

Photos by Craig T. Greenlee  
**Deshawn Corprew of Quality Education Academy has emerged as a prized major-college basketball prospect.**



**QEA power forward Marsellis Purvis (33) is expected to play a pivotal role in Saturday's game against Word of God Christian Academy.**

## QEA basketball showdown features marquee match-up

BY CRAIG T. GREENLEE  
 FOR THE CHRONICLE

When Word of God Christian Academy comes to town to play Quality Education Academy on Saturday night, basketball connoisseurs are sure to get an eyeful. Tip-off is 7 o'clock.

The upcoming showdown features a pair of big-time college recruits who figure to produce an intriguing match-up. Word of God's Rawli Alkins is a five-star recruit who ranks among the Top 15 high school players in the country.

A year ago, Alkins was voted Player of the Year in New York City while playing for Christ the King High School. The heavily-recruited Alkins transferred to Word of God for his senior season and has reportedly narrowed his choices to nine schools, which includes North Carolina, N.C. State, Kentucky, Kansas and St. John's.

QEA, on the other hand, has an upper-tier player of its own in Deshawn Corprew, whose stock continues to rise as the season progresses. Corprew initially committed to Arkansas-Little Rock, but changed his mind and now he's free to pursue other possible destinations. The list of interested parties continues to grow. Louisville, Kansas, Florida State, UCLA, Oregon and Texas are all in the hunt to sign Corprew.

During the course of Saturday's game, these two will very likely end up guarding each other for long stretches. Both are 6-feet-5. Both are athletic, and they have the ability to shoot from the outside and score in heavy traffic. At the college level, both are projected to play shooting guard.

Given Alkins' national reputation as an elite player, one would presume that Corprew would have added incentive to perform well on Saturday. That's not the way he sees it. In Corprew's mind, his level of intensity should always be the same.

"In playing ball, you go after your opponent," he said. "To me, it's all the same. I don't look at anybody as being any less than or any more than anybody else. That's my approach regardless of who the opponent is."

Saturday's contest, however, isn't solely about the marquee match-up between Corprew and Alkins.

Aside from Alkins, the Holy Rams have four other players who are Division I prospects. Jalen Fornes, a shooting guard, has signed with UNC Wilmington. Post player Brandon Huffman, along with guards Blake and Jalen Harris, have yet to choose a school.

In spite of its talent level, Word of God (4-11 as of Jan.



Alkins

15) has not performed as well as expected. In the preseason, the Holy Rams were viewed as a program on the rise. The school's most notable basketball alumnus is NBA All-Star John Wall of the Washington Wizards.

Word of God plays a demanding national-level schedule against teams who are stocked with the nation's top high school players. A week ago, Word of God held its own in a road game against defending Class 4-A state champ Raleigh Garner, but still came up short in a 93-89 loss.

The Pharaohs (15-3 as of Jan. 19) has given a good account against national-level competition this season. Although Corprew is the prime force, he is not a solo act. Jaylan McGill has delivered as an on-the-money outside shooter. Point guard Renathan Ono Embo has proven himself as a viable ball distributor who can score and defend. In the paint, 6-foot-7 Marsellis Purvis and 6-foot-9 Pape Ndiaye are the key contributors.

So, which team will have an edge on Saturday? Coach Isaac Pitts believes the Pharaohs can prevail by making a concerted effort to pound the ball in the post.

"Word of God is top-heavy with guards," said Pitts. "Their guards will have to defend our bigs in the post. And we'll have to defend their guards, so we're going to see which team can impose its will on the other. We feel like we have an advantage in the low post, so we're going to get the ball inside."

## WSSU track & field team returns to action at invitational

SPECIAL TO  
 THE CHRONICLE

The Winston-Salem State University Rams women's track & field team returned to action in a big way, Saturday, Jan. 16, when the team competed in the 2016 Wake Forest Invitational. Though competing for the first time in nearly a month, the Rams had some solid performances at the meet.

WSSU senior sprinter Raven Covington led the way for the Rams with an impressive effort in the women's 60m dash as she placed seventh in the event with a 7.80 in the event finals. Her best performance, however, came in the

event preliminaries when she ran a 7.68, an NCAA Division II provisional qualifying time.

Joining her with a spot in the finals was defending national champion C'Evon



Jones, but the rematch would not happen as Jones did not compete in the event finals.

It was the Rams' 800m

runners who had the best finishes of the day when junior Taska Johnson placed second in the event with a 2:17.87 while junior Tametris Morrison placed third with a 2:20.42. Sophomore Domilla Kiplagat placed seventh in the women's 3000m run with an 11:04.30. The Rams' distance medley relay also had a strong day when they placed third in the event with a 12:57.29.

The Rams will split for their next action, with some participating in the Emory Invitational in Birmingham, Alabama, while others will compete in the WSSU Six-Way at the JDL Fast Track in Winston-Salem.



Photo by Garrett Garms, WSSU

Tametris Morrison races into third place for the finish in the 800m run

## CIAA basketball names men's and Women's standout players, coaches coach of the week

PLAYER OF THE WEEK    NEWCOMER OF THE WEEK    ROOKIE OF THE WEEK    PLAYER OF THE WEEK    PLAYER OF THE WEEK    NEWCOMER OF THE WEEK    ROOKIE OF THE WEEK    COACH OF THE WEEK



**#20 Lady Walker,** Virginia Union (Jr, F - 6-2, Cleveland, OH)

Lady Walker recorded two double-doubles this week in victories over St. Augustine's (102-53) and Virginia State (84-68). Versus the Falcons, Walker scored 35 points and grabbed 20 rebounds and against Virginia



**#15 Courtney Best,** Fayetteville State (So, F - 5-11, Raleigh, NC)

In two games played this week, Courtney Best produced 29 points and 17 rebounds. She shot 44% (13-29) from the field and 75% (3-4) from the free throw line en route to victories.



**#11 Jayln Brown,** Elizabeth City State (Fr, G - 5-5, Williamston, NC)

Jayln Brown led all scorers in the contest versus Winston-Salem State with a game-high 15 points. She also scored 8 points off the bench in the Lady Vikings' opener against Chowan University.



**A.G. Hall,** Winston-Salem State

Hall led the Rams to a perfect 3-0 record this week, including a win at Elizabeth City State as well as an upset win over the Bowie State Lady Bulldogs. The week included some of the best efforts of the season for the Rams as the team held all three opponents under 50 points and scored a season-high 74 points against Saint Augustine's.



**#2 Kortez Smith,** Chowan University (Sr, G, 5-8 - Waldorf, MD)

Kortez Smith averaged 19.7 points per game as the Hawks extended their win streak to nine consecutive games with three victories this week. Smith also netted his 1,000th career points in Chowan's 73-70 win over Livingstone and led the Hawks to a 76-71 win over rival Elizabeth City State with 24 points.



**#4 Michael Briscoe,** Bowie State (Jr, G, 6-3 - Waldorf, MD)

Michael Briscoe ranked second on the team in scoring this week, averaging 13.3 ppg. His best game of the week occurred at home against Fayetteville State, scoring a career-best 23 points on 7-of-11 shooting from the field, 6-of-9 at the free throw line and he dished out seven assists.



**#3 Marco Haskins,** Chowan University (Fr, G, 6-5 - Fredericksburg, VA)

Marco Haskins averaged 10.3 points per game this week as the Hawks won three straight games and extended their win streak to nine consecutive contests. He scored 12 points in victories against Livingstone and Elizabeth City State and continues to be a consistent performer for the Hawks in his rookie season. This is Haskins third consecutive Rookie of the Week honor.



**Brett Vincent,** Chowan University

Coach Vincent led his Hawks to complete a perfect sweep of CIAA Southern Division opponents for the first time in program history and extended the team's winning streak to nine straight games. Chowan earned a 73-70 win over back-to-back defending CIAA Champion Livingstone, edged Saint Augustine's 59-58 and clipped rival Elizabeth City State 76-71 in their CIAA Northern Division opener this week.