

Black teens more likely smokers

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Trust Fund is working to reduce the number of youth smokers.

"The African American community has had higher than average rates of tobacco use among all the people, not just the kids, but the kids' rate has been really high," Perdue said. "Although we are making a difference there, we've advertised in the African American media and we feel like targeted information makes the difference. We do see a decline in the rates,

but the decline isn't as strong as the Caucasian decline."

Sarah Blackwell, a student at Butler High School in Matthews, said African American students use athletics as a deterrent to smoking.

"I've seen a decrease in African Americans using tobacco too," Blackwell said. "We focus more on other things, rather than smoking, like playing sports. I run track, cross country, and play basketball, and there's a lot of African Americans moving

into other sports now."

Joy Beck, youth tobacco prevention coordinator in Mecklenburg County, said she recognizes the declining rates among African American teens, but there are other factors to consider in addressing the problem.

"The health deficit is significantly higher, sometimes there are lingering effects, sometimes there are biological factors, sometimes it has to do with the type of usage," she said. "Typically in the African American community, the usage of menthol cigarettes is significantly higher.

Those cigarettes have less of a filter and have more side effects."

Jarrell Adjib, who is also a Butler High student, said he believes black teens are turning away from tobacco, but the temptation is still pitched to them.

"I think they are turning away because more information is getting out there and knowledge is being put out there, but then you see some that are turning toward tobacco because it is sort of advertised more in the African American community," Adjib said.



Charlotte artist T'Afo Feimster prepares chains for the exhibit "Shackles of Freedom" at The Arthouse.

Exhibit brings slavery up close and personal

By Cheri F. Hodges

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Black History Month is over, but T'Afo Feimster still has teaching to do.

On Friday, Feimster will present an interactive slavery exhibit, "Shackles of Freedom" at The Arthouse in NoDa, a multimedia replica of cargo holds that were used in slave ships during Middle Passage. It will feature live models on Friday, but not for the entire month that the exhibit will be on display.

"Shackles" allows gallery visitors to imagine themselves in the slaves' place by lying or sitting down with shackles chaining them in place as the Africans were when they were brought to America.

As a part of the exhibit, visitors will hear a recording of the 18th century "Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano or Gustavus Vassa The African," which recounts the shock and isolation he felt traveling from West Africa to Barbados and fears that his European slavers would eat him.

"The shackles that bind us today are not physical, they're mental," said Feimster. "Our confrontation of what happened within the hold of those ships can be neither changed nor denied. But from such a confrontation comes the power to shape our present."

All events begin at 7 p.m. The Arthouse is located at 3103 Cullman Ave. For more information, call (704) 737-8097.

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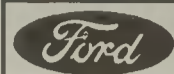
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Ford is adding fun and excitement to this year's CIAA Tournament by providing fans a chance to win a hot new 2006 Ford Fusion SEL.



FORD SHOOTS AND SCORES AT 2006 CIAA TOURNAMENT

CHARLOTTE. — When ever CIAA basketball tournament fans get together, there's bound to be fun in the air and Ford wants to help everyone celebrate.

Ford is the exclusive automotive sponsor for the 2006 Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association (CIAA) Basketball Tournament and Ford Finals Night, Mar. 1-4. Ford will continue to play an instrumental role in improving the academic outlook for CIAA students by awarding over \$100,000 in scholarships and providing them a chance to win a hot new 2006 Ford Fusion. Fusion breathes a fresh attitude into the American mid-size car. The SEL model has an affordable starting price of \$22,000 with lots of high-end features. You can check out the new Fusion at your local Ford dealers throughout the Charlotte area.

Ford will be enhancing this year's tournament by pumping up fans at the Fan Experience. The Ford sponsored event is open to the public at the Charlotte Convention Center on Mar. 2-4. Ford's participation will include various interactive games and activities including opportunities to win I-Pods and other prizes. The event will also feature performances from artists such as American Idol winner Fantasia, and a live taping of the Steve Harvey Morning Show presented by Budweiser.

These latest CIAA efforts highlight Ford's commitment to actively give back and support Historic Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), continuing a tradition it began more than 40 years ago. The tournament is an excellent venue for Ford to use in helping bring families and friends together to enjoy the unique experiences that come from the spirited competition between these historic schools.

"Education is the great equalizer, a liberator," Francisco Codina, Ford group vice president, Marketing, Sales and Service. "With these scholarships and 6 years of CIAA tournament support, Ford is helping shape the lives of young people by enabling them to receive a quality education and by providing excellent transportation to take the experiences they have learned to new places."

The Free Throw Shoot-Out contest took place at various regular season CIAA conference basketball games. Twelve students who won in shoot-out qualifier rounds received an all-expense-paid trip for two to the 2006 CIAA tournament along with a \$200 stipend and a chance to compete in the final shoot-out during Ford Finals night on Saturday, Mar. 4. The grand prize total for the final shoot-out is a \$10,000 in educational scholarships.

Ford Motor Company has supported HBCUs for more than 40 years through various grants, donations and scholarship funds. This year, Ford celebrates its sixth consecutive year of supporting the CIAA tournament with more than \$600,000 in total donations.

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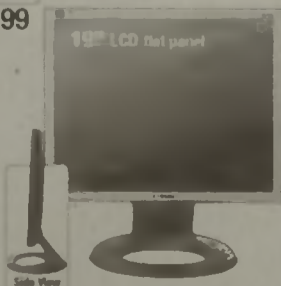
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