



The **Legendary**

Where Legends Are Remembered!

Items of interest for your informational consumption . . . !

JAN./FEB./MAR. 2022

Our mission has been to acknowledge, promote, archive, and disseminate the illustrious history and impact that basketball as a sport has had on Metro-Columbus and surrounding counties, which has produced some of the most accomplished women and men in the field of sport, business, and social activism.

“Women’s Basketball Sports History in Ohio”

Lawrence O. Payne a Black Lawyer and politician, was born in Columbus, Ohio (b.1892-1959), son of Robert and Madeline (Wittington) Payne. He served in the Army in France. He came back to Cleveland, Ohio, after the war, and graduated from Cleveland Preparatory School (1902), then received a LL.B from John Marshall Law School in 1923, admitted to the Ohio Bar Association, and appointed Cleveland’s 1st African American Assistant Police Prosecutor, and later appointed to serve on the state parole board in 1938.

He moved from traditional Republican Party support to an Independent stance. While running for Cleveland Council, he sponsored uniforms for a women’s professional basketball team in the area, whose jersey logo read “Payne for Council”. This clearly shows the existence of women’s basketball in Ohio during that period. There is a book available titled, *“A Century of Women’s Basketball: From Frailty to Final Four”*, by John S. Holt and Marianna Trezell. The book focuses on the role, growth, development, and evolution of competitive Basketball between 1890-1930 and 1940-1980.





Homage Project for Keith J. Neal, Keeper of Arts and Cultural Life

All too often we close our eyes and move away from the abandoned and fatherless families and children that fill our after school and youth programs. Our communities continue to be further disrupted and our senior citizens are scared to walk our streets. Now with the global pandemic and COVID fear, uncertainty has multiplied and isolated us even more. This is why we can no longer wait to give the well deserved kudos and recognition to the keeper of the cultural arts and cultural life, Keith J. Neal, who has throughout his life impacted our Black communities with such commitment, compassion, courage, and sacrifice. I, Duarte Brown along with innumerable other young people and adults, think of Mr. Neal as our life coach, mentor and friend. My perspective is that of a fatherless boy and visual artist looking to build narratives to connect and find community. I met Coach Neal for the first time at the J Ashburn Youth Center. I knew about the center because of Queen Brooks, a well known local African-American artist. When I was commissioned to make a mural for the Ashburn Center as a community project sponsored by Hands on Ohio in conjunction with Martin Luther King Day, Coach Keith clearly lived the cultural tradition of African / African-American history and the insights and resilience he instilled in the community unfolded right before my eyes. Sharing his art works, African artifacts, and photos with us he gave the origins of the pillars of truth manifesting in the visual images. The families and leaders that are now responsible for mentoring the next generation even in the midst of this pandemic have all benefited from Coach Neal's wisdom, cultural knowledge, and acuity much of which was expressed through his sharing through the arts. From the west side of Columbus to all parts of our city Coach Neil's mandate to do our best and to do good to all mankind fearlessly still resounds.

Two of his mentees I worked with at Central Community House, Chad Younger, father and youth worker, and Veta Azem, youth worker, published artist, and author are among the many individuals that testify to the phenomenal nature of the work undertaken, life lived, and personal art gallery Mr. Neal shared. Marshall Shorts, Founder of Creative Control and many other key community leaders meet regularly with Coach Neal to strategize and navigate life through his many strategic chess game lessons.

After retiring as director of the Ashburn Center, which he used his personal funds to keep open for years, Keith Neal continued his innovative arts and cultural initiatives that addressed the unprecedented, challenging circumstances brought about by centuries of systemic racism, cultural imperialism, social injustice, and inequity. Keith Neal has remained devoted to lifting up and providing relief to others, particularly in the Black community, so that they might have the opportunity for exposure to and education about African and African-American art/artists.

Having created a magnificent African art museum in his home, which he opens and shares widely, his artifacts rival any one would find in an official national setting. In addition for three years he shared his art collection with the public at the African-American and African Studies Community Extension Center(AAASCEC), and The Ohio State University, 905 Mt. Vernon Avenue. The displays he created were phenomenal and visitors always commented on how much they gained by being in a setting so steeped in such beauty and cultural richness! His eye for the spectacular in African artifacts and African-American art is amazing, as has been his willingness to give freely to the community-at-large through the art displays he has generated over the past decades and presented in such typical, yet much needed places.

Keith J. Neal, a GCBLA 2019 Hall of Fame Inductee, recently received the Dale E. Heydlauff Community Arts Innovation Award, which pays homage to Keith for his unprecedented contributions to cultural education and the uplifting of people who historically have been denied access and exposure to critical African/African American cultural arts and



Support local high school basketball!

Make it a point to attend a (or several) boys and/or girls high school basketball game(s). Support the student-athletes of your community or alma mater. The players today could be the ones you'll be watching on television tomorrow!

Keith Neal – continued from page 2

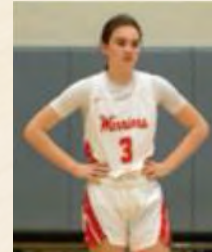
resources. This award exemplifies the type of work Keith has carried out for years. This award exemplifies the type of work Keith has done for years. Keith recently purchased memorabilia on the Columbus Quest of the now defunct women's professional American Basketball League (ABL), located in Columbus, Ohio, that won the first of two ABL titles, lead by Katie Smith (Ohio State University), and Teresa Edwards (University of Georgia). Keith purchased the rights to a signed team jersey with signatures from the entire team along with statistics cards on the entire team. We applaud Keith for his insight, commitment, compassion, courage, and sacrifice to impact our community.

We are paying homage to Mr. Keith J. Neal for his unprecedented contributions to cultural education and the upliftment of a people who have historically been denied access and exposure to critical African/ African-American cultural arts and resources. We know of no other steward of the arts and culture, locally or nationally, that has done a more outstanding job independently breaking through the barriers of cultural equity and social justice in the arts.



HIGH SCHOOL HIGHLIGHT

Megan Weakley



Megan is a Junior 5'10" Wing/Guard for the Worthington Christian High School Lady Warriors varsity basketball team. She is a prolific scorer who is leading her team to yet another successful campaign that is projected for deep advancement in this year's Ohio High School Athletic Association's state tournament.

Megan comes from a distinctive bloodline of basketball royalty capped by her grandfather Scott Weakley who starred at Bexley HS and Capital University and was a 2019 GCBLA Hall of Fame inductee. Her father, Kevin, starred at Worthington Christian HS and Otterbein University and is now the AD at WCHS where he is head coach of the varsity boys basketball team.

There is no such thing as a safe lead (a rarity this season) for WCHS opponents as long as Megan is on the floor. She has been deadly from beyond the arc whether off the dribble or off the catch. Many coaches are having sleepless nights while designing defensive schemes against Megan and the Lady Warriors while her coach, Jason Dawson, is secure in knowing that he will have Weakley for yet another year to hone her already advanced talents in preparation for continued success at the next level.

Keep your eye on Megan Weakley. You have not yet heard the last of her!



Impact of HBCU Graduates

Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) Graduates from Metro Columbus, who returned after graduation have made tremendous impact in the development and growth of our thriving city in the areas of business, education, politics, and other professions. The following are a list of some of these individuals. This list certainly is not all inclusive, and we apologize in advance for anyone we excluded from the list, and applaud your contributions to this city.

- 01) **Janicia Anderson** - *Wilberforce University / Educator & Coach Columbus Public Schools (CPS)*
- 02) **Miller Barnes** - *Central State University (CSU) / Educator, Coach, and Administrator CPS*
- 03) **Tom Brown** - *CSU / Educator, Coach, Administrator CPS / Entrepreneur*
- 04) **Joyce Beatty** - *CSU / Ohio Legislature / Congresswoman & Head of Black Caucus / Entrepreneur*
- 05) **Rich Bolden** - *CSU / Educator & Coach track and field*
- 06) **Dr. Marion Causey** - *CSU / Educator CPS*
- 07) **Robert Causey** - *Maryland-Eastern Shore University (Maryland) / Business owner (All-State Insurance) & Entrepreneur*
- 08) **Eddie Clark** - *Texas Southern University / Government Employee & Administrator*
- 09) **Garnett Davis** - *CSU / Professional Baseball Player (New York Mets)*
- 10) **George Gilchrist** - *CSU / Educator & Coach CPS*
- 11) **Bernadette Kennedy** - *Wilberforce University / Educator & Coach CPS*
- 12) **Terry Kizer** - *West Virginia State University / Educator & Mentor*
- 13) **Reggie Lee** - *CSU / Educator & Coach, Basketball, track & Field*
- 14) **George Mills** - *West Virginia State / Educator & Coach / Mentor CPS*
- 15) **Ted Rachford** - *Winston Salem State University / Educator & Coach CPS*
- 16) **Monty Ragland** - *Howard University (Washington, DC) / Vice- President Pro-Team Solutions*
- 17) **Hallie Robinson** - *Alabama State University / Educator & Coach / Basketball, Track & Field*
- 18) **Edward "Doc" Simpson** - *CSU / Educator & Coach / Mentor*
- 19) **Doug Smith** - *CSU / Professional Athlete, NFL- Cincinnati Bengals*
- 20) **Kent Scholfield** - *Florida A&M University / Professional Athlete NFL/DI College Coach / Educator CPS*
- 21) **Alfred Young** - *CSU / State Government / Private Enterprise / Mentor*





Do you know your basketball heritage?

GCBLA is striving to keep the spotlight on the historic exploits and traditions of Central Ohio basketball in the forefront of the archives to witness the contributions of the sport to the development of the thriving general community.



University of Dayton Arena To Host OHSAA Boys & Girls State Basketball Tournaments Through 2024

University of Dayton Arena is scheduled to host the Ohio High School Athletic Association state boys and girls basketball tournaments from 2022 to 2024. The Ohio High School Athletic Association and University of Dayton announced that the OHSAA girls and boys basketball state tournaments will be hosted at UD Arena for the next three years. The agreement includes tournaments held from 2022 through 2024. UD Arena had already been announced as the home of the OHSAA girls basketball state tournament for 2021, 2022 and 2023, but the new agreement for the girls and boys basketball state tournaments in 2022, 2023 and 2024 replaces that previous contract. UD Arena hosted the state tournaments this past March.

Doug Ute, OHSAA Executive Director, and Scott DeBolt, Senior Associate Athletics Director at the University of Dayton and Executive Director of UD Arena made the announcement. “We are very excited that our student-athletes will get to play at UD Arena,” Ute said in a statement. “Even with the pandemic limiting what all could take place at the state tournaments last March, our schools still had a great experience at UD Arena, and UD made it very clear that they wanted to host both the girls and boys state tournaments moving forward. We know that the support for basketball in Southwest Ohio is very strong and UD wants to be the home of the state tournaments.”

Having hosted 125 NCAA basketball tournament games, UD Arena has been the home court for March Madness more than any other facility in the country. “We are very excited to host the state tournaments at UD Arena,” DeBolt said in a statement. “In addition to our love of the Dayton Flyers, we are so proud to host many great events here, including the NCAA First Four, and we are pleased and grateful to welcome the OHSAA girls and boys basketball state tournaments to UD Arena. Our community will support the state tournaments just like our other events and this will be a special place for the teams, schools and communities that reach the state tournaments.” Renovated in 2019, UD Arena has a seating capacity of 13,000 and has played host to many OHSAA basketball district and regional tournament games, along with Atlantic 10 Conference and NCAA tournament games.

UD Arena hosted the boys and girls state tournaments this past March. This past season was the first time since 1987 that the boys state basketball tournament was played at UD Arena. In May 2020, the OHSAA announced the University of Dayton would host the OHSAA girls basketball state tournaments in 2021, 2022 and 2023, but the COVID-19 pandemic put the location of the 2021 state tournament in question due to spectator limitations and costs associated with the tournament. Prior to its move to UD Arena in March, the OHSAA girls basketball state tournament had been hosted by The Ohio State University every year since its inaugural state tournament in 1976, except in 1986 when it was hosted by the University of Akron. The 2021 OHSAA boys basketball state tournament was scheduled to be held at St. John Arena at The Ohio State University, but that facility was not available due to the pandemic. The OHSAA did not have a contract in place with OSU for the boys basketball state tournament beyond the 2021 agreement that was voided. The OHSAA boys basketball state tournament had been hosted by OSU every year since 1957, except for 1986 and 1987 when it was hosted at UD Arena.



In Memory of A Legend

Our deepest condolences to the family, relatives, friends, and former teammates of **HERMAN REEVES**, a GCBLA Hall of Fame Inductee in 2015. He attended Central HS, one of the older built school, located in downtown Columbus near the river. Many accolades have followed Herman throughout his basketball career from Jr. High School, commonly referred to now as Middle School (Everett), to Central High School, where he was 1st team All-City, received Associated Press Class AA All-Ohio basketball award. Not enough can be written about Herman and his basketball abilities, and on court antics, and passion for the game were unquestionable and will always be remembered. We will miss you “Big-Bopper”.

Herman Reeves, Jr. (Big-Bopper) was born September 18, 1941 to Herman Sr. and Lena Kate Reeves in Columbus, Ohio and passed away on January 28, 2022. He was educated and graduated from Central High School. His radiant and warm personality naturally drew people to him; and as a result of this, he had a vast amount of friends.

Junior, as referred to him by his parents and 5 sisters, previously was employed by Coca Cola, Jacob & Sons and a lifetime member of Local 423.

In the early years of his athletic development, many thought that Junior (affectionately called “Uncle Big Head” by his nieces/nephews) displayed equal talent at basketball and baseball as a young student at Everett Junior High School in Columbus, Ohio. He earned Certificates of Meritorious Award in each of his last two years (1956 and 1957) for his contributions in varsity baseball and varsity basketball.

Success and accolades followed him to Central High School where his varsity basketball exploits for the Pirates garnered more Certificates of Meritorious Awards in 1958, 1959 and 1960. His 1960 senior year accomplishments included: 1st Team All-City, Associated Press Class AA All Ohio High School Basketball Award, United

Press International All Ohio Cagers Honorable Mention and many more awards. Nicknamed “Big-Bopper”, the 6’3” forward/center was known for his leaping ability and was known as an early day “trash talker” that backed up his rhetoric with hustle and a devastating hook-shot.

After graduation from Central, Junior played in and earned numerous awards with a number of AAU and Industrial League teams. He logged seven years playing semi-professional basketball, playing in nine gold medal tournaments of which he was selected Tournament MVP three times. In 2015, Junior was inducted into the Greater Columbus Basketball Legends’ Hall of Fame. In addition to this, he was also presented the My Brother’s Keeper Humanitarian Award for his commitment to helping others and providing support to fellow players and community members.

Junior was predeceased by his parents Herman Sr. and Lena Kate Reeves. He is survived by his daughter Deborah Reeves; sisters Florence Rogers-Adams, Rosa Rodgers, Pearl Washington, Helen Reeves and Diane (Thomas) Ford; significant other Paula Stewart; best friend Walter Stewart, Sr.; many nieces, nephews, cousins and a host of friends to numerous to mention.



Have you read a book lately?

GCBLA will issue a challenge to feed your mind when the "Recommended Reading" column returns to The Legendary. It will be promoting books with sports topics or books that are authored by people with a sports background or connection.

Sam Jones - NBA Hall of Famer - Boston Celtic All-Time Great Hoopster Will Be Missed.

SAM JONES a legendary NBA player, Boston Celtic, and former alumni of North Carolina Central (HBCU), recently died on December 30, 2021. Better known as "Mr. Clutch", due to his game winning heroics during the Celtics consecutive championship years, in which they won 11 titles during Sam's tenure. Sam was raised in Wilmington, North Carolina, and attended and played for Legendary Naismith Hall of Fame Coach, John McLendon, creator of fast-break basketball. Sam developed his signature "Bank Shot" off the back board, while playing against taller centers in college. Sam was drafted by the infamous coach of the Boston Celtics, "Red" Auerbach, sight unseen, in the 1st round. This went against Auerbach's normal approach of making certain to see a player before drafting him. Sam on hearing the selection, believed his career was over, due to thinking he was not good enough to play for World Champions, after playing for a small Black College. Sam said, " I never felt so miserable in my life, when I got news of the draft selection". All this worry was for naught, as he became a major cog in every championship with the exception of the one year prior to his coming. Sam was named to the 50th and 75th anniversary all time greats, and was inducted into the Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame in 1984. There is story told about Sam meeting Larry Bird, former Celtic, and HOFer, at the peak of Bird's career, and Sam having been retired for some years, visited the team. Bird asked him to come out and shot some shots. Sam declined, saying he doesn't do that anymore. Sam came out a 2nd day and almost bet Larry, shot for shot. He then came out again, and almost bested Bird again, shot for shot. Following the contest, Bird commented, that Sam was one of the best shooters he had ever seen, and that he had learned more about shooting in that one encounter than he had learned in his entire life. While retiring in Florida he frequently was golf partners with non-other than our co-founder, Dr. John Howard, Jr., and he endorsed Dr. Howard's first novel, "The Mysterious Gems: The blue Ice Topaz". Although you have shot your last shot for us, you will always be remembered for the wonderful memories you gave us as "Mr. Clutch".

BOBBY CHANDLER **A Legend In His Own Right**

We send our deepest regards to the family and relatives of Bobby Chandler, who passed away recently this January 2022. Bobby was a legendary All-City 1st team player in the 60's, who held the the distinction of being one of the top four players in the city league at that time. He was known for weary bells on his shoes when playing. Bobby worked for the City of Columbus Parks and Recreation for numerous years, effecting the lives of many youth. He is also the younger brother of GCBLA Co-Founder, Dr. Wallace Chandler. We hope the bells are still ringing for you Bobby...Jingling...Jingling...Jingling.



100 BLACK WOMEN



*“There is something so special about a woman who dominates a man’s world.
It takes a certain grace, strength, intelligence, fearlessness,
and the nerve to never take no for an answer”*

-Rihanna

Reflecting on the above-mentioned quote, which is powerful within its own context, just amplify this idea 100 times and you have just opened the door to view 100 Black Women (100 BWC) of Columbus, Ohio. The mission 100 BWC is to advocate on behalf of African American Women, and Girls, to promote self-awareness, artistic development, leadership, gender equity in the areas of health, education, and economic empowerment, and global travel to spread their mission, including STEM programs. They also conduct a yearly program titled “Jazz & Eggs and friends”, which is their signature event, recognizing individuals/organizations that have contributed in the Arts/Culture, and overall improvement of the community. GCBLA has been fortunate to have been recognized by 100 BWC, as a recipient in 2020. Proceeds from this event, which is sold-out each year, goes towards a scholarship fund for college bound students to cover the cost of tuition/books, and assist outstanding middle and High School students. 100 BWC also conduct other significant programs such as a “Purse Campaign”, where they give out slightly used/new purses filled with tooth paste, hand lotion, mask, and other essentials to Women in various shelters in Central Ohio. Co-sponsors for that campaign are many repeatable community organizations like Women in local government, and OSU Period Group, to name just a few. During the winter holiday’s they give out hats, gloves, Scarfs, and books to needy youth, which to date has reached over 1,000 student, and is growing. Finally 100 BWC has an Anti-Bully program in the Columbus Public School System. GCBLA is proud to be a long-time sponsor with other sponsors of the last two aforementioned campaigns. We are extremely proud to be affiliated with such an outstanding group of women led by their President, Ms. Linda Thomas, who truly exemplify the adage, “IT TAKES A VILLAGE”.

For further information go to www.100BlackWomenColumbus.org

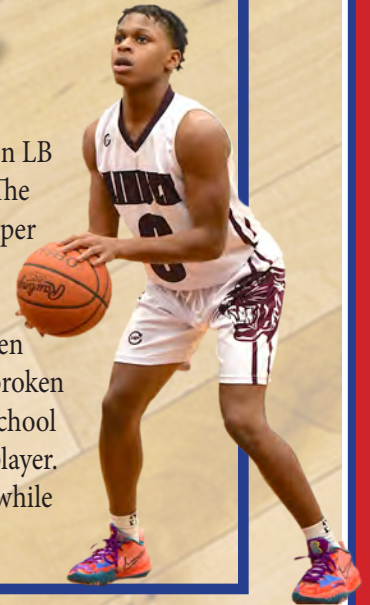


Be safe during the COVID-19 pandemic!

GCBLA is urging EVERYONE to remain safe and follow the guidelines set by the CDC, your local, state, and federal health officials to keep yourself safe and those around you. Get vaccinated, wear a mask and maintain safe social distancing!

"Heart Over Height"

It takes a lot to be noticed when you have 15 siblings like **LB Towns Jr.**, but when LB laces up his sneakers and steps onto the court, the spotlight is directly on him. The senior point guard for the Linden McKinley Panthers averages nearly 20 points per game, is a lock-down on-ball defender who carries a overall 3.7 gpa. His listed height is debatable between 5'8"-5'10" but it doesn't matter when you would be hard pressed to find anyone who works any harder. As a senior cager, LB has been named 1st team All-City North and All-District. He is the team leader. LB has broken records in Track and Cross Country, led the football team to its best season in school history where he was Honorable Mention All-State and was a standout Soccer player. LB has played a major role in establishing his team's mantra "Restoring Order" while being the perfect example of "Heart Over Height"!



Psychology Test

The psychology instructor had just finished a lecture on mental health and was giving an oral test. Speaking specifically about manic depression, she asked, "How would you diagnose a patient who walks back and forth screaming at the top of his lungs one minute, then sits in a chair weeping uncontrollably the next?" A young man in the rear raised his hand and answered, "A basketball coach?"



**GET VACCINATED
AND PUT THE
FULL-COURT PRESS
ON COVID**



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Greater Columbus Basketball Legends Association has registered to participate in the **AMAZON SMILE** program, which allows customers to support their favorite non-profit charitable organizations. With every eligible purchase made from Amazon, a portion will be given to GCBLA. To participate search [Smile.Amazon.com](https://www.smile.amazon.com) and insert, The Greater Columbus Basketball Legends Association. Your support in this matter is greatly appreciated. For further information contact us via email at legendscbla@gmail.com.



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