

Camp is Bailey's means of giving something back

BY SAM DAVIS
THE CHRONICLE

Basketball was the vehicle that Aaron Bailey used to help him attain many of his goals. Bailey, who currently works for the city of Winston-Salem's Recreation Department, used the sport to his advantage.

After completing his high school career at Mount Tabor, Bailey earned a scholarship to St. Paul's College. And when he graduated in 2001, he decided to come back home to Winston-Salem and share what he's learned with others.

This summer Bailey is taking that one step further. He and the staff at the Carl H. Russell Recreation Center are facilitating a basketball camp this week. The gym at the center has been chock-full of campers aged 8-15 as some 80 participants turned out for it.

In terms of numbers, Bailey said the camp has been a success. The campers have learned a lot about the game of basketball, and coaches and counselors have made an effort to offer more.

"Growing up, I attended a lot of basketball camps," Bailey said. "What I've tried to do is combine everything I learned and was exposed to at basketball camps and present it to this group."

Although the space isn't ideal, Bailey said he has worked with center supervisor Ronnie Beverly to give the kids a strong dose of fundamentals. But they have also looked beyond the athletic sphere.

"We're hoping to change lives and attitudes through this camp," he said. "We want to let the kids know that they can achieve goals in life and also take advantage of the gifts that God has blessed them with. It doesn't matter what neighborhood or community they come from. Their desire and drive to achieve is really what's going to carry them."

Bailey brought in a speaker each day to talk with the campers. The speakers included Kedrick Lowery, youth pastor of Greater Cleveland Avenue Christian Church; Andy Muse, head basketball coach at Mount Tabor High

School; Phillip Stitt, head basketball coach at Winston-Salem State; and Jim Caldwell, former head football coach at Wake Forest.

The idea for the camp came as a result of Bailey's contact with parents during the Jr. Hornets Basketball Program at the center.

"I received a lot of input from parents and most of them said they wanted to see a structured basketball camp that would help the kids and teach them fundamentals," he said. "They also wanted something affordable for kids in this community."

The cost of the camp is \$25, including lunch, a T-shirt and a trophy. Bailey handled most of the logistics of putting the pieces together. He said he received a lot of help and support from his mother, Felecia Bailey. Beverly has also been a staunch supporter.

"Ronnie has supported the whole idea from start to finish," Bailey said. "He's been behind this all the way and helped anywhere I've needed help."

Twin City Little League in need of a change

To the Sports Editor:

This is in response to the comments made about the condition of the Twin City Little League.

I have been working with this league for the past five years and some of what you said is true. The main reason for most of the downfall of this league is the fact that instead of people stepping up to the plate to assist in whatever way they can, all they do is complain. This goes for parents, coaches and league administrators. Then those that are trying to make a difference get overlooked as if they are doing nothing.

I think it is time for anyone that wants something done in this situation to step up and put your money where your mouth is. Twin City Little League has been used as a baby-sitting service and also as a welfare agency. Parents are not supporting their kids, which leads to the league not being as strong as it could be. Then there is the issue of monetary

Letter to the Sports Editor



something that really should be a fun time in their lives.

If everybody would contribute their pieces to this puzzle, then we would see some progress.

We need to stop sitting back complaining and start putting that energy to supporting our children, which would be supporting the league. People have grand ideas but do not want to do the work that is needed to make those ideas come to fruition. I will continue to do my best to support the Twin City Little League because this is the only league in this city that caters to the African-American children in the sport of baseball. We need to start giving back some of what our past brothers and sisters gave when we were children.

Candace R. Stowe
Twin City Little League
Vice President,
Tee Ball Division

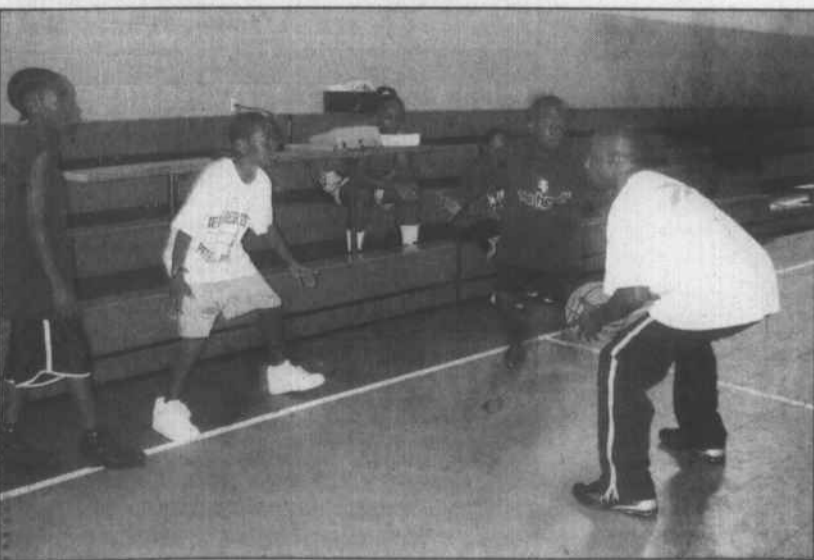
Fundamentally Sound!



Aaron Bailey (left), director of Generation's Best Basketball Camp, gets up close and personal with campers during drills.



Antonio Pitts (middle) goes in for a left-handed lay-up.



Johnny Ligons (bottom) receives instruction on how to play defense from Aaron Bailey.

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