

# Company helps student-athletes

By Deborah Kohlen  
Sentinel-Voice

Reggie Farmer is successful: a college graduate, former semi-pro athlete, teacher and budding entrepreneur. For all his success, he can't forget about a friend who should be similarly successful, but got involved with drugs and now sits in jail.

As president of EliteXposure, an Internet promotion program marketing high school athletes to college coaches around the country, he hopes to help other promising college athletes avoid similar crash-and-burn endings.

His college roommate, Kirk Jones, the company's vice president, also had a teammate whose life went sour, thus the impetus that impelled the two to form the company.

While the richest collegiate sports programs can scout and recruit nationally, schools with smaller athletic budgets must focus on regional recruiting, often in only a handful of adjacent states. Thus, it can be difficult for talented high school athletes to garner national attention and find colleges that will finance an entire education.

That is where EliteXposure steps in. The company creates a client file that includes photographs,



Photo special to Sentinel-Voice

Cimarron High teacher-coach Reggie Farmer helped start a company to help student-athletes get exposure.

newspaper clippings, recommendations, grade point averages, SAT scores and athletic statistics and is updated periodically.

New clients list their 10 preferred colleges. Farmer adds 20 more colleges to the list after researching likely matches. He then sends letters to coaches from all 30 schools and gives them semi-annual updates on the athletes' progress and achievements.

It's best to sign on early, not only to lower costs, Farmer said, but to allow coaches to observe the student's development.

Both Farmer and Jones are

former athletes turned coaches.

Jones, who lives in Long Beach, Calif., coaches the nation's second-ranked high school football team. Farmer coaches baseball at Cimarron-Memorial High. He's more interested in getting his athletes to college than to big paydays in professional sports.

He once quit college to sign on with the San Diego Padres' farm team. He became disillusioned with his chance to make it to the major leagues and after two years began returning to school during off-seasons.

A broken ankle suffered during his fifth season closed

the lid on baseball.

By then, he was close to finishing a bachelor's degree in elementary education. "I never wanted to be just a jock," he said.

And he isn't. He has a master's degree in elementary supervision and administration and has been teaching fifth grade at H.P. Fitzgerald Elementary School for four years.

The UNLV graduate says athletic scholarships can be tickets to a solid college education. He wants parents to understand that just because their children put on a uniform doesn't guarantee they will be seen. Coaches don't have time to market every player, so parents have to do their job, he said.

Two of his eight clients have already been offered full scholarships. Jared Bonnell, a junior, has signed early for Brigham Young University and Marcus Winder, a senior, will attend Texas Southern University this fall.

Winder says that when Farmer approached him last summer about EliteXposure, he "jumped on the deal." A look at Farmer's resume convinced Winder that Farmer knew what he was doing. "He was a top person, not just some shmoe," Winder said.

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# Penalty phase of rape case set to begin soon

Special to Sentinel-Voice

POUGHKEEPSIE, N.Y. — Completing his summation before jurors Tuesday in the penalty phase of the Tawana Brawley trial, Alton Maddox quoted the Bible, soul singer James Brown and Martin Luther King Jr. in insisting a former prosecutor deserves no financial award for defamation and has only himself to blame for his health problems.

Maddox claims former prosecutor Steven Pagonos did not suffer from stress-related illness over the allegations that he raped Brawley, who is black, in 1987. Instead, Maddox said, Pagonos had stomach problems from eating too much.

Summations in the penalty phase of the trial of Brawley's advisers began Monday. Pagonos' attorney, William Stanton, also gave his summation before the jury began deliberating.

The jury on July 13 found that the three defendants defamed Pagonos by accusing him of raping Brawley. The question before them now is how much the defendants should pay.

Pagonos sued after a special state grand jury in 1988 exonerated him and found evidence that Brawley fabricated her claim that she was raped by a group of white men.

Pagonos is seeking \$150 million in compensatory and punitive damages for seven defamatory statements made by the Rev. Al Sharpton, two by Maddox and one by C. Vernon Mason.

The three claim that Pagonos has not proven he deserves more than the legal minimum for compensatory damages — a dollar for each statement — because he has not shown that the Brawley case harmed his reputation or his health.

They claimed punitive damages should be zero because they were not acting maliciously when they accused Pagonos.

On Monday, the voice of Sharpton's attorney quavered as he recalled that Pagonos' lawyer had compared the Brawley advisers to Nazi propagandists. He began dabbing tears from his eyes as he called the claim "outrageous."

"If I stood up here and compared Mr. Pagonos to a Nazi, I wouldn't get out of the room," Michael Hardy said. "The press would crucify me."

Hardy took pains to portray Sharpton as a selfless fighter for civil rights, and told the jury a large damage award would imply "black people in America have no rights."

"If that is the statement you want to make, make it," Hardy told the jury in a booming voice. "But then the world will truly know what a farce of justice this trial really is."

Hardy said a large judgment against Sharpton would amount to a "financial electric chair."

# Judge nixes third trial for white Pittsburgh policemen

Special to Sentinel-Voice

PITTSBURGH — A judge ruled last week that two white police officers will not be retried in the death of a black motorist after a car chase.

Another trial would violate the officers' right to avoid double jeopardy, which is a repeat prosecution for the same crime, Judge Joseph F. McCloskey wrote last Wednesday, agreeing with defense attorneys.

Double jeopardy is banned by Pennsylvania and U.S. constitutions.

The first two trials for Lt. Milton Mulholland and Officer Michael Albert ended in mistrials in the 1995 death of Jonny Gammage.

The judge in the second trial should have found less drastic means of resolving a hung jury and should have investigated a holdout juror, McCloskey ruled.

A defendant has the right to continue with a jury even when circumstances may justify a mistrial, and the officers were denied that right, he wrote.

"You didn't have to call the psychic hotline to see this coming," said Donna Reese, a Gammage family spokeswoman. Attorney General Janet Reno has said the Justice Department

is investigating whether Gammage's civil rights were violated when he was restrained face down during a fight with officers following the chase from suburban Brentwood to Pittsburgh.

The trouble began when Mulholland started following Gammage, 31, because Gammage was tapping his brakes in a car owned by his cousin, then-Pittsburgh Steelers defensive lineman

Ray Seals.

The officers said his death was an accident. The Rev. Jesse Jackson called it a "lynching."

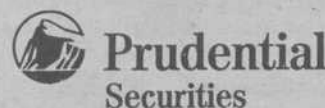
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