

Faith Academy announces ambitious sports plans

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

Come this fall there will be a new player on the high school sports scene in Forsyth County. Faith Academy Christian School, a private school which began operation this past September, will field athletic teams for the 2016-17 year. The school plans on participating in football, basketball, wrestling, track and field, golf and baseball for boys. It also plans to offer golf, basketball, track and field, softball and tennis for girls.

"We realize those are ambitious plans, but, with God's favor, we plan on putting those teams on the field," said Sam Davis, who is spearheading the effort. "There is such a need for this in Forsyth County because most schools don't know how to deal with the total student-athlete. The academic progress of our students is falling

woefully short and most school personnel don't have a clue about how to deal with our children's overall needs."



Davis

Davis, who has been a coach for more than 35 years, said he plans on drawing from past experiences to make his new project work. "I remember when I started the football program at LIFT Academy," he said. "A lot of people said we wouldn't be able to get it off the ground, we'd be too undisciplined to win and that we would be a rag-tag operation. But God smiled upon

us and we proved them wrong. We went 8-2 our first year and had one of the best football teams in the county. But more importantly, we were able to reach a group of kids who people thought were unreachable. All of my players graduated and 20 of them went to college during my first two years."

Just as was the case with the program at LIFT, Davis is literally starting from scratch.

"We don't have one piece of equipment at this point," he said. "But we have a burning desire to help kids academically, athletically, socially and spiritually. With all that going for us we're going to be hard to stop."

Faith Academy Christian School is enrolling student pre-K - 12 for the upcoming school year. Although tuition will be required for all students, Davis said

it is affordable for all families. "With the new legislation, everyone can afford to attend the school," Davis said. "We urge anyone with an interest to call and we can provide resources to help. Finances should not be a problem for anyone who wants their children to attend a school where the total well-being of the student is our focus."

Davis, who is also an ordained minister, said he hopes to connect with his former students and athletes to help Faith Academy work.

"There are hundreds of former students and athletes in Forsyth County whose lives I might have impacted in one way or another," he said. "They know who I am. They know the principles I stand for and the standards that I required them to maintain. I am appealing to them to support this mission."

American Basketball League bringing pre-draft camp and franchise to Greensboro

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The popularity of basketball in North Carolina has steered executives of the American Basketball League (ABL) to establish a franchise in the Triad.

The coach and general manager of the Tar Heel state's first-ever ABL team, Corey Simmons, will be joined by ABL officials to host a pre-draft evaluation camp for aspiring professional basketball players across the state. The camp is set for Sunday, Feb. 28 from 3-6 p.m. at the Simpkins Sports Pavilion at 1500 Dans Road in Greensboro. The workout is open to athletes ages 20-35.

Simmons' interest in bringing the Florida-based ABL to North Carolina was sparked while helping his son explore opportunities to play professional basketball with the ABL, his own experience as a public school coach, and his desire to mentor and grow athletes through a league dedicated to catapulting them to the

next level of professional play.

"I am trying to create legacy to give this generation and next generation of players the chance to fulfill their dream to play professional basketball and to give them hope so they can take care of and provide for their families while pursuing their passion," said Simmons. "There are some semi-pro leagues that are not pushing players to the next level, not getting players signed to play overseas because they operate like a recreation league."

"The ABL is not like that," Simmons added. "If you play here, and get better, the opportunities will be there to get exposure and play for leagues overseas and, eventually, in the NBA."

Simmons' own passion for basketball includes a stint as an assistant coach at R.J. Reynolds High School. He also served as head coach of the Winston Salem Preparatory Academy middle school girls' team, which garnered an undefeated season and won its first championship in the history of the school under his tutelage.



The upcoming Pro Camp Evaluation gives prospective players an opportunity to showcase their talents in front of Simmons, William Eddie, the ABL's Director of Scouting and Placement, and ABL Commissioner and Vice President, Eric Newsome. The tryout consists of an IQ test, drills, and 3-on-3 games, both full and half-court.

"We are trying to identify talent in North Carolina and uphold the playing standards of our league," said Newsome. "The ABL platform is the ideal opportunity for the overlooked player to showcase his talents and land an overseas contract."

Based on camp performance and ABL evaluations, Simmons will select players to begin to fill the team's 2016 roster. The season begins in June with the North Carolina team playing a modified 10-game schedule. Ultimately, the goal is for the new team to advance to compete in the league's full 16-game schedule in 2017.

To register for the camp, visit <https://form.jotform.com/31828903463155>. To learn



Photo provided by The CIAA

WSSU women repeat as CIAA indoor track and field champions.

WSSU women repeat as CIAA indoor track & field champions; St. Augustine men repeat

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

The Saint Augustine's men and the Winston-Salem State women defended their titles at the Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association (CIAA) Men's and Women's Indoor Track and Field Championships at the JDL Fast Track on Monday, Feb. 15.

The Falcons scored 173 points to claim their 19th straight men's crown. Virginia Union was second with 107 points and Virginia State was third with 84.5 points.

The Rams scored 120 points to win their second consecutive women's title and fourth in the last six seasons. Johnson C. Smith placed second with 110 points and Saint Augustine's was third with 107.33 points.

Immanuel Hutchinson of Saint Augustine's was selected men's track MVP after scoring 30 points in the meet. The Falcons' senior won the 5000-meter and one-mile runs and placed second in the 800-meter run. On Sunday, he was part of the winning men's distance medley squad which included Shaquille Dill, Burkheart Ellis, Jr. and Khari Herbert, Jr.

Chazton McKenzie of Virginia Union came away with men's field MVP honors after scoring 24 points. The Panthers' sophomore won the heptathlon and the long jump and placed fourth in the high jump.

Domtila Kiplagat of Winston-Salem State was chosen women's track MVP after scoring 22.25 points. The Rams' sophomore won the 3000-meter and one-mile runs, and was part of the winning

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women's distance medley squad Sunday which included Taska Johnson, Aaliyah Craft and Tametris Morrison.

Shamia Lassiter of Saint Augustine's and Rachel Bonham of Winston-Salem State were chosen women's field co-MVPs after they both scored 18 points. Lassiter won the pentathlon and placed second in the long jump. She also won the 60-meter hurdles. Bonham won the high jump and finished second in the pen-

tathlon. The Falcons relied on their sprinters and jumpers to win their latest men's championship. They won all eight running events and the triple jump to pull away from their competitors.

After entering Monday in second place after three events, the Falcons erupted for 158 points on the final day. Hutchinson led the way with two victories and Khari Herbert, Jr. (400 meters), Shawn Rowe (60-Meter Hurdles), Daniel Jamieson (200 meters),

Shaquille Dill (800 meters), Burkheart Ellis, Jr. (60 Meters), and Jumonne Exeter (Triple Jump) each won an event. The 4x400-meter squad which included Herbert, Ellis, Rowe and Omar Johnson was also victorious for the Falcons.

Led by Kiplagat and Bonham, the Rams won four events at the meet. The Rams entered Monday with a seven-point lead over Johnson C. Smith, and maintained their margin by scoring 86 points on the final day.

The other men's individual champions were Garland Archie of Livingstone (Shot Put), Dajawn Williams of Virginia State (High Jump) and Zakari Greene of Virginia State (Pole Vault). The other women's winners were Ebony Moore of Livingstone (Shot Put), Ornella Livingston of Saint Augustine's (60 Meters, 200 Meters), Kendra Clarke of Johnson C. Smith (400 Meters), Dominique Julius-Williams of Johnson C. Smith (800 Meters), Shakinah Brooks of Saint Augustine's (Long Jump) and Amenze Uhunwangho of Saint Augustine's (Triple Jump). The foursome of Clarke, Julius-Williams, Crystal Campbell and Tovea Jenkins of Johnson C. Smith placed first in the 4x400-meter relay.