

Tournament ind city on center stage

Nothing gets our hearts pump-ing like college basketball. And for the first time, this city witness to its mandes.

ference tournament.

Make no mistake, the CIAA is all that. It has pageantry. It draws celebrities. The basketball is competitive and intriguing.

And it's here.

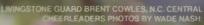
Final Four weekend has bigtime drama, but it's hardly a

must-do for James and los Sixpack, The NBA All-Star gar has big names from sports and entertainment, but the game is an exhibition. The CIAA combines those attributes with homecoming, a family reunion and blue-light house party thrown in for

No wonder the host city gets to spend a week at the center of black America's sports and social calendar. And for the next three years, it's Charlotte.

Even if you don't know the difference between Curly Neal and curly fries, you've no doubt heard of someone with CIAA links. There are the legendary players: Earl Monroe. Cleo Hill, Bobby Dandridge, Charles Oak-ley. Coaches like Bigbouse Gaines and John McLendon. But don't overlook more receent heroes, like Virginia Union's Ben Wallace, Darrell Armstrong of

From the games to the cheerleaders. CIAA basketball brings out passion in athletes and tans. It goes up exponentially at the annual tournament





Elizabeth City State sophomore **CELESTE TRAHAN** takes care of business on and off court/Page 5

Maryland Eastern Shore football legend ART SHELL leads class of 2006 into CIAA McLendon Hall of Fame/Page14

Remembering Winston-Salem State's hall of fame coach CLARENCE GAINES and his legacy/Page 7

