

Camps Balance Brains and the Game

“Life After Sports” sends message of success to youth

BY SARAH BLOUNT
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Hoop dream chasers see the glitz of the NBA lifestyle, but rarely catch a glimpse of the other side of superstar athletes. With skills that generate millions of dollars, professional sports stars can't survive without practicality and savvy business skills, and a solid education only helps.

That's the message found in Life After Sports, a motivational speaking tour that emphasizes the balance between academic success and athletic dreams. Even though most of us won't become professional athletes, athletic goals can be healthy, character-building pursuits when combined with academics.

The camp's creator, Billy Moore, is a Jefferson High School graduate who started his own company, Global Sports Management, after playing basketball in college and the military, followed coaching. He admits he made some bad decisions that led him off track, but it's that experience that helps him teach a younger generation that there's more to life than basketball.

Moore works with former Trail Blazer James 'Hollywood' Robinson, and together they travel throughout the country



PHOTO BY MARK WASHINGTON/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER
Former Trail Blazer James 'Hollywood' Robinson (left), and mentor Billy Moore (right) join Tre Vionte Riley (center) during the Life After Sports speaking tour, which stopped in Portland last month at Self Enhancement Inc.

-not to discourage dreamers, but merely to present the realities of the situation.

"It's not our position to downplay sports in society, but to provide a dose of

reality of the ups and downs," Moore said.

"It's going to be more important what you do academically than what you do athletically. That will go on and on, where sports

won't."

The tour's curriculum cuts through the common conceptions, and illustrates the differences between basketball at high

school, college and professional levels.

Moore calls the high school level reality, because students are forming relationships. He says college basketball is a fantasy, because undergrads face tough choices when athletic responsibility becomes a major distraction. He says professional basketball, with its million-to-one odds, is just dreaming.

"It can go from being the game you love to the game you love to hate," he teaches. He says the message is never easy, but he keeps pounding that point home.

Robinson's role on the tour is to enhance that message by sharing the ups and downs of his real life experiences. He played ball at the University of Alabama, before the Blazers selected him in the first round, the 21st overall pick, in the 1993 NBA draft. He spent seven years in the NBA, following with a basketball career overseas.

So how does a player who found elusive success convince youth to value education as much as sports?

"The NBA is more of a business," Robinson said. "It's not what they think it is, fun and games. The aspect is you wanna be paid and you wanna be compensated well for it."

Robinson also keeps it real when explaining college basketball, simply stating, "if you don't have the GPA, you can't play".

New Gang Task Force Formed

Operation covers entire metro area

A new gang task force with officers from six local police departments and two federal agencies will combat gang crime in the entire Portland metro area and both sides of the Columbia River.

The Metropolitan Gang Task Force will consist of officers from the Beaverton, Gresham, Hillsboro, Milwaukie, Portland and Vancouver police departments; the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives; and the FBI. The law

enforcement team will be housed at the Portland Police Bureau's Northeast Precinct.

Supervision of the group will come from a board of directors consisting of a representative from each law enforcement agency, the four elected district attorneys and the United States Attorney for the District of Oregon.

Officials announced the formation of the task force on Friday as an effort to combat gang-related violence under the U. S. Dept. of Justice's Project Safe Neighborhoods gun violence reduction initiative.

The overall goals are to detect and apprehend members of gang-

related organized criminal enterprises and their leadership by gathering and sharing information and expertise among local, state and federal law enforcement agencies.

Gang officers in the Portland metropolitan area believe that in order to combat the gang problem effectively, officers must be able to track and investigate gangs in the four-county area.

"Gangs don't care about state lines or city limits; this task force erases the boundaries, so law enforcement can work together to reduce gang-related crime," says Special Agent in Charge Kelvin N. Crenshaw, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

Higher Education Post Filled

Gov. Kulongoski's nomination of Dr. Dalton Miller-Jones to the State Board of Higher Education has been confirmed by the Oregon State Senate.

Miller-Jones is a professor of psychology and chair of Black Studies at Portland State University.

Board president Henry Lorenzen praised him for his work in classrooms and with teachers, administrators and parents to assist inner-city schools and community colleges to achieve their academic goals.



Dalton Miller-Jones

"Having the trust and respect of his colleagues makes Dalton an effective communicator, and

we look forward to his contributions to the board on behalf of all Oregonians," Lorenzen said.

Miller-Jones has been professor of Psychology at PSU since 1991, and was appointed chair of the Black Studies Department in 2004. He served as vice provost for academic affairs at PSU from 1992 to 1996. Recently, he worked with the Chancellor's Office to establish diversity initiatives to assist all OUS campuses

in their efforts to recruit faculty from diverse cultural backgrounds.

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