received the full listing of his phenomenal statistics. But more importantly, Ronald has made a tremendous impression on not only me, but many, many others in the community. He has handled his athletic success almost as if it did not exist. Seeing the way he conducts himself and the way he talks, one would never know of his accomplishments. One incident comes to mind to illustrate this. Last March the City of Hampton honored the 1996 Hampton football team for being Number One in the country as picked by USA Today. At the banquet, my wife and I were sitting at the head table, as I was serving as Master of Ceremonies. During the dinner period, without any encouragement from me, Ronald came up to our table and engaged my wife and me in a 5 to 10 minute conversation. It was the first time my wife had had any contact with Ronald and needless to say, she was overwhelmed with the fact that a young high school student would make an effort to enter into a conversation with adults as he did. I only highlight this example because I do believe it is truly indicative of the type of individual he is. It was consistent with a number of other conversations I have had with him.

HIGH SCHOOLS

turns out top crop of quarterbacks for colleges

rivals '83 draftees



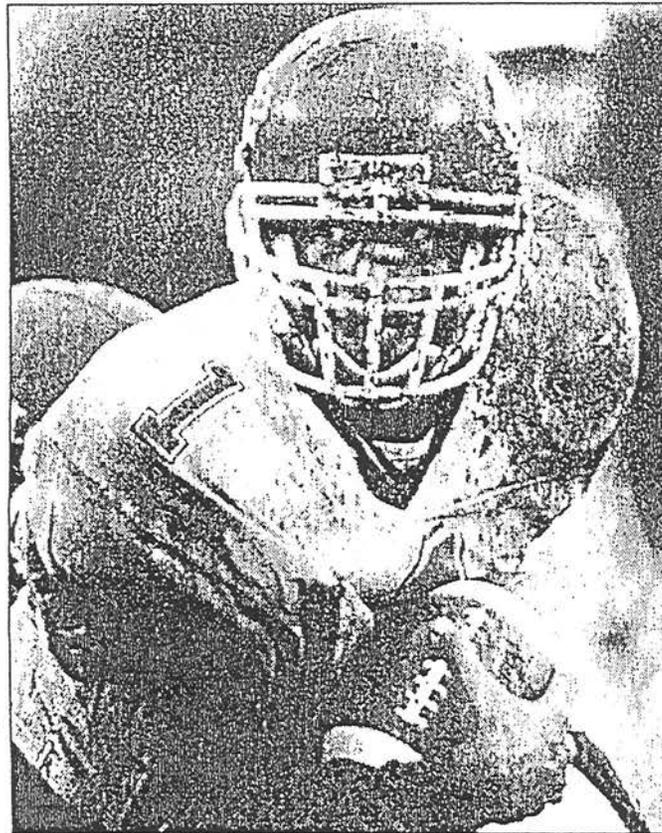
By Linda Radin, AP

ake: Drew Henson of Brighton, Mich., has committed for football but also is considered a baseball prospect.

Rancho Santa Mar-
).
er seen a year like
obby Burton, man-
of the 7-year-old
ootball Recruiting
gazine. "What's so
the sheer depth at
a. There are a lot of
great quarterbacks

coming out of this class."

Tom Lemming started doing his *Prep Football Report* the year Elway and Marino graduated from high school. "This is the best year I've seen in the 18 years I've been doing this," Lemming says. "I've told all the colleges: If you are looking for a quarterback, this is the



By Dean Hoffmeyer, AP

Decided: Ronald Curry of Hampton, Va., intends to be a two-sport star, in football and basketball, at Virginia.

year to go out and get one."

SuperPrep editor Allen Wallace agrees. "Based upon what they've done up to this point in their lives, they would all want

to accept a scholarship offer from every school in the USA.

"They are some awfully bright kids who are incredible football players."

This year's QB superstars have a range of similarities. Most are two-sport standouts and good students who already have qualified academically. Henson, Watts, Holliday and Jones are potential first-round picks in next spring's major league baseball draft. Curry and Thomas also are two of the USA's top basketball guards. Curry will play both at Virginia. Thomas will concentrate on football at Southern California.

Curry (6-3, 195), the only junior QB to earn first-team All-USA honors, is a superb athlete with big-play potential whenever he touches the ball — whether he's playing football or basketball.

This year, Curry set state career records for passing (7,339 yards) and total offense (more than 10,000). This year, he's passed for 1,704 yards and 17 touchdowns, rushed for 902 yards and scored five times on punt and interception returns.

Despite a cracked fibula and torn ligaments that has sidelined him since the fourth game of the season, Thomas (6-4, 235) is a promising left-hander with a nice light spiral. He has 500 yards and six TDs passing and is regarded as among the '97 elite.

Henson (6-4, 215), a drop-back, pro-style QB, has "great size, a terrific arm and unbelievable accuracy," Wallace

says. Henson passed for 1,900 yards and 25 TDs. He's committed to Michigan.

Battle, a 6-2, 185-pounder from the same hometown as Terry Bradshaw, is praised for his speed (4.46 for 40 yards), arm strength and athleticism. Wooing him are Tennessee, Nebraska and Notre Dame.

Holliday, reportedly the best pro-style passer this year, has 1,871 yards and 17 TDs for 9-1 Stillwater. He's still uncommitted. Watts, heralded as the most recruited QB to come out of Alabama since Richard Todd (ex-New York Jet) heads into the playoffs with 2,080 yards and 17 TDs passing, 500 yards and 11 TDs rushing.

Santa Margarita's Palmer (6-5, 215) is a strong, strapping passer with good decision-making ability. Despite his modest stats, Walla Walla's Jones (6-5, 215), who missed two games this season because of a thigh bruise, is said to have one of the best arms in the country. Luke Huard comes from a long line of QBs. Brother Damon is a third-stringer with the Miami Dolphins; Brock is a starter at Washington. Through nine games this season, Huard, known for his accuracy, passed for 1,600 yards and 26 TDs. He won't head for Washington and draw comparisons to his brothers. He'll play for North Caroli-

RONALD ANTONIO CURRY

PERSONAL INFORMATION:

Ronald Antonio Curry
3459 Victoria Boulevard
Hampton, Virginia 23661
(757) 723-0084 DOB: May 28, 1979

ACADEMIC INFORMATION:

Hampton High School
1491 W. Queen Street
Hampton, Virginia 23669
(757) 825-4430
Principal: Dr. Michael Canty
Coaches: Michael L. Smith - Football
 Walter C. Brower - Basketball
GPA: 3.55 SAT: 820 (5-97)

ATHLETIC INFORMATION:

Height: 6' 3" Weight: 198
Football: Quarterback; Safety # 1
Basketball: Point Guard # 22

SCHOOL & COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES: Natural Helpers, Latin Club
Church Choir & Youth Group
Youth Football and Basketball Programs

HONORS: FOOTBALL:

All-State - Virginia High School Coaches Association
9th Grade - First Team Quarterback
10th Grade - First Team Quarterback, Defensive back,
Kick returner
Group AAA - Defensive Player of the Year
11th Grade - First Team Quarterback, Defensive back,
Kick returner
Second Team Punter
Group AAA - Offensive Player of the Year
Group AAA - Defensive Player of the Year
Gatorade Player of the Year - Virginia
12th Grade - Sports Illustrated - Player of the Month -
September, 1997

BASKETBALL: 11th Grade - First Team - Group AAA All-State - Associated
Press
Gatorade Player of the Year - Virginia

ATHLETIC ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

FOOTBALL: A four year starter at quarterback, he has passed for a Virginia State record 7, 113 yards and 77 touchdowns. He has rushed for 2,993 yards. He also holds the state record for total offense.

He has scored 88 touchdowns.

Hampton owns a 46-2 record and two state championships with him at quarterback.

He is the only player younger than a junior to start at quarterback for Hampton in Mike Smith's 27 years as head coach. He started from his first day his freshman year.

He was named the state's Group AAA Player of the Year on offense and defense in 1996. He is a candidate for several national Player of the Year awards this season.

BASKETBALL: He averaged 22 points, 5 assists, 6 rebounds and 3 steals per game in leading Hampton to the 1995-96 State Group AAA Championship and a 26-3 record.

He was the state's Group AAA basketball Player of the Year as well as the Daily Press Player of the Year.

He has scored 1,251 career points in three seasons. He has attended the Nike All-Star camp that only invites the nation's top high school players for three years.

He also led his AAU team to a national title.

Finding My Calling: Dr. Rolle

Myron Rolle

There are experiences in life that truly define an individual and shape the very framework of that person's future. While accepting the Lord Jesus Christ as my personal Savior, being recognized as the #1 High School Football Player in the nation, and being offered a full-athletic scholarship to attend Florida State University are certainly memorable moments in my life, there is one event that made a significant impact in helping me understand my potential in society through a career as a physician. The National Youth Leadership Forum on Medicine enriched my understanding and appreciation for the field of medicine and the possibility of helping others in need while doing something that I enjoy – science.

The National Youth Leadership Forum is an organization that benefits young ambitious students with the opportunity to explore various fields of study such as medicine, government, military and law. As a participant of the Medicine forum in New Orleans, LA in the summer of 2004, I was exposed to a profession that was quite new to me. Yes, I was interested in the nervous system as a 5th grade student at Smithville Elementary School in my hometown of Galloway, NJ. Yes, I watched and was very intrigued by TV dramas such as “ER” and “Chicago Hope” as a youth. My interest in medicine and in particular neurology, led me to read about Dr. Ben Carson of John Hopkins Hospital in his book “Think Big”. After reading about how Dr. Carson viewed the gift given him by the Almighty, I was further encouraged to explore a future in medicine.

Despite the early interest, never was I fully immersed into the subject as I was at the NYLF. I practiced suturing techniques. I learned how to take blood pressure and the difference between systolic and diastolic pressure. I discussed medical ethics issues such as abortion and performing operations that may contradict religious or cultural beliefs. I revived a CPR dummy. I toured facilities at Tulane University, LSU Medical Center and Charity Hospital. I spent valuable time talking and communicating with an AIDS patient. I had a chance to meet experienced and accomplished professionals in the field. All of these experiences really played an important role in allowing me to see my future as a doctor more clearly.

Indeed, science is a subject in school that comes naturally to me. I have always done well no matter if I was taking Chemistry, Biology, Ecology or Marine Science. It is this love and passion for science coupled with the NYLF experience that really solidified my career plans. Beyond realizing my full potential in medicine, I deeply believe I am able to be of service to less fortunate individuals. I can give back to the community by being a practicing physician. I can provide a shining example for all youths, but especially black youths, that lack a role model in their lives. Often young black adults, boys and girls do not have an inspirational figure in their lives and/or a goal in mind to strive towards. I am more than willing to fill that void and become that role model. Furthermore, after graduating from Florida State University and several years of Medical School with specialization in neurology, I will have a special skill that can benefit the sick, hurt or

even handicapped individuals. It will be a wonderful feeling to know that I have made a difference in the lives of others while doing something that is self-satisfying.

Knowing exactly what the future holds is close to impossible. Nevertheless I am very grateful to the NYLF on Medicine for leading me in the right direction and providing me a goal to pursue that is obtainable through a combination of 1) hard work in a field that is of great interest to me, 2) my desire to help others in need and 3) become a role model to others. I truly believe that my path is laid out for me and it is just up to me to prepare myself to walk it.

Myron Rolle

Student Life:

- Student Class President
- Head Tour Guide
- Lead role as Tevye in Fiddler on the Roof
- Plays the Baritone Saxophone
- Studied Culture and Art in Italy and Switzerland for 11 days
- Sports Editor of School News Paper
- Habitat for Humanity
- National Youth Leadership Forum on Medicine
- Red Shield Society (Tours and Spokesman for the school)
- Swetland Award for the Freshman that contributed the most to the school

Academics:

- 4.021 GPA
- Highest Honors Award recipient
- 1970 on SAT's (1340 equivalent)
- Max E. Zisson Scholarship Award for excellence in the classroom and citizenship
- AP Courses in Biology, BC Calculus, Spanish Language
- Scholar-Athlete Award for the student that demonstrates academic and athletic excellence

Athletics:

- Track and Field Team Captain
- School Track Record Holder in 100 meter, 200 meter, and 400 meter dash
- School Football Record Holder in Season Rushing Yards (1,501 yards)
- 2 time Football Team Captain
- New Jersey Prep Defensive Player of the Year
- Mid-Atlantic Prep League Offensive Player of the Year
- Mid-Atlantic Prep League Defensive Player of the Year
- Trenton Area Player of the Year
- *Princeton Packet* Player of the Year
- *Town Topic* Top Fall Male Performer
- 1st Team All-State Prep (Defense)
- 1st Team All-Trenton Area (Defense)
- 1st Team All-Mid-Atlantic Prep League (Offense and Defense)
- #1 Ranked Player in the nation by ESPN
- #1 Ranked Player in the nation by Scout.com
- #1 Ranked Player in the nation by Sporting News
- #1 Ranked Player in the nation by SchoolSports.com
- #1 Ranked Athlete in the nation by Rivals.com
- #1 Ranked Defensive Player in the nation by USA Today
- Reebok All-America Team
- U.S Army All-America Team
- Nike All-America Team
- Prep Star All-American Team
- Featured Articles in New York Times, USA Today, Sporting News, ESPN the Magazine

RONALD ANTONIO CURRY
HAMPTON, VIRGINIA

I, Ronald Antonio Curry, was born on May 28, 1979 in Newport News, Virginia. I lived for a short while in Louisiana and returned to Hampton, Virginia when I was four years old. I began my educational career at Armstrong Elementary School I, and attended Cooper and Cary Elementary Schools as well. I then attended Lindsay Middle School and am currently enrolled at Hampton High School, from which I will graduate on June 13, 1998. Under any other circumstances my goal would have been to attend a college with a good accounting program. I had hoped to achieve that with academic scholarships. Fortunately, I have been blessed with God-given talents which will enable me to achieve this goal through athletics.

When I was 10 years old, I sat the bench in football, but at 11 years old I got to play tail back for the Hampton Tornadoes. I was in the sixth grade and I liked it and had a lot of success at tail back. It broke my heart when I had to play quarterback for the next two years at ages 12 and 13. When I was in the eighth grade, I played on the Hampton High School junior varsity football team at the position of quarterback and safety. I was delighted when I was named All-State quarterback my freshman year. My career in basketball has run right along with football. I started as a freshman and scored 29 points in my debut varsity basketball game.

I have had many experiences in my youth that have led me to the point where I am today. When I was a young boy, my grandfather played a lot of ball with me. I enjoyed hanging around and playing with the big boys in my neighborhood. My grandmother was serious about keeping me in line, and my mother would not let me go out to play until my homework was done. One special influence in my life is my cousin, Joemel Dennis, who was three years older than me, was an outstanding athlete. He was killed on June 30, 1994 when two teenagers attempted to rob Joemel,

All of these experiences have made an impact on me and my life. Everything can be turned upside down in only a matter of seconds. I do believe that everything happens for a reason--that I am supposed to learn something good from everything that happens. So the next couple of weeks will be one of my biggest tests yet. I have to undergo extensive rehabilitation on my shoulder with our athletic trainer, Miss Dianne Limerick, a great trainer. I am young, healthy, and determined not to let this injury end my high school football career. I will be ready for the playoffs on November 14, as the Crabbers prepare to bring home our third straight state championship.

Attending church is very important to me and goes beyond these experience to provide resources of strength. At first I went to church because other people made me go. "Big Momma", my guardian, encouraged me to go to church in the eighth grade. She taught me how to go there to praise and worship God. I like going to church. It's a feeling I get when I am there. I give thanks for the previous week and get hope for the upcoming week. It's great to have the fellowship with other believers. I believe that God has given me my talent and I give Him all the credit.

My future plans are to become a top certified public accountant in a big accounting firm. I would like to marry, have children, own a home and a nice car. I want to work with the Achievable Dream Program and do hands on work with youth in sports. I understand the importance of preparing for a career. I know that a college degree is necessary to achieve my career goal. At this time, I am planning to attend the University of Virginia and hopefully play football and basketball. I am not money hungry or anything. I know that my athletic career will last longer and offer more money if I continue to play basketball. Whichever sport I play, in the future, will depend on how successful I am in either sport during my first two years of college.

while he was riding his bike home after riding with a friend to the bus stop. He was like an older brother to me--I could talk to him, he would help me with my problems. He wore the numbers 1 and 22 when he played sports, so I chose those numbers to wear when I play. He was a definite role model for me--everyone liked him and we were very close. When I play, I play to honor his life. He's the guardian angel who watches over me to see that I do well and do right.

Another experience that deeply affected me occurred in December of 1995, I had to split my time between the football field and my grandmother's hospital room. She had had a massive stroke and the doctors were not optimistic. I spent every moment I could at her bedside. However, there was the state championship game against E. C. Glass of Lynchburg for which I had to prepare. I practiced very little that week and on the first play from scrimmage, I fumbled the ball away, setting up a Glass touchdown. I gathered all of the strength I could muster to continue in that game. On our next possession, I threw an 86 yard touchdown pass to Ahmad Hawkins and we went on to win 35 - 7. I passed for a state championship game record 271 yards on that day.

On October 25, 1997, as I was lying on the muddied field of Darling Stadium in great pain and thinking that my high school football career was over, I started to get hysterical. The trip to the hospital in the ambulance was bumpy and painful. I knew I should have ridden in a car, which had been one of my options. I was sedated so the shoulder could be reduced. I was in the emergency room for about two and a half hours. A friend of mine from last year's team, William Blount, had to lend me his jacket since they cut off my shirt and I wasn't allowed to leave the hospital without a jacket. The diagnosis was a dislocated left shoulder and resulted in my having to stay out of football for three weeks. This experience, my first serious injury, made me realize how fortunate I have been and how much I value the talents I do have.

McKamey named finalist for scholar-athlete award

FROM STAFF REPORTS

After reviewing more than 1,000 applications, the National Alliance of African American Athletes recently announced that Steel-High basketball standout Duquesne "Duke" McKamey has been selected as one of three finalists for the seventh annual Franklin D. Watkins Trophy Award.

The Watkins Award is presented annually to the nation's premier African American male high school scholar-athlete.

Each year, Leland Stein, sports editor for the Black Voice newspaper in Los Angeles, and a member of the U.S. Olympic Committee, selects the nation's top 1,000 African American male high school athletes and nominates them for the award.

Today, the Watkins Award is considered the most prestigious award for any African American high school student.

McKamey, a 6-8 center who received the basketball MVP award at the 1997 Keystone State Games, is rated as one of Pennsylvania's top

high school players by USA Today. He is heavily involved in church, school and community activities.

He has a solid B average and is currently undecided about his college choice. McKamey led the Rollers in points, rebounds and blocked shots last season. Steel-High advanced to the PIAA Class AAA state playoffs last year.

Voting by sports writers across the country will take place over the next two weeks, with the winner being announced on Saturday, after the third quarter of the North Carolina A&T vs. South Carolina State game.

All three finalists will receive their awards at a dinner set for Feb. 22, 1998, in Washington, D.C.

A reception will be held for McKamey at room 225 of the main capital (the Governor's Reception Room), tomorrow at 9 a.m.

For more information contact the office of Fred O. Rush Jr., Executive Director of the Governor's Advisory Commission on African American Affairs, at 772-5086.



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
HARRISBURG

November 20, 1997

Mr. Duquense "Duke" McKamey
572 South Second Street
Steelton, PA 17113

Dear Mr. McKamey:

I would like to take this opportunity to offer my sincere congratulations to you for being named a finalist for the Franklin D. Watkins Trophy Award. This award presented to the nation's premier African American male high school scholar-athlete is not only a tribute to your athletic acumen and academic excellence but a testament to the sacrifice and dedication to hard work that it takes to meet such a challenge. Being named as a finalist for this award is a great honor for which you, your family, your teachers, coaches and your school and the great community of Steelton should take great pride. Your abilities and persistence have gained nation-wide recognition and marked your place in history.

This award is made even more special because it rewards not only academic and athletic excellence but adds to its significance for its emphasis on family, church and community. These are values often left wanting especially among young adults. You have clearly earned high marks for your thoughtfulness and citizenship that are a reflection of your strength of character, family values and personal integrity.

On behalf of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives I would like to offer you our gratitude for your accomplishments as a student, an athlete and as a Pennsylvanian. Again, congratulations on a job well done and best wishes for your continued successes in life.

With warm regards,

- Mike Veon
State Representative



COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
HARRISBURG

THE GOVERNOR

TO: DUKE MCKAMEY

It gives me great pleasure to join with family and friends in congratulating you for being named a finalist for the 1998 Franklin D. Watkins Memorial Trophy. As an exceptional student and a talented athlete you have been, and will continue to be, a truly inspirational role model to our young people.

This award is presented annually to the nation's "premier African American Male High School scholar-athlete." For seven years, the National Alliance of African American Athletes chooses one individual, based on their scholastic performance, community service and athletic ability, to be honored with this award. It is not very often that I have the pleasure of hearing about the accomplishments of such a dedicated, enthusiastic and energetic young person. I must say that the dedication you have shown in reaching your goals is truly inspiring. With dedicated leaders, such as yourself, our future is guaranteed to be filled with hope, endless possibility and boundless horizons.

Your commitment to your family, church and your community reflects a spirit of service that we, as a commonwealth, embody in our very name. As Governor of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, I would like to take this opportunity to personally thank and commend you for being a continuous source of Commonwealth pride and Pennsylvania excellence.

On behalf of all Pennsylvanians, I extend my sincere congratulations on your many achievements. Best wishes for continued success and much happiness in all your future endeavors.



Tom Ridge

TOM RIDGE
November 17, 1997

Darryl Richard

Personal Information:

Darryl Richard
346 River Oaks Drive
Destrehan, LA 70047
(985) 764-6253 DOB: 06/17/86

Academic Information:

Destrehan High School
#1 Wildcat Lane
Destrehan, LA 70047
(985) 764-9946 Fax: (985) 764-9948
Principal: Chipper Simon
Coaches: Stephen Robicheaux, Football
Joseph Schick, Basketball
Ulysses Frontha, Track
GPA: 4.35 (Honors & AP) 4.00 (Unweighted)
99.72% Rank: Top 1% of 362 (# Rank: NA)
ACT: 28 PSAT: 185 AP: 5 (US History)
3 (Lang & Comp)

Athletic Information:

Height: 6'4" Weight: 285lbs.
Football: Defensive Lineman (#99)
Basketball: Center (#50)

Academic Honors:

National Achievement Semi-Finalist;
Dist. Literary Rally (1st Place Trig; 1st
Civics); State Rally Participant (Civics &
Trig); State Rally Winner (1st Civics); Who's
Who; National Honor Roll-3 yrs. Honor Roll;
District; Regional Science Fair Winner

Extra-Curricular
Involvement:

Student Council: (2yrs. Class President)
(1yr. Student Body President);
Volunteer for Parish Sheriff and Library
(1year); National Honor Society (3years,
Treasurer); Church Youth Department (3years,
Youth Leader); Peer Mediator (4years);
Destrehan High Honors Council (4years);
Volunteer Tutor (4years); Boys' State

Football Accomplishments
and Honors:

10th: All Parish; All District; All River
Parishes
11th: All Parish; All District; All River
Parishes; All State (1st Team); Top 20 Junior to
Watch (LA Football Magazine); Player of the
Week (11/02/02) by St. Charles Herald, WWL-TV,
Times Picayune
12th: CBS Sportsline All-American; all-metro; Top
20 Blue-Chip Prospect (Times Picayune, The
Advocate, LA Football Magazine); #9 Defensive
Lineman (Insiders); All-Louisiana; Wendy's High
School Heisman; ABC26 Scholar Athlete; U.S.
Army All-American Game Participant;

Darryl Richard Destrehan, LA

Being Darryl Richard is not a task that the common person can fulfill. The aforementioned task, though difficult, is possible. At a very young age, I revealed my main goal in life, the one that drives me each and every day. Through this I discovered that God has something great for me, someone great for me to be; therefore, I am somebody, I want to be somebody, so that I can help somebody. This inspiring, self-applied standard quote has been with me for about nine years since I first became a member of the Boys' Shepard League Organization, and we opened every meeting on Thursday night with this powerful quote driving our every decision being our motto. As a member of the "Boys' Club" as we referred to it, I was afforded an opportunity to have an inspiring black male inform me about many real-life situations. The vast amount of useful knowledge and wisdom that I attained from that organization, along with other significant experiences, helped to mold me into the young black man that I am today.

Indeed, there are several different facets of life, which have produced a coherently bright, athletic, and respectable young man of whom this essay presents. My involvements within my school and community are the most essential elements in my

life at the present time. While many people say that I stretch myself too thin, I feel that my involvement is pertinent to the building of my character, a trait that definitely sets me apart from the rest of the crowd. I liken myself to one of the South's tastiest delicacies, seafood gumbo. There is never too much that one can put into a rich gumbo. The more one puts into the pot, the better. Therefore, I feel that my involvement in football, basketball, student council, National Honors Society, and many other activities do not hinder me because I engage myself in the activities both wholeheartedly and diligently. If today, I had to choose one of the things that I am most thankful for, it would be the respect of my peers as one of their leaders. I know I have gained their respect through my dedication to excellence.

Furthermore, I have only been on this earth for 17 years. Considering I shook this place on June 17, 1986, I have yet to experience and fully to fully appreciate the many blessings that I have received, am receiving, and will receive. However, I am grateful to be a person that my peers look up to for leadership and guidance on a daily basis. At a school of about 1600 students of which 72% are white and 27% are African American. For the first time in history, students have chosen a young black man to lead them into an age of advancement and equality

for all people. Nevertheless, attaining this position did not come without sacrifice. I have realized that when it is time for change, adversity is everywhere, but when I was greeted on the day following the election with 85% of the vote I knew that I was commissioned by the people, but even more so by God to do great things in this life. For the rest of my life I know that I will be a leader. It is not just something that I want to be. It is what I am. Leadership is an innate gift from God that was not just dropped on my doorstep, but it is the main ingredient, the essence, of my being and my existence. I must set high standards and goals in life, not only because I want to, but because I must. As parents often say, "This topic is not up for discussion." For this reason I often make sure people around me know that becoming complacent is my greatest fear in life. After all, if we expect the best then we cannot settle for less. I place the same value on grades, sports, and everything else that I endeavor to touch with excellence. I am going to major in Sports Administration so that I can one day become a leader in the sports industry. From experience, I know that it is an avenue, which often allows success to grace the presence of many young black men. However, my emphasis will not be so much on sports. I want to afford young black men like myself, whose backs are against the wall, an unique opportunity. As I see it,

these exceptional young men have only two options initially. The first option is to succumb to this world of heinous crimes and utter failure. The only other option is for these young men to fight their way out so that they can explore the many options that they can have if they excel not only at sports, but in the books. I know that I can meet and exceed the expectations of this award; however, I will also pass on this expectation of excellence to my fellow young black peers. I will work to eliminate the belief that because I am black I am a step behind. I will allow them to see that because they are black they are capable of doing anything and everything to which they set their hearts and minds.

I firmly believe in the words to an old song, "If I can help somebody as I pass along/ If I can cheer somebody with a word or song/ If I can show somebody that they are traveling wrong/ Then my living shall not be in vain." Therefore, I know that my calling in life is to ultimately shine a bright light down the path of success for young black men so that the dark path of destruction and imprisonment becomes the path less traveled. I know that this is in not an easy task, it can be achieved. My strong spiritual background also let me realize that Philippians 4:13 is a self-evident truth "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."

Nicholas Jerrod Maddox

Personal Information:

Nicholas Jerrod Maddox
205 N. East Avenue
Kannapolis, North Carolina 28083
(704) 932-9174 DOB: December 11, 1980

Academic Information:

A. L. Brown High School
415 E. First Street
Kannapolis, North Carolina 28083
(704) 932-6125
Principal: Mrs. Jancie Carty
Football Coach: Mr. Bruce Hardin
Basketball Coach: Shelwyn Klutz
Track Coach: Eric Lynn
GPA: 3.89 SAT: 970 (6/98)
Class Rank: 26/171

Athletic Information:

Height: 5' 11" Weight: 190
Football: Running Back, Defensive Back, Punt Returner,
Kick Returner #20
Basketball: Point Guard #5
Track: Sprinter

School and Community Activities:

National Honors Society, Fellowship of Christian
Athletes, Spanish Club, Tutoring Elementary
School, Fishertown Community Center Volunteer,
Boys and Girls Club, Junior Rotarian, Boys State

Football:

10th Grade: All-Conference, All-County
11th Grade: All-Conference, All-County, Charlotte Observer
Player-of-the-Year-Offense
State Player of the Year- Associated Press
State Player of the Year- N.C. Prep Football
First Team All-State
12th Grade: Wendy's High School Heisman Nominee
CNN SI All American
Sports Illustrated- Player-of-the-Month

Athletic Accomplishments:

Football: As a freshman, played three games on junior varsity (500yds/12TD's) and has since been a starter on varsity. Has rushed for 5,607 yards and 93 touchdowns. Was named the State Player-of-the-Year. As a junior, led his team to a state 3-A Championship. Set four records in that game including most TD's in a game; longest touchdown run from scrimmage (78 yards); longest pass reception for a touchdown (98 yards); and most yards in a game (12/205 yards). He is a candidate for several National Player-of-the-Year awards this season. Invited to first Nike Football Camp last summer

Basketball: A starter on the Varsity since freshman year. First two years, played the post because of his extended vertical leap (37 inches). As a junior, averaged 15 and 10 rebounds. Named All-Conference and All-County as a junior. Has played AAU since the fifth grade.

Track: Qualified for State Finals three consecutive years: 100m, 200m, 4 x 200m relay, and 4 x 100m relay. Has run 10.8 in 100m dash and 21.52 in 200m dash.

NICHOLAS JERROD MADDUX
KANNAPOLIS, NORTH CAROLINA

I, Nick Maddox, was born on December 1, 1980 in Shelby, North Carolina. I spent the first four years of my education at Jefferson Elementary School in Shelby. In the spring of my fourth grade year, my mother was blessed with a great job opportunity in Kannapolis, North Carolina and I enrolled in Woodrow Wilson Elementary School. I attended Woodrow Wilson Elementary for the next two years. My seventh and eighth grade years were spent at Kannapolis Middle School and in the fall of 1995, I entered the ninth grade at A.L. Brown High School in Kannapolis. I will graduate from A.L. Brown High on May 26, 1999. My goal is to attend a prestigious academic college with a reputable computer-engineering program. I believe that God has enabled me to have a chance to accomplish my goal free of charge by giving me unique academic and athletic talents.

My football career began in Shelby when I was eight years old. I was the meanest and fastest offensive tackle around (that is, I wanted to be). I played for the Jefferson Wolverines. My next year of football was played in my new hometown of Kannapolis. My YMCA youth team was sponsored by Brothers Tire Sales. The first day of practice my coach, Willie Robinson, asked if anyone on the team had ever played quarterback. My only football experience had been the year before, playing on the offensive line, yet I desperately wanted the opportunity to lead a team. I raised my hand and told

Coach Robinson that I was a quarterback. For the next year I played the quarterback position for my team and I loved it! It gave me that chance to be the team leader that I had wanted to be and I was thrilled. As one would imagine, I wasn't particularly thrilled with my being moved to the tailback position the following year. Truthfully, I really hated it, yet people told me that I was extraordinarily talented and that one day I may just be one of the greatest backs in the history of A.L. Brown High School. Obviously, these words of encouragement were meant to help me accept this new position, yet I still yearned for that leadership role I felt when playing quarterback. After many fans in my Kannapolis hometown and even the head football coach at the high school, praised me that year for my God given talents, I decided to stick with the tailback position.

My seventh and eighth grade years of football at Kannapolis Middle School went well. My coaches and others began to tell me that I was the best and most talked-about tailback around. I must admit that I liked hearing this and after breaking every football record at Kannapolis Middle School I also began to believe that possibly I could be one of the best. As I entered the Junior Varsity football season at A.L. Brown high school my freshman year, I was able to compile 500 yards and 13 touchdowns within the first three games of the season. What a thrill and honor it was to be moved to the Varsity Football Team for my fourth high school football game. My first Friday night on the field was breathtaking! It was a competitive atmosphere that I had never experienced anything like. I loved it. My freshman year I scored fourteen of my many touchdowns to come!

I have always believed that to be the best you have to apply yourself. When I finally decided that I was a tailback, I would go over to watch the high school football practices daily and especially watch the runningbacks. I tried to learn as much as I could about hole numbers, dipping the shoulder, getting low to make the cut and other techniques that backs need to be really good. I did not have a lot of time with my friends during these days. When I wasn't practicing my "tailback moves", my mom would have me inside the house helping me to "develop my manners and study habits" as she would refer to it...to her, being an "all-star student" was just as important as being that "all-star athlete" that I so desperately wanted to be.

I learned never to give up early in life. One afternoon in December of 1988, the year before I began playing youth football, I was on my way home from a neighbor's house where I had gone to borrow a cup of sugar. A backyard football game was getting started and as luck would have it, the teams were a man short. I was hesitant at first, not being familiar with football or these older neighborhood boys, yet I decided to give it a try. I certainly didn't go into that game thinking that I had much to contribute, much less think that I would be given the ball as a "last ditch" effort when we were already down by three touchdowns. I can remember just standing there in the huddle somewhat dumbfounded. I'll never forget the look I got from the others as I asked what I was supposed to do with the ball after I got it. And my advice to "run where they ain't" by a guy I thought to be the best player on the team, sounded pretty good. So there I was, lined up in what they told me was the backfield where they told me to stand, thinking "how will I ever do what they tell me to do?". All I could think about was that I'm about to be killed! Then came the moment that I think changed by life – the quarterback

Watkins Award honors premier national student/athlete

By LELAND STEIN III

In spite of the constant badgering of many media members voicing concern that today's athletes are spoiled, do not care about education, or are bad citizens, I submit those contentions are overstated.

Sure there are some who do not take advantage of education opportunities, even though they are concurrent with any involvement in sports at every level.

However, many, many do take advantage. Sport is a panacea — right or wrong — for a multitude of urban youth.

One Detroit football coach told me he took a survey and “only eighteen out of fifty of my kids come from two-parent households.” He also noted that in many cases the “team becomes the kid's family.”

In most cases, athletes struggling academically, it's not the sport, but the living conditions or environment they are submerged in.

Despite the obvious shortcomings in Urban America, there are some fine young men rising out of our communities and one national organization has decided not to shy away from the impact of sports, while highlighting our successes and not failures.

The National Alliance of African American Athletes (NAAAA) saw a need to project a different and positive image of our youth in athletics. The Alliance founders set out to recognize outstanding achievement in athletics, academics and community service by an African American male high school senior athlete.

The coveted Franklin D. Watkins Memorial Trophy Award, which was first awarded in 1992, is the NAAAA's signature event. It has become the premier African-American high school scholar/athlete award in America and each year — primarily through the Black media — it has taken on added stature and significance.

The Alliance, a non-profit organization, was established in 1989 and boast an athlete advisory board of Hall of Famer Reggie White, NFL players Greg Lloyd, and Warren Moon, MLB stars Frank Thomas and Royce Clayton and NBA player Charlie Ward.

One goal of the Foundation is to facilitate the development of African American boys in American society. Help them become a presence in their community by creating activities and opportunities that encourage these young men to realize their full potential as productive members of their communities and our nation. The Finalist for the coveted Watkins Award meet these objective and more.

As a member of the Watkins Award selection committee, I look forward every year to receiving the final twenty or so Watkins' application packets. Our average finalist will receive between twenty-five and fifty athletic awards, dominate the attention of high school recruiting magazines and appear regularly in the USA TODAY, but more importantly, each is at the top of their class academically and are leaders in their community.

After reading these fine young men's personal statements and achievements, I get a rejuvenated spirit and regain my balance against the overwhelming negative energy that's in the media concerning young African-American males – especially athletes.

Too many of today's youth shun extra work, and, make no mistake about it, the all-star athletes that apply for the Watkins Award put together application packages that are daunting and time consuming. Each applicant must include transcripts verifying GPA, three letters of recommendation, athletic awards and honors, a personal statement essay (min. 1000 words) and community and volunteering activities.

Recently the Alliance named its 12th Watkins winner at its annual Franklin D. Watkins Memorial Award Weekend and Dinner held in Charlotte, NC at the Ballantyne Resorts. The keynote speaker was Dennis Green, former Minnesota Vikings and Stanford University head coach. The Five Finalist was feted and the winner was announced in Heisman-like fashion. Also in attendance were past winners.

This year's Final Five is an outstanding collection of Black high school male athletes. All carry GPA's higher than 3.8 and are Prep All-Americans.

The Alliance believes young men like these need to be highlighted in our sporting community, to create a balance against the perception that Black male athletes do not achieve in school. Many times we get so wrapped up in the negative perceptions that we lose sight of the good that all around us.

Rounding out 2003's super five is the Watkins winner Samuel Cheatham of San Leandro, Ca, and Finalist Jason Evans of Acworth, Ga; Aaron Henderson from Colorado Springs, Co; Jonathan Hubbard of Charlotte, N.C.; and Emeka Nnoli from Elk Grove, Ca.

What makes the Franklin D. Watkins Memorial Trophy so Special?

The Watkins Award brings these young men face to face with the reality that through sports each has an opportunity and an obligation to do more. So, before the money, before the fame each must decide . . . in the face of coaches, agents and schools that promote them as "athletes" . . . each must decide whether he is a Black educated Man or just an athlete.

As the legacy of the Award grows, the young men in the Watkins Family are spread at colleges and professional teams through out America, all are standing as beacons of what Black male athletes can accomplish via education and sports.

Information or Watkins applications can be found online at www.naaaa.com.

Leland Stein is a veteran journalist/columnist; he can be reached at lstein3@aol.com



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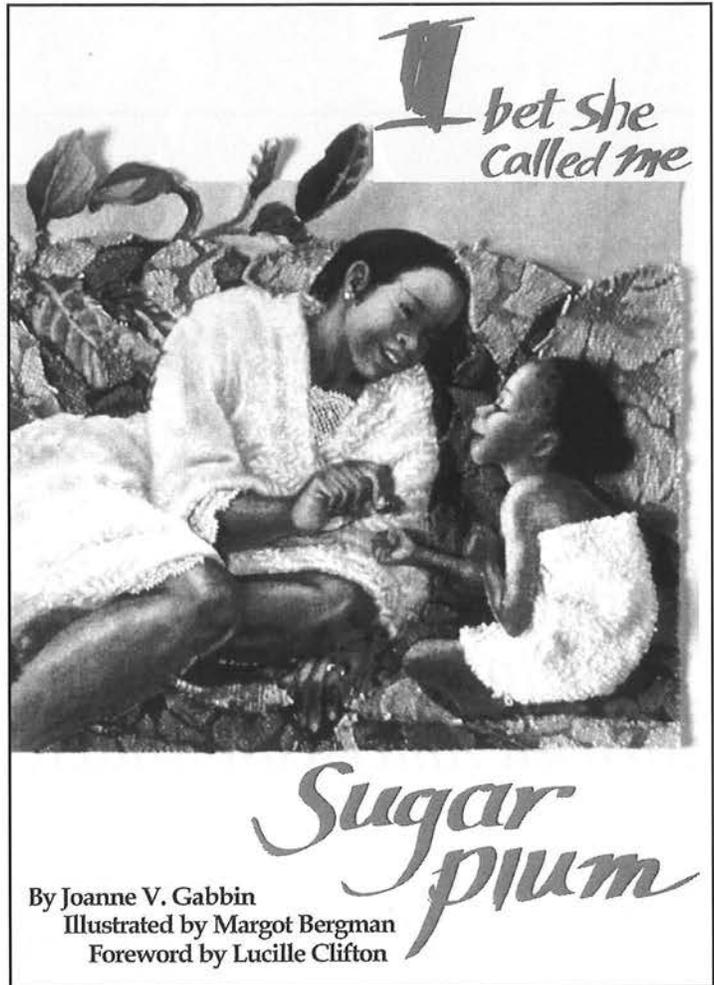
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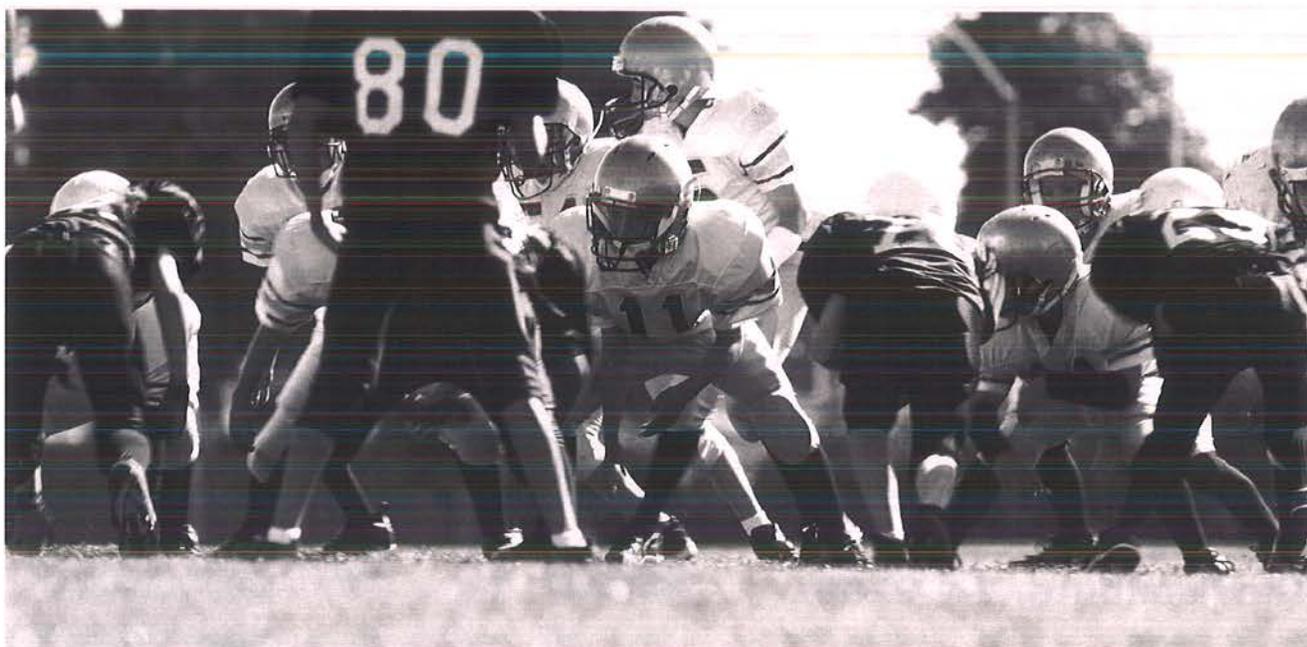
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– Sonia Sanchez, Poet



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FRANKLIN D. WATKINS AWARD

The award will be presented Sunday night at a 6 p.m. banquet that will feature four finalists from around the country. The keynote speaker at the banquet, which is open to the public, is former Grambling and NFL star quarterback Doug Williams. Tickets are \$50; tables \$500.

The Franklin D. Watkins Memorial Trophy Award, named after a former high school coach in Harrisburg, Pa., was created in 1992 to promote academic excellence among young African-American males. As unavoidable role models on the "image" front lines, talented athletes – especially in football, basketball and baseball – define what the emerging generations of African-American males will value and the aspirations they will have. The Watkins Trophy Award, considered the most prestigious award for any African-American high school student, is a means for recognizing exceptionally talented African-American male athletes who, by their example, help promote high academic standards and a commitment to community service.

Since 1992, eight high school seniors have been honored with the title "Premiere African American Male Scholar Athlete." Two of them received athletic scholarships to play for Penn State (Ahmad Collins and Shawn Lee). Three more accepted athletic scholarships to Notre Dame (Raki Nelson and Grant Irons) and the University of Pittsburgh (Darnell Dinkins). The first scholar athlete to receive the Jostens trophy, Ronald Curry, selected the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. The eighth Watkins Award winner, Deryck Toles, is now a freshman at Penn State.

The Franklin D. Watkins Award reinforces the 100 Black Men commitment of recognizing the value of education, and the need for parent and business involvement throughout the community. The Franklin D. Watkins Memorial Trophy for the winner and plaques for the runners-up are produced by Jostens Inc. through its Renaissance program. The prestige of the Watkins Trophy Award forcefully demonstrates that academic excellence and community service are valued and rewarded.



Last year's Watkins Award winner, Deryck Toles, center. From left, 100's Lenny Springs, Sam Belnavis; Dr. Alexander Gavin; Kevin Patterson, president 100 Black Men of Charlotte; David Taylor, MetLife and far right, Everette Pearsal, Watkins Award Selection Committee chair

There have been all-out efforts to recruit collegiate sports stars, but there has been little focus on developing opportunities at the high school level to motivate African-American males to seriously pursue higher education. The Watkins Trophy Award program recognizes the expressed value of education in the pursuit of athletic goals and serves to encourage young men to pursue this balance of success.

By the time a high school senior is a finalist for the Franklin D. Watkins Memorial Trophy Award, he will have received numerous awards, dominated the attention of high school recruiting magazines and appeared regularly in the media. What, then, does the Watkins Trophy Award bring to a young man's life?

The true significance of the award can be captured in one word: Expectation. Award finalists are expected to be leaders in efforts to empower and improve disadvantaged communities. It brings young men face to face with the reality that through sports, they have an opportunity and an obligation to do more for their communities. What they do and say will transcend sports and have a major impact on society.

FRANKLIN D. WATKINS AWARD BANQUET

Sunday, November 21, 1999

Reception: 5:00 PM • Dinner: 6:00 PM

The Hilton Charlotte & Towers

222 E. Third Street

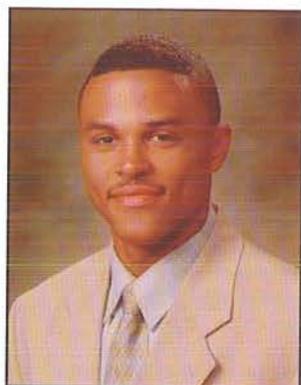
Tickets: \$50 • Table: \$500

Keynote Speaker: Doug Williams, Super Bowl record holder
and head coach at Grambling State University

Tickets call: 704.375-7300

1999 MetLife Franklin D. Watkins Memorial Trophy Award Finalists

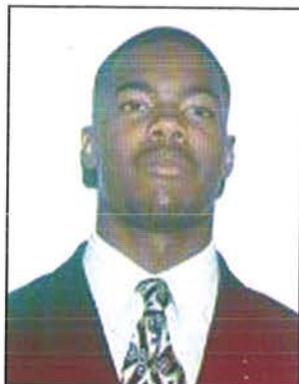
The Carolinas Football Classic has proudly become the home of the announcement of the MetLife Watkins Award winner. The award correlates the charter of the 100 Black Men of America in recognizing African-American youths for their academic achievements. The following comments are indicative of what the Selection Committee members had to say about this year's finalists:



Adam Boone
Minnetonka High School
Minnetonka, Minnesota
3.96 GPA

"His recommendations and achievements are outstanding. He is definitely a prized young man."

Theron D. Cook,
Program Director,
Village Foundation



Marcus Houston
Thomas Jefferson High School
Denver, Colorado
3.6 GPA

"Clearly an exceptional young man to have gained international recognition for his leadership and civic activities at such a young age. his future looks very promising."

Clyde E. Proctor,
Vice President,
Chicago Urban League



Dominique Sims
De La Salle High School
Minneapolis, Minnesota
3.87 GPA

"In addition to outstanding and comprehensive recommendations, Dominique has written a compelling and poignant personal statement. He is certainly a classy young man."

Dr. Joanne V. Gabbin,
Director,
James Madison University Honors Program

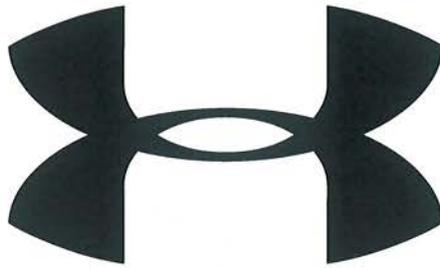


Brandon Royster
Fairfax High School
Fairfax, Virginia
4.0 GPA

"Clearly a top choice in a good field."

Marc Pollick,
President,
The Giving Back Fund

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