

Junior Day attracts basketball recruits

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By DeJane' James

HAMPTON, VA- Hampton **women's basketball** hosted its fourth annual "Junior Day" event Sept. 23 and 24, to recruit high school athletes. Seventy people attended, including 30 student-athletes from more than 15 different cities.

Hampton University's athletic budget does not allow coaching staff to do home visits with recruits, but coaches found a way to turn that negative into a positive.

"Not being able to do home visits started to become a disadvantage, so I created "**Junior Day**," said Timothy Valentine, associate head coach. "This makes up for the home visit recruiting that we cannot afford to do."

Many recruits traveled from the West coast and Midwest. It took those who did over a day just to get to Hampton, Va.

Tori Davis, a 16-year-old high school sophomore, traveled with his family from Phoenix, Arizona for a firsthand HBCU experience.

"I did not know what an HBCU was up until a few months ago," Davis said. "I feel that people my age need to experience and know about them, so that's why I came."

The recruits saw a day in a college athlete life firsthand.

"I like how we were able to watch the team practice and tour their locker room," said Ja' Niah Henson, a 16-year-old high school junior from Baltimore, Maryland. "It was cool to hang with the players without the coaches and my parents."

Adria Strothers has more appreciation for "Junior Day" now that she experienced it as a player instead of a recruit.

"Junior Day" convinced her to come to Hampton, she said.

"Junior Day played a big part in my commitment to Hampton," said Strothers. "It made me fall in love with the school and want to spend the next three years here."

Recruits and families said they enjoyed the event.

"Recruits are already looking forward to coming down for next year's event," said Jermaine Brown, assistant coach. "One recruit even told her mother she wants to go to school here."

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