

Anchored

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Hill advises parents to take more interest in developing and nurturing of their child-athletes and assist them in evaluating their situation.

New kids on the block in a very competitive arena, Anchored In Faith has targeted what they call "the diamond in the rough."

"We're professional polishers. We bring the shine to the surface, then teach them how to keep the shine," group founder Aubrey Branch said. "We start looking at the kids in junior high and senior high, we follow them. Often young people sacrifice for the team, coaches trying to get their dreams, they put the kid in a spot that they need, not a spot that enhances their actual skill. But when you watch a child very early in their career, you see them play all positions and you can decide what their strong point is and then you can suggest a plan."

"We have a desire to help kids get to their goals, wherever their interest lies, to give them what it takes to get to the next level, not just by athletic ability," Branch continued. "If we could help them get started from the ground up, when all is said and done, they have a life after the game."

Rickie Breaux, who with Donnie B. Ellison helped develop Anchor clients, said: "We're not out for the money. (We're) just tired of seeing guys come out and don't have anything, going broke after one and two year contracts."

That philosophy drew former Miami Dolphin Ontiwaun Carter to Anchor In Faith.

Carter became the University of Arizona's career-rushing leader in 1994. Overlooked in the 1995 NFL Draft, Carter signed to a two-year free-agent contract with the Dolphins.

Carter was released after the preseason but was drafted by the World League, NFL Europe. After playing in the NFL in 1996 and 1997, Carter moved to Las Vegas and met Branch.

"There was a difference, on a personal note," Carter said. "My last agent never gave any counseling, or words of encouragement."

Moved by the dedication of the agency, Carter said, "he really took the time out to communicate with me. A man of God in Christ, he (Branch) would ask me, 'What do you want, what do you really want.'"

The agency has produced for Carter. Unsigned by a team, he worked out for the Oakland Raiders and the World League in Calgary



ONTIWAUN CARTER

Canada. He's returning to the World League this season. He said each experience is preparing him for the next level.

Las Vegas NAACP tabbed most improved; Collins honored

John T. Stephens III
Sentinel-Voice

The Las Vegas NAACP won the "most improved branch" award at the NAACP's Tri-State Conference held recently in Ogden, Utah.

Nevada, Utah and Idaho comprise the tri-state region.

"The credit doesn't go to me — it goes to all of those individuals that has helped us (NAACP)," said Las Vegas NAACP president Gene Collins, whose branch beat out 2,300 branches for the distinguished title.

"There is where the



GENE COLLINS

credit should go."

The local branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People hired two full-time

employees, increased membership by 450, sent two voting members to the national convention and moved into a new office at 3925 N. Martin Luther King Drive.

"That goes unfounded," said Collins when asked if the branch's new location may be out the way for people who require the NAACP's services.

"You can't move the NAACP anyplace without someone saying its too far."

The Las Vegas NAACP now has 2,500 members, and is open from 9 am. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. Collins, a state assemblyman

from 1981-87, was appointed to the NAACP's internal affairs committee and the time and place committee.

The internal affairs committee listens to complaints from tri-state branches and decides which cases have merit.

The time and place committee is working on having the NAACP National Convention in Las Vegas in 2004.

"Everyday that I get up I know I will have to fight someone," Collins said. "Before the sun goes down I know I will have to fight again."

Chamberlain

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coach Al LaRocque recalled his one-time meeting with Chamberlain during a coaching clinic in Hawaii.

"I remember he liked to play beach volleyball," LaRocque said. "What I remember most is meeting him and he was wearing these beach jammer shorts, playing volleyball. Here is this basketball icon and he had such a passion for volleyball."

"When you look at old film clips, it's hard to believe anyone that big had so many skills."

Said Tarkanian: "As an athlete, he probably was the best who ever lived."

As a sophomore in 1957, he led the University of Kansas to the NCAA tournament finals, where the Jayhawks lost to unbeaten North Carolina in triple overtime.

Chamberlain left Kansas after his junior year and began his professional career with the Globetrotters in 1958.

He starred in the NBA from 1959 through 1973, when he played for the Philadelphia (later the San

Francisco) Warriors, Philadelphia 76ers and Los Angeles Lakers.

Chamberlain was one of only two men to win the MVP and rookie of the year awards in the same season (1959-60), and was also MVP from 1966-68.

He led the NBA in scoring seven straight seasons, 1960-66, and led the league in rebounding 11 of his 14 seasons, but will likely be most remembered for his famous record of scoring 100 points in the Warriors' 169-147 defeat of the New York Knicks in 1962, in Hershey, Pa. Chamberlain also holds the single-game record for rebounds (55), which he posted against Boston in 1960.

He averaged 30.1 points in his career, including a record 50.4 in the 1961-62 season with Philadelphia. One of the most versatile big men ever, Chamberlain led the NBA with 702 assists in 1967-68.

He scored 31,419 points during his career, a record Kareem Abdul-Jabbar broke in 1984 against the Utah Jazz

at the Thomas and Mack Center. Chamberlain, who never fouled out in any of the 1,205 regular-season and playoff games he played, holds the record for career rebounding with 23,924.

Chamberlain led his team into the NBA playoffs 13 times, and won two championships, the first in 1966-67 with the Philadelphia 76ers, and then in 1971-72 with the Lakers, who won a record 33 straight games.

Former UNLV coach Rollie Massimino, now at Cleveland State, grew up in Philadelphia and remembers Chamberlain attending several functions, donating time to a community that adored him. "He was very personable and I had the pleasure of meeting him again just a few years back, when they announced the NBA's greatest 50 players,"

Massimino said Wednesday from Ohio. "I always marveled at the way he played. He was a very, very special talent that probably could still play the game today."

Although he never met him, UNLV coach Bill Bayno said it's a loss for anyone involved with the sport, whether it be players, coaches or fans.

"I have many ties in Philly who knew him and they've always commented what a remarkable individual he was," Bayno said. "When you lose someone who has done so much for the game, it makes you reflect on what is important in life. He was in such great physical condition and ... this is a lesson how fragile life is. We all get wrapped up in our jobs and careers and at times lose perspective of what's important."

Starr recalled the one opportunity he had to meet Chamberlain, and saw just how big — literally and figuratively speaking — he was.

"(The Bulls) were on the road and getting ready to play the Sixers and he happened to be at the arena that night," Starr said. "You could see he was well-respected throughout the league, especially in the city of Philadelphia."

"And when you meet him and look at him, the first thing you think is he is invincible. You think he would die of old age, if nothing else."

Starr, who owns a State Farm Insurance agency, said the death of the NBA legend — as most deaths do — put things in perspective for him and his family.

"It makes you ... make every day special with your family and friends," he said.

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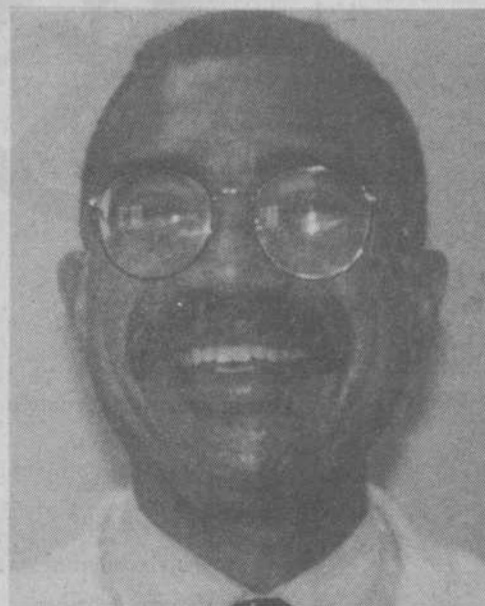
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