

## Sport a study in humanity

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ketball to teach young people life skills and helps them cope with social issues such as racism and AIDS. Clunie will also travel to Argentina to meet players in lower leagues who dream that their passion for the game will lead to fame and fortune.



Clunie

He will study Basketball Without Borders in Italy, which brings together players from embattled countries like the Congo and Balkan nations to help them improve their skills, and use their success to move their countries toward reconciliation.

"I've played basketball all my life, and if I didn't really believe it can be a force for positive change in the world, I wouldn't have put the time into this proposal," Clunie said.

That conviction springs in part from the game's effect on Clunie's own life. Growing up in Bel Aire, Md., he played on a predominantly white youth league team that often faced all-black inner city teams from Baltimore. "There was always a hint of racial tension," he recalled, "but the game ultimately worked to bring kids of different backgrounds and ethnicities together."

Basketball helped Clunie grow in character, and think globally. He was a three-time Baltimore Catholic League All-Conference performer and named Maryland Interscholastic Athletic Association A-Conference in 2001. But he has spent most of his Davidson career as a substitute.

"I love the game so much, and everyone wants to play," he said. "It's been tough sitting

on sideline."

Clunie had to assess his basketball future before his junior year, which he decided to stay at Davidson. "I decided it wasn't about me, but it was about something greater—the team," he said. "I made a commitment to keep doing everything I could to help the team be as good as possible."

The Davidson experience has been a good one. He has played against top national teams like Duke, North Carolina and Georgetown. He also played on the international stage against the Italian national team and Slovenian teams during the Wildcats' overseas trip last summer.

Whether he gets on the court or not, the past season has been memorable.

"This is closest I've been to championship basketball," he said. "I may have won a championship in basketball camp, but my high school team struggled in a tough league. Being able to win an NCAA spot as convincingly as we did in the Southern Conference tournament is amazing. This is the culmination of working hard for four years to help this team succeed."

With competitive basketball receding into the past, Clunie hopes to earn a graduate degree in international studies or business. For now, he's looking ahead to being a student of the game around the world.

"It'll be time for me to stop playing basketball for a while, and instead study the game's influence throughout the world," he said. "This project offers me an unbelievable opportunity to understand the game that I love so much in a new light. I believe that most of its influence as a force for change occurs away from the court, and I intend to see just how far it goes."

## Winston-Salem NAACP branch leader suspended by national board

By Melde Rutledge  
CAROLINA PEACE/MAKER

WINSTON-SALEM — The national NAACP board of directors has voted to suspend Winston-Salem NAACP President Stephen Hairston and treasurer, Irene Phillips, after receiving numerous complaints last year from former branch secretary Millicent JoAnne Allen.

Hairston received the letter, dated March 8, last week when he arrived at the branch's office.

Allen accused Hairston, Phillips, and current secretary Linda Sutton of violating the NAACP's constitution and bylaws in her six-page report dated Aug. 5, 2005, which Allen said was received by the national office on Sept. 1, 2005.

After the national office's branch and field department made its suggestion from the complaints, the national board of directors, which met in mid-February in New York, made final recommendations.

"Hopefully we can just progress and do things," Allen said after the investigation, "and get things back on track instead of serving other individuals personal agendas."

The national board voted to suspend Hairston and Phillips when it was concluded that Hairston signed his and Phillips' name on

deposited branch checks. Under NAACP guidelines, the treasurer must handle all deposits and both president and treasurer must sign the checks.

"When the treasurer goes out of town, on vacation or whatever, I'm not going to hold all these checks and money and stuff in my office, on my person, when I can go down to the bank and make a deposit," Hairston said.

Phillips could not be reached before press time. She told the Winston-Salem Journal that she had asked Hairston to deposit checks when she was headed out of town on "maybe one or two" occasions in 2003.

"What I did was a mistake of the heart, not of the mind," Hairston said. "I know I hadn't committed fraud."

Hairston said that he also has signed vice president Jim Shaw's name on documents because Shaw gave him written permission to do so.

The national board also ordered that all officers and executive committee members of the Winston-Salem branch attend a branch administration training session by the national office staff by March 18. Any member that fails to attend may face removal from office.

The terms of Hairston and Phillips' suspensions keep the two from holding office until

2009.

Yet, both have appealed their suspension, which entitles them to hold on to their position at least until the appeal process concludes in May, when the national board meets again to review the appeals, according to Hairston.

Hairston said that state NAACP president, the Rev. William Barber, is making an appeal on Hairston's behalf as well.

"All that mess she threw at me, that's the only thing that came out," Hairston said about Allen's complaints. "This was the only thing they came up with."

In other claims dismissed by the national board, Allen accused Hairston and Sutton of purchasing the chapter's headquarters on 4130 Oak Ridge Drive. The property was decided to the local branch with both of their signatures, even though Allen pointed out in her complaint that it was supposed to be purchased by the national office.

Allen also said that Hairston and Phillips submitted false information to the national office pertaining to the amount of money raised during the 2004 Freedom Fund fund raiser.

"They didn't find anything wrong with any of that stuff," Hairston said.

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PHOTO/WADE NASH

DEFACED EXCELSIOR The Historic Excelsior Club was defaced by vandals earlier this week. Graffiti was sprayed on the side of the nightclub on Beatties Ford. No one has been apprehended.