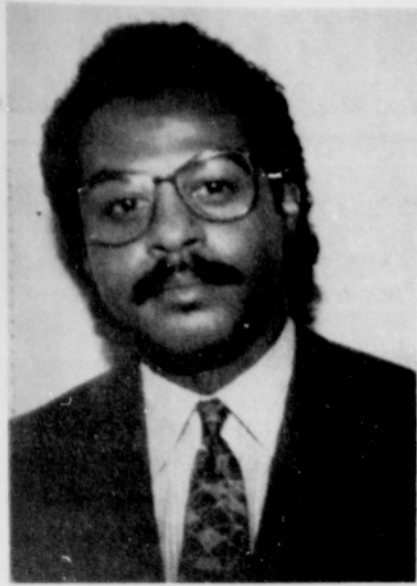


Samuel Pierce: An Unsung Hero



by Kathy Martin

July 14, 1989 marked nineteen years that Samuel Pierce arrived in Portland. The cross-country trip from Florida aboard a Greyhound cruisesliner had been trying, but nevertheless, an exciting one. With the urging of his older brother, Pierce had finally heeded the call to "go West young man." Having spent all of his money and Greyhound having lost most of his clothes, Pierce arrived in Portland with little more than what he had on his back.

Today, sitting in his three-story home in North Portland with African art and coastal paintings scattered about, the past nineteen years seems like light years away.

In those nineteen years Sam Pierce has amassed some impressive achievements. However, concerning his achievements, Pierce is somewhat reserved and modest. When asked why, he simply says, "I believe that an individual's works should speak for him. It doesn't matter much what one has done in the past, but what he is doing right now. What challenges he is willing to undertake. What visions he has the courage to see through to completion."

But if one's past is to be viewed with any merit at all, then Sam Pierce's has been one of winning against overwhelming odds. His challenges and visions started early in his life. Stricken with a bleeding disorder that took the life of his brother before, he made it through "with the help of his mother's prayers." As if that wasn't enough, he had the further challenge of growing up poor in Georgia during the 1950's in a family of seventeen brothers and sisters! According to Pierce, "these were the most significant years of my life. We grew up about sixty miles from Dr. King and his influence on my life has lasted until now." Pierce said, "we were so poor, that we thought people who could afford bologna were rich! Seriously!"

To escape the hardship of these times he submerged himself in books and music. In doing so he found something that he was good at. He soon discovered that developing one's intellect and God-given talents was something even a poor boy from Georgia could do.

Since these humble beginnings, Samuel Pierce has gone on to achieve some very important personal and human goals. For starters, he is a veteran of the U.S. Army and served with distinction as a paratrooper with the 82nd Airborne Division during the Vietnam War era. He graduated at the top of his class (out of 5000 soldiers) during his military training. In addition, he graduated with honors in Pre-med Science from Oregon State University—lacking about forty hours for a second degree in Microbiology.

He also spent three years doing research in cancer and lipid biochemistry. He is currently working on a Masters degree in Alternative Education Administration at University of Portland. Also, before moving into public service four years ago, as an administrative manager, Pierce developed his skills through several years of corporate management experience.

(Story Will Be Continued Next Week)



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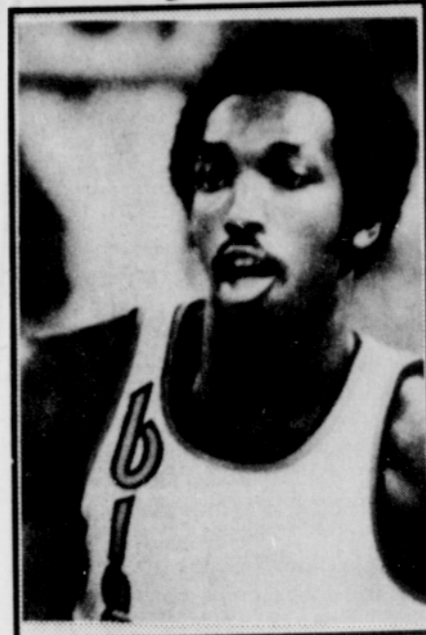


The Locker Room

by Ulysses Tucker, Jr.



Johnnie Davis: "The Dayton Flash"



Johnnie Davis is beginning his sixth year with the Atlanta Hawks organization as a player and director of Community Affairs. This year may turn out to be the sweetest as a Hawk. Recently, he was promoted to VP/Basketball Operations, where he will be involved in more basketball and less community activities.

"I'm helping out in the area of player personnel and helping the team with the evaluation of other teams throughout the N.B.A. as well as internationally, so, it's a great opportunity. One that I look forward to and that I embrace. It keeps me in the game of basketball and allows me the chance to make management decisions. I'm going to help determine what type of players we want or even the style we might want to play. I'm real excited."

Though this basketball season might turn out to be a "sweet" one for his future in management with the Hawks, Davis, at 34, is quick to note that winning the NBA (1977) Championship as a rookie in Portland was ultimate experience.

"Portland was probably the greatest single year I've had in my basketball life or career," said Davis. "I certainly treasure the memories and the fondness of the fans, the support, and I can truly say that they were our sixth man that year. Portland is a wonderful town, Oregon's a wonderful state, and I can't say enough wonderful things

are going well for him. We had a lot of fun that year." Davis finished his N.B.A. career with a 12.9 scoring average and 9,710 points. He played in Cleveland, Atlanta, and Portland.

When questioned about blacks in management around the N.B.A., Davis, who completed his college degree at Georgia State University in 1987 (Business & Community Development), said that the league is far beyond other sports in terms of hiring minorities.

"If you look carefully, you'll see that the N.B.A. has been in the forefront in hiring minorities. We have black coaches, general managers, and vice presidents, now owners. I don't see any participation problems in this league at all for minorities..."

Short Shakes: I picked the Knicks to win it all! Patrick Ewing is Player of the Year if writers selected today... Former Blazer Adrain Branch was waived out of the league, again, by the Minnesota Timberwolves. Portland people, keep praying for Ramon Ramos. His family appreciates the kindness and love you demonstrated in their time of struggle.

Correction: Jacque Butterfield and Lori (LORI) A. Wilson were the contributors names spelled incorrectly recently. Thank you for your contributions to a needy family at Christmas.

about the entire experience. I'm very thankful and blessed for the opportunity."

Davis, who attended Dayton University, was a key element because of his quickness and outside shooting. He was a favorite of Bill Walton and Maurice Lucas.

"Johnnie contributed a great deal to the success of the 77 team, like many others did," said Lucas. "He was, still is, a good person and I'm glad to know things

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