

## **Press Clippings 02/04/2019**

### **---Daily Herald---02/02/2019**

#### **Six African-American U-46 students to receive scholarships Saturday**

**By: Madhu Krishnamurthy**

Six Elgin Area School District U-46 seniors will be honored during Elgin's Black History Family Festival Saturday at Gail Borden Public Library.

The festival runs from 1 to 4 p.m. at Gail Borden Public Library, 270 N. Grove Ave. This year's focus is highlighting the community's "Young, Bright and Brilliant" African-Americans.

Each year, the festival offers one African-American senior from each of U-46's high schools a \$500 scholarship for continuing higher education. Students were chosen for being good citizens, their attention to academics, participation in extracurricular and community activities, and aspirations after high school.

This year's recipients are Zaria Milledge of Bartlett High School; Juwan Lockhart of Larkin High School; Makayla Hall-Lee of South Elgin High School; Kristopher Smith of Streamwood High School; Alexia Smith of Elgin High School; and Symone Dumas of the Dream Academy. Students will participate in a panel discussion.

The free festival features a keynote speech by motivational speaker and business consultant Christopher Williams, performances by local musicians, including Larkin High School Royalty and T.J. Ptak, poetry and spoken word performance by Elgin Poet Laureate Chasity Gunn, community booths, children's crafts and games, and drawings for gift baskets.

Event partners are Elgin Community College, City of Elgin, U-46, Elgin Symphony Orchestra, the Elgin History Museum and the Hoffman Estates Chapter of The Links, Incorporated.

### **---The Courier-News---02/03/2019**

#### **Speaker challenges teens: 'I am somebody'**

Black History Family Festival includes 'Chris Empowers,' music, crafts at library

**By: Gloria Casas**

Christopher Williams heard the saying "You're a product of your environment" and said growing up he didn't live in the best environment.

His parents provided a safe home and guided him away from the dangers of their neighborhood on Chicago's South Side, yet Williams struggled with the question, "Who am I," and his environment influenced the answer, he said.

“My environment was not the best so I thought I was” not the best, the business and motivational speaker said at the 14th annual Black History Family Festival Saturday at Gail Borden Public Library in Elgin as a part of a Black History Month program.

Teens often struggle with their identity and don't realize their potential instead they are influenced by the negative aspects of their environment, said Williams, known as “Chris Empowers.”

“Who am I is the most profound question you can ask yourself,” said Williams. Teens need to tell themselves every day that they are somebody, he said. “Say I am. I am. I am somebody. Say it with your chest out,” he said. “I am. I am. I am somebody.”

The journey toward becoming somebody is not easy, and there are trials, Williams said. The key is finding your talent and being ready for the opportunity to use it, he said.

Williams' speech was part of an afternoon of events and performances aimed at empowering people and strengthening families. Featured performers included Mike Lo, Accidentally on Purpose, Larkin High School Royalty and Elgin's poet laureate, Chasity Gunn. Families did craft projects and met future African-American leaders in the community.

Williams appreciated the title Black History Family Festival when he was approached to speak. His blackness and his family are the things he values most in the world, he said.

He also values his failures, he said. “I wouldn't have access to any of my success without my failures,” Williams said. “For any young person, embrace your failures. Do not run away from them. It's easier said than done, but failure is like a rocket on your back,” he said, adding it will launch you to greatness.

“If you didn't learn anything else today, know that you are bright and brilliant,” Williams said. He told the audience to tell the person sitting next to them, “You are a world changer, a game changer. You are designed for greatness.”



- Christopher Williams, a motivational speaker known as “Chris Empowers,” was the keynote speaker Saturday at the 14th annual Black History Family Festival.

## **SPORTS**

**---Daily Hearld---02/03/2019**

### **Conant takes 2nd at South Elgin regional**

**By: Jared Birchfield**

Black and orange were the colors of the day Saturday at the Class 3A South Elgin regional.

DeKalb advanced 12 wrestlers to championship matches and 10 Barbs, clad in black uniforms with orange piping, ascending to the top podium step during the award ceremonies.

Only Schaumburg's Jack Lingle at 145 and Larkin's Isai Rios at 285 bested DeKalb grapplers to take top honors.

Conant's victories at the 152 and 220 title matches -- the only weight classes DeKalb did not advance to the championship -- propelled it to second in team standings with 185.5 points to the Barb's 288.

Eleven Cougars also advanced to next week's individual sectional at Conant. In addition to champions Filippo DeFrenza (152) and Lester Gonzalez (220), five teammates took second place honors and four won third place championships.

"DeKalb is sixth in the state for a reason and they brought it today," said Conant coach Chad Hay. "They didn't make a lot of mistakes today. They got a lot of falls and they just opened it up."

"I'm really pleased with my guys' performance. We got 11 through and two champs," Hay said. "We went four for four in the third place matches so I have to be pleased with that."

DeFrenza earned the 152 title with a 9-4 decision over Tyler Bobnick of Schaumburg.

"My strategy was to move around with my under hook --. that was my offense and defense by cutting him out of everything else and not letting him score," said DeFrenza. "The first takedown was a tough one, but after the second one I felt I was starting to get momentum. I knew I was getting one step ahead of him."

Led by Lingle, third place Schaumburg (149) notched seven sectional berths with one second place finish and five third place wins.

Lingle edged DeKalb's Bradley Gillum, 3-1.

"I knew he was a tough kid. He's got some skill so I knew if I kept hanging in there I could come out with the win," Lingle said.

Rios will lead a contingent of five Larkin wrestlers at the sectional. Four Royal wrestlers earned second place medals.

Rios battled DeKalb's George Colbert for the 285 championship and pulled out a 3-1 victory. The match was scoreless after the first period and Colbert scored the first point in the second frame. Rios then pulled ahead with an escape to take a 2-1 lead. The senior added a point in the final period.

"When I escaped, it gave me the confidence to keep on going," Rios said.

South Elgin will send four wrestlers to Conant. The Storm earned two second and two third places finished.

Michael Roath netted a second place medal in a tough title match with Conant's Gonzalez. Roath was leading 1-0 with 11 seconds left in the contest when Gonzalez scored two points on a reversal to pull out a 2-1 win.

"Michael Roath had a really good tournament. He came out and battled. He gave up that last two points in the last seconds," South Elgin coach Adam Lehmus said. "He just got put into a weird position and he wasn't ready to adjust."

DeKalb, in addition to sending a wrestler in each class to the individual sectional, advances to the McHenry team sectional.

## **---The Courier-News---02/03/2019**

### **Back with black**

Senior guard Pierre Black comes off the bench, sparks Larkin past Elgin

**By: Paul Johnson**

Pierre Black missed 15 games with a labrum injury. He finally made his way back into Larkin's lineup last Friday against Bartlett.

But the senior guard definitely made sure he was ready to go for Friday's final regular-season game against crosstown rival Elgin.

Black made the most of his opportunity, coming off the bench to score a team-high 14 points in a 69-54 Upstate Eight Conference win.

He shot 4-for-7 from 3-point range.

"It felt really good," Black said. "First game back, I was kind of iffy, but second game, I adjusted. I was able to play and I played my heart out.

"It was very important especially since it could be my last time playing Elgin."

Senior guard Victor Perez actually scored 10 of his team's first 14 points as Larkin (10-13, 7-6) jumped out to a fast start before Black took his turn and made his mark.

Black hit a 3-pointer in the first quarter, another in the second and two more in the third. His final 3-pointer built a 52-27 lead. The Royals led by as many as 28 points in the fourth.

“I’m happy for him,” Larkin coach Deryn Carter said of Black. “He did a lot of work on his rehab. He’s back. Hopefully he can stay through the end of the year.”

Elgin (5-19, 2-11) was flying high on Dec. 21 as the Maroons snapped Larkin’s 16-game winning streak in the rivalry. Since then, however, the Maroons have gone 2-12.

Larkin’s stifling defense had a lot to do with Friday’s struggles, particularly in the first half. Elgin shot 5-for-29 from the field in the first half, including 1-for-12 from 3-point range.

“We came out with some energy, but you have to give them credit,” Elgin coach Dave Hess said. “They improved since last time. We missed some open shots too, but the lead was too insurmountable.”

Xavier Bonds led Elgin with 14 points. Trey Yarber added 10.

Perez scored all 13 of his points in the first half. Damari Wheeler-Thomas also scored 13 points for Larkin, while Jashon Johnson-Neals added 10.

The Royals were determined to rebound from their earlier loss to Elgin. They have a three-game winning streak and their leading scorer, Black, back in the fold.

“It was a collective group thought that we wanted to reorganize things that happened last time,” Carter said. “That’s the best way to say it.

“We didn’t talk a whole lot about the last game. It was more about the way we’ve been playing with our eye toward March. I’m really proud of the way the guys responded.”



- Elgin’s Trey Yarber (3) and Larkin’s Victor Perez (5) battle for the ball during the first quarter of a game on Friday.



- Larkin’s Trace Bolley (12) and Elgin’s Xavier Bonds (11) fight for a loose ball during the fourth quarter of their game Friday.

## Young with lots of heart

Junior guard wins for her coach in leading Larkin past Elgin

By: Paul Johnson



- Larkin's Brianna Young (13) looks to get past Elgin's Emily Graves (14) during the third quarter of Friday's game.



- Elgin's Kamiya Harvey (25) puts up a shot against the defense of Larkin's Brianna Young (13) during the second quarter of Friday's game.

An inspired Brianna Young led Larkin onto the court for Friday night's Upstate Eight Conference game at Elgin.

The Royals were playing without coach Steve Knapp, whose mother, Cynthia, died Wednesday.

Young, a junior guard, paced all scorers with 17 points as Larkin led by as many as 20 in a 55-42 victory.

The Royals kept Knapp and his family in their hearts during the game.

"It's a heartbreaking thing to touch upon," Young said. "We knew we had to come out and play for him. I know it means the world to him that we came out and won."

Larkin (11-17, 6-10) wasted no time getting things going. The Royals took a 21-7 lead with the first basket of the second quarter and didn't look back.

Young's 3-pointer in the middle of the third quarter pushed the lead to 44-24, the largest lead of the game.

“She played really well,” Larkin assistant coach Kristin Alexander said of Young. “I think she took on a lot of leadership. I think she was really ready to come out and play.

“It’s hard when you’re off (school) for six days and you come back and play, but I thought she did a great job of bringing a lot of energy. I think that helped her scoring a lot. She was just focused and ready to go.”

It’s the third time Larkin beat Elgin (6-23, 2-14) this season.

The Maroons shot only 8-for-31 from the field in the first half, digging too big a hole to climb out of, although they did cut the lead to 11 at one point late in the fourth.

Elgin coach Nick Bumbales also sent best wishes to Knapp afterward.

“God bless him and his family,” Bumbales said. “It’s a tough situation. The kids came out and played inspired for him, so he should be very proud of their effort on his behalf.”

Sarah Moskow paced Elgin with 14 points and 16 rebounds. Dajha Cooper had 10 rebounds and six blocked shots.

“She did a very nice job of scoring and on the boards,” Bumbales said of Moskow. “She’s been consistent all year. We know what we’re going to get out of her every day.”

Aaliyah Dixon scored 13 points for Larkin and Amber Allen had 11.

Young and Ashley Miller helped Larkin to a 59-51 rebounding edge. Young grabbed 16 rebounds, while Miller had 15.

“We talk about boxing out and rebounding because (Elgin does) a pretty good job of rebounding,” Alexander said. “I think they did a really good job.”