

The Voice

FOR STUDENTS, BY STUDENTS

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We Are The Champions

by Deirdre Freeman

Somebody said, "we dat." The CIAA Champs that is. The FSU family is still on a cloud, two weeks after the women's basketball team was crowned CIAA champs. Fayetteville State University showed its appreciation with two celebrations, one in the cafeteria and one in Capel Arena.

"All the way turnt up" is just how the student body decided to welcome back the ladies after the big win. Flyers, posters and congrats were moving through the air, and down to the Café for a pep rally. As if the Café wasn't crowded enough, with "Fried Chicken Wednesdays" in effect, the Lady Broncos had their own entourage of supporters. The cheerleaders, Cheer Phi Smoov, started the rally with plenty of energy, glitter, and of course shirt-give-a-ways. Organizations also collaborated with one another to be in dress-harmony all showing their love and support for the team. Music, Café food, and tons of laughs, all ingredients mixed for a great welcoming congrats. "I'm very happy and proud of the ladies for the CIAA win! It can only get better from here," said Sophomore Jazzmine Burch.

In Capel Arena, the team received a hero's welcome. Ray Thomas of WFSS 91.9 FM hosted the celebration. It featured a free-throw contest, the FSU pep band, and the Broncos' cheerleaders. FSU's Athletics Director Dr. Edward McLean, Representative Elmer Floyd and Chancellor, Dr. James Anderson saluted the ladies.

From day one of the season, The Lady Broncos possessed a unique bond, which over the course of the season has gotten even tighter. "Your sister's keeper" is a term coach Eva Patterson-Heath used to help maintain the bond within the team on and even off the court. Sophomore Deja Middleton, who plays Center, says throughout the season the team worked on two things; "we worked real hard to improve our defense, as well as our bond with one another. I feel we are united mainly because we all have the same goal in mind. We each feel like we are a great team but we knew we couldn't win if we were not in sync with one another," said Middleton.

Beyond what we see at each game; the team drilling the court and giving it their all, these ladies started some of their days at five am for workouts. Waking up early for workouts didn't mean the day would stop there. The ladies would meet each day for practices that could last up to three to four hours. But, Middleton said, "no matter how long we practiced or how intense it got, it was all worth it, because it showed when we got on the court. We had been working hard and pushing ourselves. So when you saw us on the court everyone, coaches included could see we were becoming a team that possessed ability that could and did lead us to our success."

The Broncos received an automatic bid to its DII Atlantic Region Tournament. The Number four seeded Lady Broncos took on the Number five seed Seton Hill (22-7) Friday, at the Hammermill Center on the campus of Gannon University in Erie, Pennsylvania.

Seton Hill defeated the Lady Broncos 73-64 Saturday to advance to the next round of the NCAA Division two atlantic region tournament.



photo by Monique Vaughn

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