

Election Results Overturned at FAMU

Contributed by Matthew Richardson -- Black College Wire
Tuesday, 14 April 2009

President and vice president disqualified for campaign violations

After being named Florida A&M University student body president and vice president for 2009-2010, Gallop Franklin and Calvin Hayes have been disqualified.

The team received more than 50 plus one percent of the student vote but the Student Government Association's Judicial Court overturned the decision. "From the court trial, we found out that the Franklin-Hayes ticket was already disqualified during election week," said Student Body President candidate Mario Henderson. "They were disqualified on the day of the actual elections, so this is the second time technically that they are being disqualified."

As a result of the disqualification, a special election will take place as soon as Friday, April 17, and students will be able to vote for tickets Mario Henderson/ Rontel Batie and Kristin Murray/ Dex Rho.

Franklin and Hayes were disqualified for having been assessed 50 points for unapproved campaign material and placing a stake on university grounds.

According to Henderson, Franklin and Hayes points rapidly added up from 25 points, to 35, to 45, then back to 25 because of faulty calculation. In court Mario Henderson spoke against the electoral commission and listed the reasons why Franklin and Hayes should be disqualified.

"Our appeal pretty much said that the ticket did break the election rules and procedures that they agreed to abide by and because of that, points should be reassessed to them and they should be disqualified," Henderson said.

Vincent Evans who served as Henderson's counsel during the trial, said that justice was served and the court ruled unanimously.

The electoral commission has already filed an appeal, and Evans understands their right to do so and approves of it.

Henderson's next plan of action is to start his campaign back up.

"From that decision, the court ordered a special election so at this point we're operating as if it's the beginning of a campaign period in February," Henderson said. "We're going to continue to build our base and reach out to the student body and tell them our vision for the student body and university."

Franklin, who named his chief of staff, Ashley Nelson, just last week, said that he was not upset and understands the situation.

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Matthew Richardson writes for The Famuan, the Florida A&M University student newspaper, which originally published this article.