

# McDaniel valuable athlete, student in college

By Tasha Pope  
Sentinel-Voice

Only the most determined, disciplined individuals are able to survive hardships and hard starts in life. There are few exceptional athletes who actually thrive and succeed beyond any expectation. They say true character becomes visible when one trots on unfamiliar territory — like the first year of college, being away from home, for the first time.

Exceptional character.

It is the perfect description for highly acclaimed student-athlete Keisha McDaniel, who has always shown her determination to survive in sports and in life.

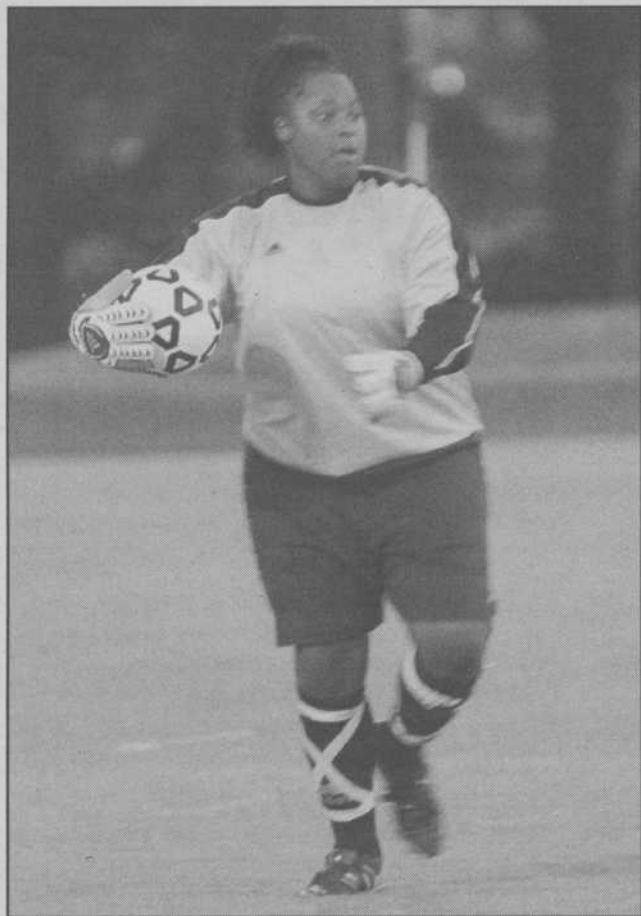
McDaniel was highly acclaimed as a hometown Desert Pines High School goalie and has kept her flawless record spot free at Texas Southern University.

McDaniel racked up 173 saves, shattered the single season record and was at the top of her conference with the numbers she put up.

"I just come out and played my game. I'm so far away from home I should have something to show for it," McDaniel said.

Earning Southwestern Athletic Conference freshmen of the year and the MVP award, is more than enough to prove McDaniel is minding her P's and Q's in T-town.

Although she was re-



During a recent game against Rice, Keisha protects the goal, retrieves the ball and puts it back into play.

cruited by other colleges, McDaniel decided on TSU because she wanted to be a part of a building program. TSU soccer has only existed for three seasons, and like most expansion teams, has struggled since day one.

"Just because it was a building program I knew I'd have a chance to start," she explained.

Not only has McDaniel had the ability to start, she

has made an enormous impact on the Lady Tigers squad. Despite the fact that they finished the season a mere 1-13, McDaniel was still recognized for her strong efforts.

"Keisha is an awesome player. She is a talented player overall," said head coach Tracey Lashley.

"Keisha gives us hope for the future," Lashley added. McDaniel's first season

impression has gained her respect that most athletes work years to earn.

"I hope to have more of a leadership role," McDaniel explained as she described her hopes for next season.

Coach Lashley has already nominated McDaniel to lead. She admires the way Keisha always gives her all.

"She maintains 100 percent in practice and during the games. I feel Keisha will be stepping up. Next year she will be a team captain," said Lashley.

McDaniel's determination doesn't dissipate off the field. She's a member of the Honors Program. Although she was extremely busy breaking records and setting new standards on the soccer field, she maintains that education is one of her top priorities.

"It is a bit more difficult. It takes more effort," McDaniel said in response to balancing school and soccer.

"I put the same amount of effort in both — on the field and in school. School is very important. Next season I could be hurt, but I'd still

have school," McDaniel continued. Her wisdom surpasses adults twice her age. And her drive continuously keeps her on her toes.

Difficult tasks only increase McDaniel's efforts. She has accomplished incredible feats outside her remarkable soccer skills.

From being a pre-teen entrepreneur with her own "Pretty Tomboy" clothing line endorsed by Queen

Latifah and other celebrities, to surviving a life-threatening car accident as a high school student — her second near-death experience — McDaniel said in an interview earlier this year that she would like to become a pediatrician. Despite all the wonderful things this young woman has accomplished, be assured she's only getting started on her path that will bring joy to many people.



Keisha McDaniel exemplifies the term "student-athlete."

## Williams

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Lawyers for Williams, author of a series of anti-gang books for children, wanted to re-exam ballistics evidence that showed his shotgun was used to kill three people during a 1979 motel robbery.

The defense claimed the forensic evidence was "junk science," but prosecutors said that allegation was "based upon innuendo, supposition and the patent bias of (Williams') purported expert."

"The extraordinary relief Williams sought is reserved for those cases which have legal merit," said Nathan Barankin, spokesman for Attorney General Bill Lockyer.

The high court voted 4-2 without comment to deny the inmate's petition, with Chief Justice Ronald George voting to reopen the case.

"We think the chief justice's dissent highlights the seriousness of the issues raised," defense attorney Jonathan Harris said. He was unsure whether he would ask the federal courts to intervene again.

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger could also still intervene. He has agreed to hear Williams' clemency petition, and if clemency is granted it would commute the inmate's sentence to life without parole.

"What I want to do is make sure we make the right decisions, because we're dealing here with a person's life," Schwarzenegger said Wednesday.

The high court's ruling came as death penalty opponents rallied around the state urging the governor to spare Williams' life because of his apparent turnaround on death row.

"We're all remaining optimistic. We're all remaining prayerful," Bonnie Williams-Taylor, Williams' ex-wife and the mother of one of his sons, said at a rally in Los Angeles.

Barankin expressed satisfaction with Wednesday's ruling.

Williams, condemned in 1981, has maintained his innocence.

Among his claims is that fabricated testimony sent him to death row. He also says prosecutors violated his rights when they dismissed all potential Black jurors from his case.

The California Supreme Court, federal trial and appeals courts, and the U.S. Supreme Court have already ruled against him in earlier appeals.

Williams was condemned for killing Yen-I Yang, Tsai-Shai Chen Yang and Yu-Chin Yang Lin in the motel robbery, and for gunning down Albert Owens, a 7-Eleven clerk, in a separate crime.

While in prison, Williams has campaigned for an end to youth gang violence while co-authoring anti-gang books for youngsters. Supporters have nominated him several times for the Nobel Peace Prize.

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