

The Tougaloo College Bulldog Athletics Booster Club (BABC) held a Recognition & Awards Reception on Thursday, May 3, 2007 in the Owens Health & Wellness Center to recognize the individual and group accomplishments of the athletics program.

The event was attended by BABC President Dr. David C. Williams, Vice President Jerry and Dr. Myrna Nickens, Dr. Matthew Burk, Gloria McCray-Watson, Dr. Wesley Prater, Carolyn Price, James Henley and Dennis Sweet. The college was represented by Dr. Abdul Turay, Provost/Vice-President for Academic Affairs. The event was well attended by the athletes. There were approximately 65 athletes along with their coaches in attendance.

Dr. Coleman reflected on the past season and talked about the hopes and desires for funding for scholarships and other projects for the new season. The athletic department is looking forward to completing work on the baseball field so they can begin playing at home next season. He thanked Dennis Sweet and his friends for coming out and working on the baseball field the previous weekend. He spoke about the need for athletic scholarships. We let the provost know that the athletic budget would be developed to accommodate the growing needs of the athletic department.

Each one of the coaches was allowed to reflect on their seasons: Coach Earl Sanders (baseball), Coach Lee Payton (women's basketball), Coach Harvey Wardell (cross country) and Coach Lafayette Stribling (men's basketball). Shane Gomez represented the golf team and told of his team's accomplishments in Coach Clarence Hogan's absence. Coach Curtis Shaw's (men and women) tennis teams did not attend.

The names of the members of all teams were called and recognized with applause. Then the academic honors and awards were presented.

The Club recognized all of the graduating students and those whose eligibility ends this year. Each student was presented with a certificate and flash drive provided compliments of Carolyn Price. The students recognized were: Charity Barnes, Irving Blake, Brandon Caston, Shawana Coleman, Brad Elmore, Kristopher Lane, Jasmine Lindsay, Travalyn Smith and Julius Young

Academic Honors

The Club presented academic honors to 23 members of the athletic program that hold a 3.0 cumulative or semester GPA. These students were presented with certificates of achievement. The students' names are: Charity Barnes, Dante Benford, Shawana Coleman, Keithdrick Harris, Cillora Hicks, Jermaine Hodges, Brian Hughes, Amber Johnson, Kevin McCoy, Erica McElroy, Jessica Mitchell, Eleysia Perkins, Lanford Porter, Christopher Roundtree, Travalyn Smith, Jessica Smith, Michael Spann, Natasha Taylor, Antonio Thames, Rukiya Umoja, Kendrick White, Jasmine Woods and Julius Young.

The club also recognized the students who hold a 3.50 semester or cumulative GPA. These students received medals in addition to their certificates of achievement. The students with a semester GPA of 3.5 or higher are: Shawana Coleman 3.5, Julius Young 3.5, Erica McElroy 3.67, Rukiya Umoja 3.79 and Keithdrick Harris and Jasmine Woods who both hold a 3.81 semester GPA. Keithdrick and Jasmine were presented plaques for holding the highest semester GPA of all the student athletes.

The club recognized the students who hold a cumulative GPA of 3.50 or higher. The students received medals in addition to their certificates of achievement. The students were: Jessica Mitchell 3.50, Erica McElroy 3.51, Jasmine Woods 3.74, Rukiya Umoja 3.79 and Keithdrick Harris 3.91. Mr. Harris was presented a plaque for holding the highest cumulative GPA of all of the athletes. These students received their honors to a standing ovation.

This was a monumental accomplishment and a moment of pride. 23 of the 57 athletes hold a 3.0 or better semester and cumulative GPA. These are definitely scholar athletes.

Athletic Honors

The golf team was recognized for winning the 2007 Mississippi Valley State University River City Golf Classic. Each team member was presented with a medal commemorating the win.

The club also recognized Shane Gomez and Mewail “Mo” Kidane. Shane made the all-tournament team at the 2007 Mississippi Valley State University River City Golf Classic. Mo Kidane tied for 1st in the 2007 Miss. College Spring Invitational, made the all-tournament team at 2007 Alabama A & M Classic, made the all-tournament team at Mississippi Valley State University River City Golf Classic and made low medalist in the MVSU River City Classic. Mo received an inscribed golf cup for his achievements.

Travalyn Smith, women’s basketball, was recognized for making the Gulf Coast Athletic Conference All-Conference Team. She received a plaque for her achievement.

The most highly anticipated awards of the night came when Dr. Williams allowed Coach Stribling to present the GCAC regular season co-champions to the attendees. Coach Stribling called each player’s name and they were awarded a plaque for their participation as part of the championship team. The members of the team are: Dominique Brown, Derrick Calvert, Brandon Caston, LaDrian Davis, Jasper Hall, Keithdrick Harris, Jermaine Hodges, Joshua Marks, Kevin McCoy, Rasaan Reed, Darius Simmons and Kendrick White. Eric Pilcher the score keeper was recognized with a team award for his service to the athletic department along with the basketball team. Coach Stribling and Coach Wardell were presented plaques for their leadership and mentorship of the men’s basketball team.

Kevin McCoy received a plaque in recognition of being making the GCAC All Conference Team and receiving an Honorable Mention for 2007 NAIA Division I All-American. Darius Simmons received a plaque for making the GCAC All-Conference team, receiving an Honorable Mention for 2007 NAIA Division I All-American, for receiving NAIA Player of the Week and GCAC Player of the Week (2 consecutive weeks).

Finally Coach Lafayette Stribling, Head Coach of the Men’s team was honored for being named GCAC Coach of the Year. He received a large plaque with his name engraved and his accomplishments.

A good time was had by all. We can’t wait to show you the pictures. The students and coaches expressed their appreciation to the members of the club and are already looking forward to next year. So get ready because we will need your help in recognizing our student athletes.