



Playing It Forward

BY CESSERLY RICE

Facing changes can be very challenging for anyone. This is especially true for young athletes making the difficult transition from high school to college level. Many very gifted individuals fall through the cracks and throw away their opportunity to pursue their dream. Overwhelmed by the daunting task of balancing academics with athletics, while maneuvering through the “who you know” network often associated with college sports, they tend to lose their positive mental outlook and give up. As an athlete myself, playing basketball and running track, I know that this situation is all too true.



Cesserly Rice, owner of CR Sports Management

Often all that is needed to turn a seemingly hopeless situation into the start of an amazing college career is a push in the right direction, and that is where I come

in. I seem to have a knack for motivating athletes. So I decided to turn my gift into a socially positive service that prepares young athletes for the challenges of the next level. My company, CR Sports Management, bridges this high school to college gap. We help our clients balance academics and sports, while maintaining a healthy lifestyle, and a positive mental outlook while they prepare for their college careers.

I have always dreamed of working in the Sports Management field. Until very recently I always assumed that I would have to wait until I was much older to be able to get my start. Well, with the help of my Advanced Small Business Ownership teacher, Mr. Scott Steward, I discovered that there is no reason not to get started now. Even though I am currently only a senior at Gwendolyn Brooks College Preparatory Academy, I am also the owner of CR Sports Management. I charge my customers a small monthly retainer for my services. I have 3 clients with great potential to make it all the way to the NBA and I plan to be there every step along the way to help make it happen.

As I had mentioned, I doubt that I would be where I am today without the mentoring of Mr. Scott Steward my Advanced Small Business Ownership teacher. Just like I help my clients achieve their goals through positive support he has played a critical role in helping me make my dream a reality. Mr. Steward is very involved with the Illinois Institute for Entrepreneurship Education. IIEE provides our class opportunities to network with other like-minded students throughout the state. It is also where I suspect Mr. Steward comes up with some of the great ideas he passes on to us.

In 2006 Mr. Steward was the IIEE Teacher-Preneur of the Year. If it were up to me he would win every time!

I will graduate in June 2008 and I plan to go to the University of Illinois at Chicago and major in business and sports management. For more information, I can be reached by email at ilatelly@yahoo.com. □

The Illinois Institute for Entrepreneurship Education (IIEE) invites young entrepreneurs and their instructors to register for the 2nd Annual IIEE Young Entrepreneurs Conference to be held May 1-3 of 2008 in the Chicagoland area. Students from around the country participate in: Business Workshops, Business Plan Competitions, The Young Entrepreneur Expo, The “E” College Tour, Networking with adult and young entrepreneurs, presentations from nationally known Keynote Speakers and more! For more information go to www.iiee.org or call IIEE at (312)587-9296.

