

FAMU Star Athlete Scores Off Court

Contributed by Jay Christie - Black College Wire
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Lady Rattler forward maintains high GPA

Lady Rattler forward Stephanie Foster prefers to place business before pleasure. With a grade point average of 3.88, Foster believes in winning not just on the court - but off it as well.

"Grades have always been important to me ever since I was little," said Foster, 20, a native of Columbus, Ohio. "I have always wanted to be successful for myself. I have always known how to prioritize my time and accomplish what needs to be done."

Foster, a junior broadcast journalism student, said she became interested in basketball when she was 5. Her father put a basketball rim in the family's backyard and urged his daughter to try a new game instead of playing with the typical Barbie dolls. Since that pivotal day, Foster has strived for athletic and academic perfection. Before she was accepted to Florida A&M University, the 6-foot-tall athlete got the chance to hone her skills in high school. She said it was an experience she appreciates.

Foster attended four different high schools in search of competitive academics as well as a solid athletic program. She settled for attending two high schools - taking classes at one and playing sports at another.

"I went to Fort Hayes High School academically; however, since they didn't have any sports teams, I played for Marion Franklin High School where I was the team captain," Foster said. "I spent my sophomore and junior year there, and then my senior year I played for a school called Brookhaven where I was also the captain."

After a visit to FAMU during the summer of 2004, Foster said she was hooked. While at the University, she has managed to maintain straight A's and has only received two B's and one C during her tenure.

Of all of her professors, Foster said she considers Valerie D. White her favorite.

White, an assistant professor in the division of journalism, said she is impressed with Foster's fortitude, and she said the athlete is indeed a hard worker.

"I believe Stephanie is a model student who is committed to her studies," White said. "As a former athlete, I understand her plight. I can recall when an assignment was due and she had a basketball game out of town. She showed up in my office in her traveling uniform with the assignment. She delivered it and went and caught her bus."

When she is not home watching basketball, Foster likes to divide her time not only between her studies and her team but with the Student Government Association as well. Foster serves as the deputy secretary of athletic affairs, where her skills of communication are efficiently employed. Together with Secretary Daniel Murff, the two address the concerns of student athletes. Murff, a business administration student, is impressed with his colleague's work ethic.

"Stephanie Foster is just an all around good person," said Murff, 21. "She is definitely a hard worker and is always eager to be doing something. She never wants to sit around and wait. She's a great individual."

And he is not the only one who thinks that way. Teammate Denise Tate said Foster is a well-rounded individual.

"She's just a great person on and off the court," said Tate, 21. "Stephanie and I have been playing together for a while now. We started out on the same AAU (Amateur Athletic Union) team and we became great friends. I think Stephanie is a very intelligent person, and anytime I have an academic problem I always go straight to her."

Foster is a member of Kappa Tau Alpha, the journalism honor society, the National Society of Collegiate Scholars and the All Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference's academic team.

"I had to hustle and play ball when I was in college," White said. "Miss Stephanie outdid me with her GPA. I was over a 3.0, but I wasn't at a 3.8. Now that's what I call commitment."

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