



SIUE East St. Louis Charter High School's Basketball Team Shaping Young Men

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EAST ST. LOUIS – More than dribbling down the court, laying up a shot or jumping for a rebound, three Southern Illinois University Edwardsville East St. Louis Charter High School (CHS) seniors enjoy being part of their basketball team. The players' love for the team, in large part, is because it brings them a sense of belonging.

Tra'Veon Dennis, Chross Mister and Lathan Streater talked about their experiences on the CHS team ahead of their Senior Day basketball game with a scheduled tip off at noon Saturday, Feb. 3 in the SIUE Student Fitness Center's Activity Center.

"It's not just a basketball team, they treat you like family," said Dennis, who stands 6 feet 1 inch tall and plays center. "I like that at the Charter High School you can be yourself, and they support you."

Mister, a 6-feet 1-inch-tall point guard, echoed his teammates' sentiments. "We're a brotherhood," he said. "Even off the court, we go above and beyond for each other. If a teammate needs a ride or needs something to eat, we make sure he's taken care of. Little things like that transfers to the court and makes us a better team when we play together."

In ranking the CHS team on a scale of one to 10, Streater gives it an eight. "We are good and are getting better," said the 6-feet 4 inches tall forward.

Personally, Streater gives himself a ranking of seven. "I'm pretty solid, but I have to get in better shape."

The seniors credit the good performance of the team and its players to Shawn Roundtree, CHS athletic instructor and social worker. Roundtree created the CHS basketball team in 2017 and each year it has gained momentum.

"Mr. Roundtree is everything you need and want in a coach," said Dennis. "Off the court, he is like a father. He has never doubted me or given up on me."

"Mr. Roundtree is probably one of the most understanding coaches I've ever had," said Mister. "He's a great mentor. He will do what he needs to do to help me, and he keeps all my confidences."

"He's a great coach and an even better person," added Streater about Roundtree. "He's been through basically everything I've been through and am going through."

Roundtree wanted his turn to offer praise for the young men.

“Tra’Veon is a talented player who can do everything,” he noted. “If Tra’Veon would have been active and had two-three years on the court, he would have been highly sought after for Junior College or Division II Level.”

“Chross has worked hard and done the things we’ve asked of him and needed for him to do,” continued Roundtree. “Lathan has been a tremendous help to us with his playing. We look forward to him finishing the season and going into the playoffs strong.”

“Having a basketball team at Charter promotes cohesiveness and the team concept. It also allows our young men an opportunity to travel outside of their neighborhoods,” said Roundtree. “In addition, being on the team gives them the chance to learn accountability and responsibility, and it provides something constructive to do outside of school.”

Finally, Roundtree confirms that the CHS coaches use the game of basketball to teach life lessons. “It allows us to be mentors, while teaching them discipline and empowerment.”

The [SIUE East St. Louis Charter High School](#) is a school-of-choice for families in the East St. Louis School District 189. The mission of the Southern Illinois University Edwardsville East St. Louis Charter High School is to prepare students who are career- and college-ready upon graduation. To achieve this mission, the school and its staff will positively impact the educational and economic lives of East St. Louis, Illinois youth through individualized instruction in core academic subjects, exploration of career interests and aptitudes, assistance in realizing students’ talents, high academic goals, and expectations that graduates will become competitive employees for the 21st century.

The [SIUE School of Education, Health and Human Behavior](#) prepares students in a wide range of fields including public health, exercise science, nutrition, instructional technology, psychology, speech-language pathology and audiology, educational administration, and teaching. Faculty members engage in leading-edge research, which enhances teaching and enriches the educational experience. The School supports the community through on-campus clinics, outreach to children and families, and a focused commitment to enhancing individual lives across the region.