

# 'Tomboy' sports entrepreneur headed to college

By Tasha Pope

Special to Sentinel Voice

Keisha Cherise McDaniel. Maybe it's not a familiar name, but guaranteed, after reading this, it will not be forgotten.

Now, let's see, Las Vegas Desert Pines High School senior has maintained over a 3.0 grade point average since her freshmen year in high school and is now college bound, a top 4.0 GPA plus honor student, all while play-

ing varsity soccer and volunteering her time in several extracurricular activities.

McDaniel has accomplished so many things and overcome many obstacles at her tender age of 16. She was born with physical challenges and her survival wasn't certain based on her skeletal problems and a premature birth weight of three-pounds. She said her mother and father just kept their faith; and Joyce and Cedric

McDaniel knew, if they could do nothing else for their baby, "they would definitely pray."

"People are gonna say mean things," McDaniel said. She's very mature.

As a child, she was teased and called a "tomboy" because of her pursuit of sports. Her pain quickly surfaced into something positive: then 9-years-old, McDaniel and her mother created the clothing line "Pretty Tomboy."

The line is geared toward young women to help them recognize their beauty — regardless of other people's opinion.

"My family got together, and my mom helped me build my self-esteem through the clothing line," McDaniel explained. Her clothing line received broad recognition on a major cable channel and in national youth and sports magazines. "Pretty Tomboy" earned the support and funding help from celebrities, including entertainer Queen Latifah.

McDaniel runs a website at [www.prettytomboyclthing.com](http://www.prettytomboyclthing.com) to promote her clothing line, her own positive rap song, her community activities and her own insightful writings about life.

Her strength is evident with one glimpse into her past.

"It's always about family. I know they'll always be there for me," she said.

When McDaniel was in the fourth grade, her mother was diagnosed with lupus and diabetes. Because of her mother's sickness, McDaniel



Photo special to Sentinel-Voice

**A clothing designer, good athlete and stellar student, Cherise McDaniel will study pre-med at Texas Southern University.**

took on many adult roles at a very young age.

"Since my Mom became ill, my life changed. Some say for the worse; I say for the better." McDaniel saw the challenge as her time to "form my character," she said, reflecting on the time when she had to "change roles" with her mother. (See McDaniel, Page 16)

## Citizens

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Barbershop; Studio 1; G. T. Mini Market; Phung Jefferson Law Office; J. B. Clothing; Top of the Line Fashion Consulting; My Place; Izo Exclusive — Omar; Thomas & Jones Funeral Home; Valley View Community Cares and other businesses and community supporters.

Karen Walker, co-founder of the West Las Vegas group, and proprietor of Hamburger Heaven located in the target area, spoke about the reason for the event.

"It's all about bringing hope back to the community. I was born and raised here all my life, and the bottom line...I want this community to rise to another level. The redevelopment that is going on in the outskirts of this community should also be focused in this neighborhood. Our business has been in this community for over 55 years," Walker explained.

"We are one of the oldest Black businesses here and it came to the point that we felt that we weren't making it and contemplated selling the business. We had a For Sale sign up, and the majority of the customers that came into the restaurant said 'No, you can't sell, because, if you leave, we really won't have anything in the community.' So, the [community outpouring] helped us to remain here...Now we are trying another approach, to revitalize this area and expand our business," Walker concluded.

Assemblyman Harvey Mumford (D-6), a supporter and a sponsor of the event, read a proclamation submitted to the group from the city of Las Vegas and spoke on the efforts that were underway in the community to revitalize the neighborhood.

"The primary reason that I am out here today is that I



Sentinel-Voice photo by Les Pierres Streater

**Karen Walker and Lynette Boyd, co-founders of West Las Vegas Citizens for Hope, hold the \$3,500 check they received from the Clark County Small Project Fund Program.**

am a long standing resident of this neighborhood. This is an event that will have a positive effect upon the community in the way of revitalization and bringing in more retail and commercial investments to the neighborhood," Mumford said.

"One of the biggest problems in our community is the lack of jobs, and when you think of commercial investments and ventures that are able to be established here, you are able to create jobs that are needed here, and would solve many problems existing here," he said.

Mumford applauded business owners who have committed long-term to the area and spoke about business expansion ideas for some of them, voicing that a possible supper club expansion for Walker's two restaurants could bring more visitors to the area.

Concluding his remarks, Mumford stated, "Over the past 33 years that I have lived here, I have seen a reduction in crime, but the stigma attached to this neighborhood has others believing that this is a violent area, but in comparison to other communities in Las Vegas, we have improved. We need to remove that image that this is a negative area and that people need to be cautious when coming

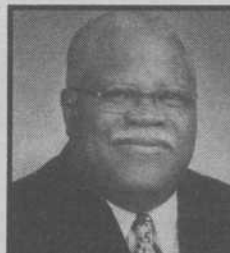
here. One of the ways to do that is to bring more economic development to the neighborhood and doing something positive that promotes growth and accelerating jobs."

Boyd spoke about the group's start and optimistically about future plans:

"The organization was founded in September of 2004 with 13 area businesses coming together to work on ways to revitalize the neighborhood. This is our first event and we look forward to collaborating with other organizations like the Urban League, Nevada Partners, and Nevada Business Services to identify programs and services offered within the community."

"We will also be sponsoring other activities in the neighborhood to entice more residents to get out of their homes/apartments and getting involved, along with promoting more tourists visiting Las Vegas to come here and patronage our local businesses in West Las Vegas. We want to make this community more attractive to all who visit here or live here," Boyd concluded.

For more information on the West Las Vegas Citizens for Hope, contact Lynette Boyd at 277-1220 or Karen Walker at 648-5323.



By  
Reg Weaver,  
President,  
National  
Education  
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*It's getting harder for middle- and low-income families to get the aid necessary to attend college.*



NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION  
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Great Public Schools for Every Child

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## College Aid Cuts: Make Your Voice Heard

America's children need Drew Schnoebelen.

He's a senior at a state university in Idaho, and studying to be a high school teacher. With a growing need for highly qualified teachers in America, he will be a welcome addition to any school.

It hasn't been easy for Drew, and college students like him, to complete their degrees and enter the workforce. In fact, it's getting harder and harder for middle- and low-income families to get the financial aid necessary to attend college and earn a four-year degree.

At many universities and colleges, tuition has skyrocketed — in some cases there are double-digit percentage increases from one year to the next. In Drew's case, that means he'll be paying off \$25,000 in loans once he graduates. That's a lot of debt for someone just starting out on a teachers' salary.

Also, Congress is debating legislation that might make it even more difficult by further cutting federal aid for higher education in this year's federal budget.

In the Pell Grant program alone, formula changes already mean 90,000 middle- and low-income students would no longer receive a Pell Grant and an additional 1.3 million would see decreases in their allocation. This decrease in assistance seems even more absurd when the average disbursement of the Pell Grant is only \$2,400 — an amount that pays for only a fraction of a semester at most colleges and universities.

It's amazing to me that some members of Congress will in one breath expound on the need to make America's workforce more globally competitive and then turn around and vote to decrease federal aid to higher education.

By doing this, Congress is not just hurting Drew's generation, but creating a cycle that will be felt for generations to come.

Without federal student aid, many middle- and low-income families will not be able to provide their children with higher education, making it harder to get a good-paying job, making it harder for them to send their own children off to college.

Representative government requires participation. Unless we the people make our voices heard, members of Congress will continue to make choices that meet short-term political goals, rather than long-term economic and educational goals.

Let's make sure our voices are heard. Find out more at NEA's Legislative Action Center at [nea.org](http://nea.org).

It's time for Congress to really invest in our future, and make sure that students like Drew have access to higher education, so that America's economy can grow and succeed for generations to come.