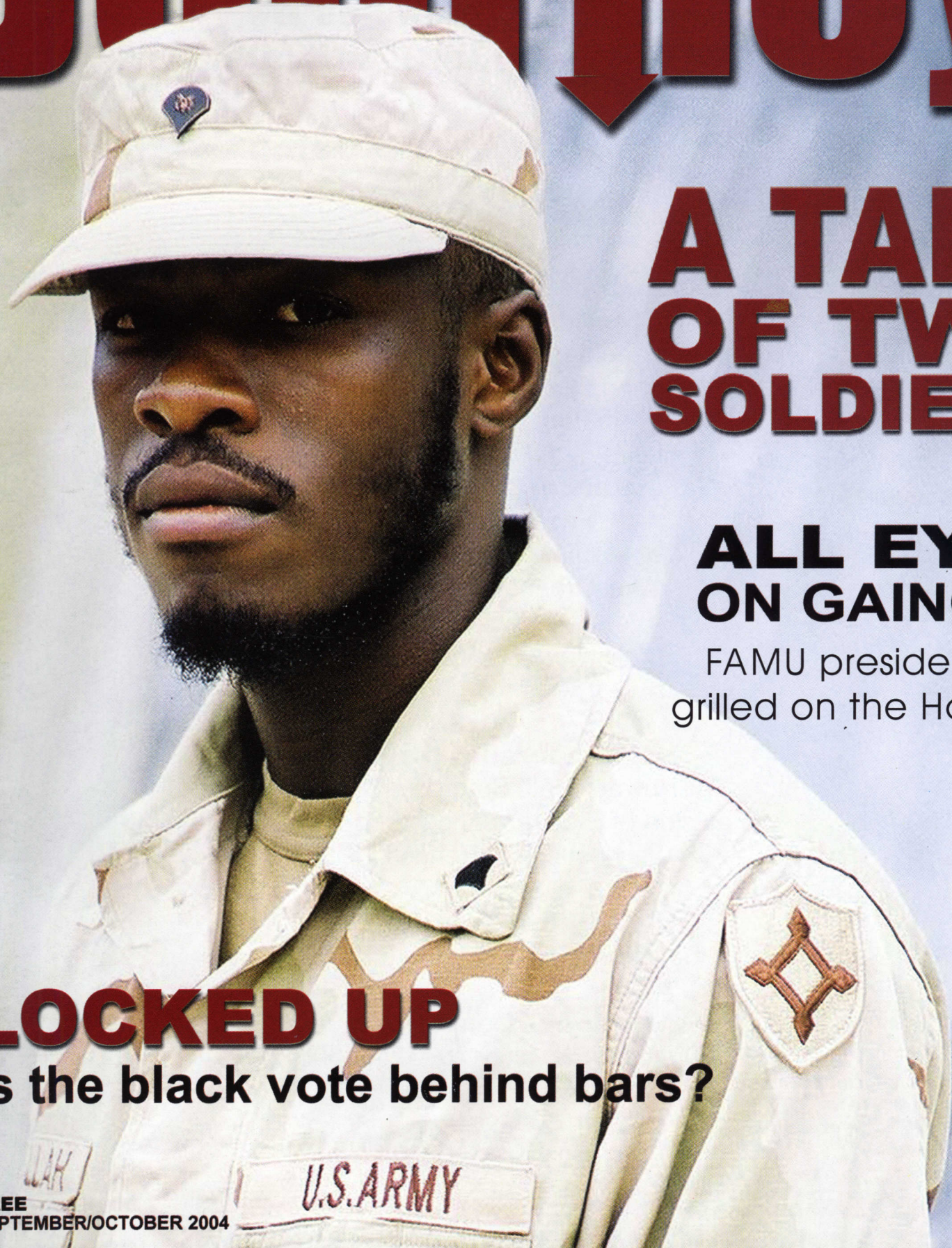


Florida A&M University's Campus Magazine

Journey



A TALE OF TWO SOLDIERS

ALL EYES ON GAINOUS

FAMU president gets grilled on the Hot Seat

LOCKED UP

Is the black vote behind bars?

FREE
SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2004

**The National Alumni
Association launches its
One Million Dollar Campaign
and
20,000 New Membership
Drive.**

Membership Drive

held before and after
Homecoming Convocation, Friday, Oct. 22
in front of the gym.

Rattler Round-Up

Friday, Oct. 22
at the Holiday Inn Round,
West Tennessee Street,
starting at 7 p.m.
Admission: \$15 in advance,
\$20 at the door.

Membership Drive

at Howard Hall, Saturday, Oct. 23
(Eastside of Stadium) and Bragg Stadium
westside entrances.

Winter Meeting

Baltimore, Md., Jan. 6 – 9, 2005

National Convention

Orlando, Fla., July 20 – 24, 2005

For more information:

**Dr. Alvin Bryant
(757) 846-3104 or
(850) 284-6317**

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While citizens chanted “God Bless America,” some of the country’s future leaders were sent overseas to fight in Operation Iraqi Freedom. But what is the price of sacrificing school for military service?

By Russell Nichols

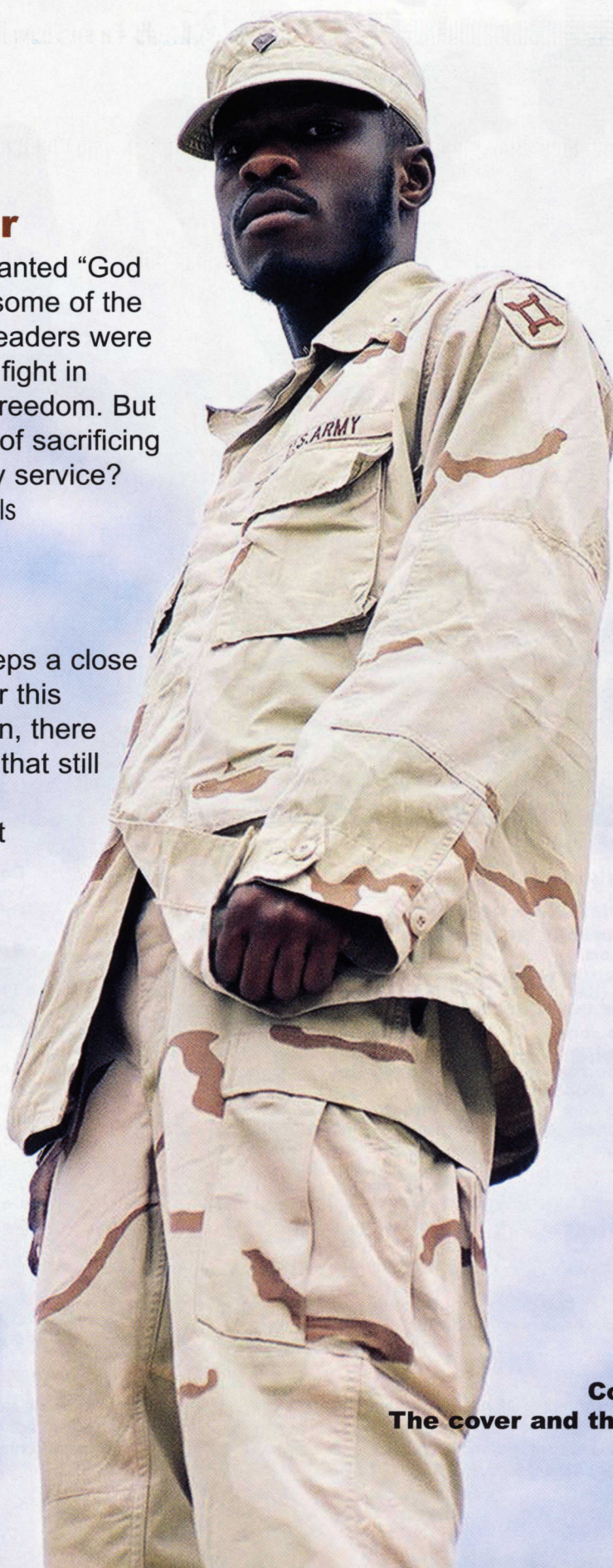
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As the nation keeps a close eye on Florida for this upcoming election, there are some voices that still won’t be heard.

QaShawn Garrett is one of them.

The former felon tells his story.

By Tiffany Pitts



Cover Design Lauren Lake
The cover and this page photographed
by Natrice Bullard



Not pictured: Alexia Robinson

Photo Jonathan Sellers

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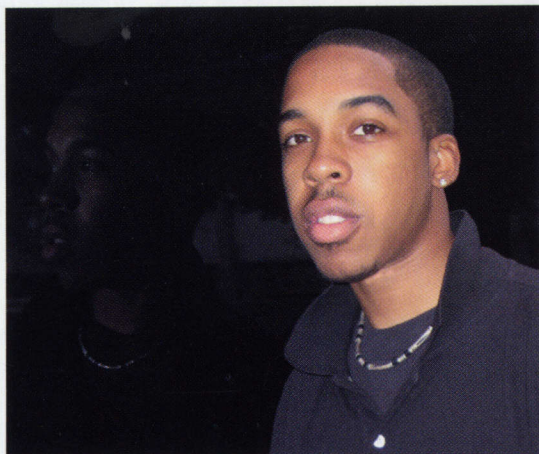
Photo S. Muhammed

Journey

September/October 05

What's the word

CALL OF DUTY



Where to begin?
Let me begin
with the end. It's

6:30 a.m. on the morning this issue is going to press. The sun tiptoes over the horizon preparing to claim its seat in the sky.

In the *Journey* office, the staff arranges and re-arranges, cuts, creates, draws, designs, edits, erases and proofs pages. These are the times when days bleed into each other and single minutes become stolen moments. Sleep seems like a myth. The line between dreams and reality becomes as blurry as the computer screens before us.

Since 1984, the sacrifices have not changed.

Journey magazine is our time capsule. In our 20 years of creating and cultivating, the FAMU community has witnessed the evolution of our culture through these pages: the aftermath of the Million Man March, the reality of rape and the death of jazz.

Last year's *Journey* staff set a higher standard. Editor in Chief Naeemah Khabir took the magazine where many have dared to tread. At the end of the year she passed the torch to me and a new journey began.

Somewhere between California and the cold corridors of Tucker Hall, I found my calling: to tell the tales of the forlorn and the fallen that we too often forget. To discover those undisclosed locations where deferred dreams curl up and die.

Like the editors before me, I have a charge to bring the life of FAMU's campus to the forefront. Here on the Hill, 13,000 strong, we are the talented tenth W.E.B. Du Bois talked about.

But how many of our soldiers are forced to fight for a free world when our freedoms fail at home? ("Tug of War," page 18) How many of our leaders died from bullets for the right to fill out ballots? How many of our voices have been silenced by a system that proclaims to be just? ("Conned," page 24)

This election year, we have a duty to lift our voices. This issue's political focus highlights the war abroad, the war at home ("President Under Fire," page 7) and the war within ("Man in the Mirror," page 11). Their stories become our stories. Their struggles, our struggles. And together — in the spirit of those who have sacrificed their lives so that we might speak up — we plot our own paths, fight for our own futures and claim our own consciousness.

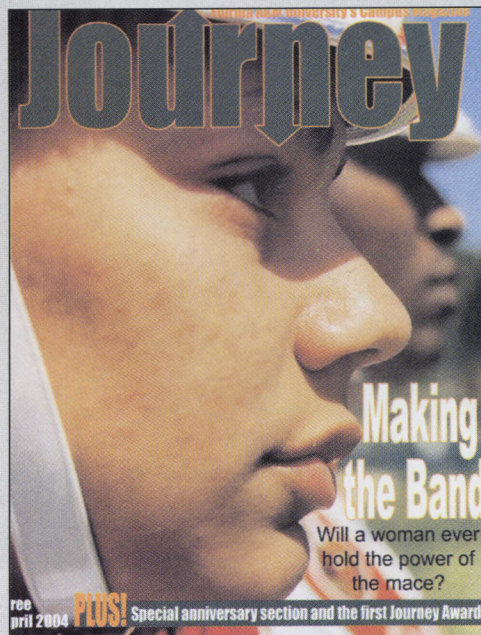
The question, then, is not where to begin, but how to become. That is our journey. This first issue is merely a step.

Peace.

Russell Nichols
Editor in Chief
"We're Steppin' Out!"

06 September/October

FOOTNOTES



New and Improved

It's a great time to be a Rattler.

My reason for writing is to let you know that I love the redesigned issues of *Journey* Magazine. It's great to see how much *Journey* has evolved since I was the art director fall '99-Spring '00.

Journey staff members are known for making miracles with the little that we are provided with. *Journey* has been on the back burner for quite some time, but I know that with dedicated and driven staff members like those from the 2003-2004 school year, the sky's the limit.

Congratulations on a fine publication. The FAMU family and especially the J-School alumni appreciate your work.

Novia Knight

Graphic Artist, *Detroit Free Press*
Detroit, Mich.

Talk Back

Comments, feedback, suggestions? We want to hear from you.

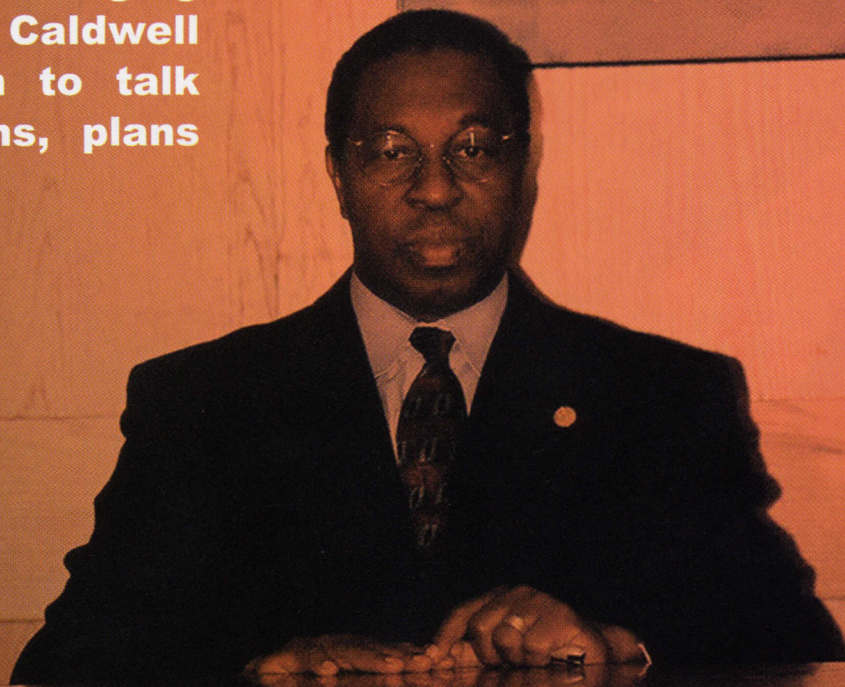
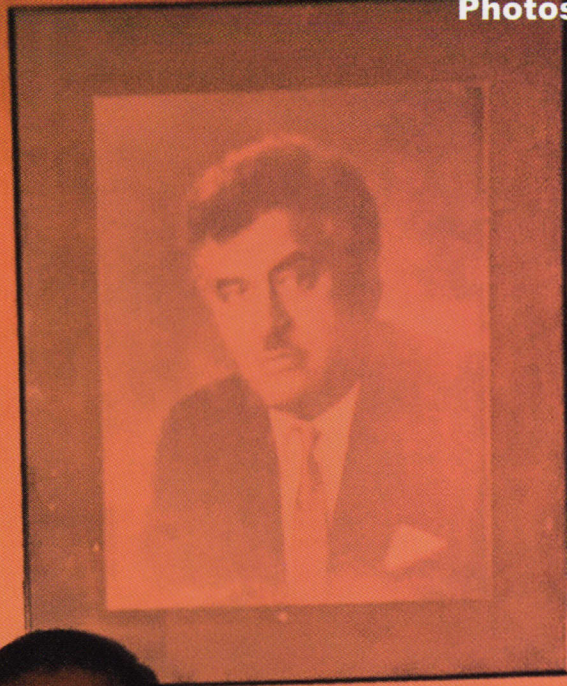
Please send letters to *Journey*, Tucker Hall, room 307A, Tallahassee, FL 32307, or e-mail journey_editor@yahoo.com. Include your full name, address, hometown, classification and major. *Journey* reserves the right to censor, shorten and keep all letters.

Journey

HOT SEAT

Photos Natrice Bullard

Exactly one week before the FAMU Board of Trustees voted 9-4 to terminate President Fred Gainous at the end of the year, *Journey* Editor in Chief Russell Nichols and Managing Editor Tanya Caldwell sat him down to talk about problems, plans and progress.



President Under Fire

**“ As of this moment,
I have no intention
on resigning. ”**



Journey: You always emphasized that you wanted to create "One FAMU."

President Gainous: Yes, my goal in creating One FAMU is about bringing those disparate constituent groups together. To create One FAMU is to bring individuals together for the common good and advancement of Florida A&M University. It brings about a spirit, it brings about an economic base that the university can draw on for support. It brings about a political base that the university can draw on in dealing with the Legislature,



in dealing with Congress, or dealing with anyone with regards to the university. That's what creating One FAMU is about.

J: When you say disparate groups, what types of groups are you talking about?

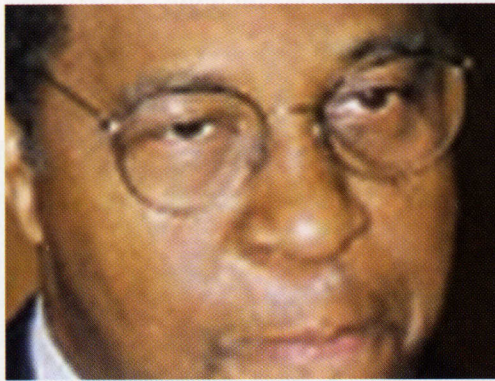
GAINOUS: They change depending upon what the issues are. The focus, however, must be on the university and what is good for the university. What disparate simply means is that there is a difference in ideologies among those groups.

J: What does it take to do that?

GAINOUS: Time, it takes travel to visit with the alumni association; it takes town hall meetings with students. It takes the effort of an entire university administration to bring about that level of cohesiveness, it takes communication of the graduates of the institution to make certain they have adequate knowledge that they can make informed decisions.

J: During your time here, would you say you have progressed the university toward "One FAMU?"

GAINOUS: I think there's a lot of progress that has been made. Progress has been on the research front. Progress has been made in terms of recruiting and retaining students. Progress has been made in productivity and accountability. This university is a very complicated institute and it's not a perfectly round circle, which means progress is made equally at all points. It's more of an exaggerated amoeba, that there's some areas you can penetrate and make changes fairly easily and there are other areas where it is simply going to take time and resources.



J: President Gainous, do you feel like you're under attack right now?

GAINOUS: You know, I don't wake up every day wondering where I am. My concern is more where the university is and how can we move the university forward. I cannot change people's minds. I cannot change their ideas. We can make the best decisions based on the information we have about this university. First of all, if everybody's in agreement, I think it's a clear indication that nobody's thinking.

J: At the President's Convocation, you announced that all of the net checks will be dispersed on or before Sept. 1.

GAINOUS: I think the statement was that net checks, for those students who completed their paperwork and those who are not freshmen, net checks should be delivered on or before. Freshmen do not get net checks the same time as juniors, sophomores and seniors. That's federal government. That's not the university.

Those students, who are being audited

by the federal government, they do not get net checks at that same time. That's federal government.

We printed some 6,000 checks were in the mail, printed another 800 and another 600. So basically, those students who had their information up-to-date and complete, that would be 80 percent of them, 90 percent received net checks.

J: What about the other 10 percent?

GAINOUS: They're still in process. Net checks are run every day. The ERP system



is new. It was brought up. We did some things this first semester that we have not been doing. So with any new system of that magnitude, there are glitches. There are things that must be worked out. What we do not have is the ability to deposit those monies directly into accounts.

J: What's all this talk about merging FAMU with TCC and FSU?

GAINOUS: You know, those are scare tactics of cowards to frighten people, to intimidate people, to control people. I don't know of any effort to do that.

There's certainly no effort on my part to do that. No one person can merge any institution. I think it's very unfortunate that anyone would engender that kind of fear in individuals.

What we need to do that we have not done is attract two-year college students to this campus. It's about economics. It's about funding. It's about being able to do things to enhance the quality of education and the programs that we have on this campus. I think it's unfortunate that individuals would use that fear tactic to accomplish ulterior motives.

J: With the community college, that's kind of getting into the gray area isn't it? Like over the summer, you endorsed an agreement to the Board of Trustees to have a working relationship with TCC in which FAMU professors would have to drive to TCC...

GAINOUS: They drive there now. There are FAMU faculty who are adjunct professors there at TCC. Obviously, those students who are there at TCC, who make the decision not to come to Florida A&M University, they make that decision for some reason. Our goal was to have faculty people teach at the university center that's located on TCC's campus. Our goal was to think out of the box, to do something differently to attract those two-year college students to Florida A&M University.

J: Wouldn't they be awarded FAMU degrees from that program?

GAINOUS: Yes.

J: So they wouldn't have a need to come campus. They would be like ok, I have my FAMU degree...

GAINOUS: We're doing that now. We do pharmacy in Jacksonville. We have the program from CESTA with Miami-Dade. The issue is not if they come to campus or not. The issue is who owns the instruction.

It's a matter of economics. Florida A&M University was the only university last year that did not get enrollment growth in dollars. There are institutions that got \$19 million. We got zero.

J: There's a lot of people who really want to see you gone: trustees, parents, students, alumni. Do you think you're going to be forced to resign?

GAINOUS: I think there are a lot of people who would like me to stay. I get calls and letters from alumni, constituents of the university, every single day.

J: How do you deal with the opposition?

GAINOUS: The same way I deal with those who are positive. Professionally. Thank them for their input.

J: So you don't think you'll be forced to resign?

GAINOUS: As of this moment, I have no intention on resigning.

J: How do you feel about the petition? Have you heard about it?

GAINOUS: The one with the dead people on it? The one with people's names on it who have not signed up? I don't think they're valid. Certainly for those individuals who have constructive comments, whether positive or negative, I'd be glad to hear them.

J: Do you consider the Board of Trustees a threat to your career?

GAINOUS: No. And why should I? I think the board is best equipped to make decisions about the hiring and firing of the president, the evaluation of the president and to work for the best interest of the institution.

J: But how does it feel to know that some of the same people that brought you in

here may be a part of the same organization that's trying to take you out?

GAINOUS: I don't wake up thinking about that. My task is to work to enhance the systems of this university. To find ways to enhance teaching and learning. There's too many things that must be done for me to spend a considerable amount of time being concerned about things I can't affect.

J: If you're forced to resign, do you have any plans?

GAINOUS: I have no intention of resigning. Whatever happens, I'll make a decision when it happens.

J: If you could do it all over again, would you?

GAINOUS: (Pause) Yes. My first day on campus, a well-dressed gentleman walked by and he said, "Mr. President, rule this place with an iron fist." And I think about that on occasion. And I thought, well, to rule with an iron fist is not what Florida A&M University needs. It changes the culture of this institution.

J: Would you do anything differently if you got to do it again?

GAINOUS: I'm sure. Yes. Probably I would have taken more time on board management. I would have had more retreats with the board and senior administration.

J: What is your biggest fear?

GAINOUS: I don't have just one. I think there's a fear of our progress being stalled because our ERP system develops a glitch that we cannot repair quickly. That we will not make the necessary changes to allow this university to become competitive globally in teaching, research and service.

There's no reason why Florida A&M University should have the smallest classrooms at this big university. There's no reason why we have a gymnasium that seats 3,300 unheated and unconditioned. We've got to do better. We've got to do better.



Man in the Mirror

Story Melissa Bridgewater,
Danielle Moore

Photo Natrice Bullard

Design Rabiah Solano

Reflections on male body image

He paces himself. His eyes focus straight ahead as he runs. He's oblivious to the students that are walking past him and the rhythmic thump of his feet pounding the moving rubber belt.

Two or three times a week for two to three hours each time, he is there, on the treadmill, trying to regain the physique that he says late-night study sessions stole from him.

"Two years ago, I was really fit," says Jamell Watson, a sophomore general education student. "But school and stress got me out of shape. I'm trying to get back in the groove."

Jamell is built like an athlete.

(Continued on page 12)

His shoulders are broad. Wide calves support his 5-foot, 10-inch, 220-pound frame.

Although the gym has the atmosphere of a social gathering, he entertains no side conversations.

He gives no casual greetings. Fifteen minutes pass, and he has decided to slow his pace, but he's not done yet.

"I work out to stay healthy because high blood pressure and diabetes run in my family," Jamell says. "I want the cycle to end with me. But part of (my reason for exercising) has something to do with body image. Body image is important because deep down the whole world is superficial."

While images of women saturate the market, the growing trend of products targeting men raises a question that may have at one time been taboo: how important is body image to men?

Image Is Everything

Yero Smith, 25, an agricultural business graduate student from Michigan, has worked for four years at FAMU's fitness center. As a licensed certified instructor, He says most men work out at the fitness center because they are concerned with their appearances.

Many men come to the gym and discover that they cannot compete with the media's definition of attractiveness, Yero said.

But they still try.

Strong Competition

Competition among men also seems to play a big part in the image factor.

Yero said men tend to concentrate on regions of the body they hear women talk about such as the chest, the shoulders, the back and the abs. "The trend used to be the same in the '70s and '80s, but it was the whole body, now this trend is geared away from working the lower body parts."

Yero also said men usually try to emulate what women say a man should look like, adding that many men feel that women are attracted to men with muscu-

lar builds. So, if women were attracted to men who worked in libraries, who had brains or were historians, and not attracted to men of strength, would men be more focused on working on their mental capacity?

Yero believes so.

Back At The Gym

It's late afternoon when Jamell steps off the treadmill. Time flies when he is working out and breaks are rare.



Photo Jamaal McKnight

*All products available at Amen Ra's Bookshop, located at 812 S. Macomb St.

Hair, skin and nail products from nature will enhance your body and refresh your soul.

1 Nubian Heritage Shea Butter Soap and Lotion with Lavender and Wildflowers Lotion (\$7)

2 Nubian Heritage Oats and Aloe Lotion (\$7)

3 Ecstasy Jelly by Carol's Daughter 4 oz. Jar (\$6)

4 Carol's Daughter Rose Petal and Pedicure Bath 8 oz. Jar (\$10)

5 Honey Puddin-Lavender and Nettles 2 fl. oz. (\$7)

6 Jamaican Punch Bath Salts 16 oz. Jar (\$7)

7 "KIZZI" Hair Pomade by Carol's Daughter 6 oz. Jar (\$6.95)

8 Ombra Rosemary Extract Foam Bath 300 ml Bottle (\$7.50)

9 Nubian Heritage African Black Soap with Shea Butter Oats (\$2.50)

10 Halal Lip Balm Nt wt: 15oz (\$2)

11 Ylang - Ylang and Frankincense Shampoo 8 oz. Bottle (\$8.50)

12 Flowers and Herbs shampoo 8 oz. bottle (\$11)

13 Nubian Heritage Shea Butter Soap and Lotion with Lavender and Wildflowers Bar Soap (\$2.50)

Jamell not only acknowledges the obsession with male body image. He understands it.

"I understand why some guys are obsessed with body image. To each his own. I guess if that's what you have to do to get the ladies, by all means do it," Jamell says with a smile.

Then he wipes his sweat-speckled face with an orange towel and proceeds to walk back to the treadmill.

He still has one more hour of exercising ahead of him.

Story Vineta Woodum

Design Robbyn Mitchell

MIC CHECK

Where there is an ear to listen...

“Silence filled the room as she used the stage to pour out her emotions on the ‘hellish, irrevocable, viral death’ of AIDS.”

Maura Speaks



photo
Jamaal
McKnight

Enlightening, moving, empowering and inspiring. What more can be said about black poetry? It's not what, but who. And that person is Maura McCasted, a petite, well-spoken, Kansas City native with a lot on her mind.

Like a full moon in the night sky, her vibrant smile and bright skin accented the dark stage at Mt. Zion Caribbean Café.

She stood front and center, weeping a rendition of her original poem "Fractured." It was like a church service with all the amen-shouting and hand-clapping.

Then silence filled the room as she poured out her emotions on the "hellish, irrevocable, viral

death" of AIDS.

"None of my poetry is fiction," she said.

A neo-soul flavor with a dash of hip-hop and a touch of comic relief was the formula for the night.

Next, Maura performed the "New Formula," a poem about the state of hip-hop, inspired by and beginning with a line from Usher's R&B hit "Confessions":

"I hope you can accept the fact that I'm man enough to tell you this," she begins.

The piece compares today's music to that of a time when "clowns cried tears," and there were "midnight trains."

Music is a popular subject for much of Maura's recent works.

"Lately, I've been writing a lot about the quality of entertainment," Maura said.

The 20-year-old junior business student recalled writing poetry consistently since the eighth grade.

"Paper always listens, especially when no one else will," she said, "journals and stories evolved into poetry, and poetry

stayed."

It wasn't until she came to FAMU that she began to go to poetry readings on and off campus.

"Poetry was mostly performed at coffee houses and for some reason they were for people 21 and over," she said.

Standing tall on stage and caressing the microphone, she shows no evidence that she's only been performing poetry for two years.

The combination of her childlike smile and soft tone of voice off stage is misleading compared to her fiery performances.

She humbly admits she is no different from the next person.

"I don't suppose my life has been any more difficult than anyone else's," Maura said.

Letting other people hear her work makes it real, she says.

"Reading or performing something you've written in front of other people gives it validity."

What appeals to Maura the most about performing is knowing there might be

people in the audience who need to hear what she has to say.

"To me, poetry means sanity, clarity," she said. "It allows me to articulate my problems when nobody else wants to listen."

In the future, Maura hopes to graduate and start a dine-in performance theatre.

But for now, she is collecting and organizing her written works with plans to copyright and publish them in volumes.

Until then, you can catch her at least once a week at Mt. Zion or traveling with the "Back Talk" poetry troupe.

She also performs once a month with fellow poet Walt Brown in a show called "Word of Mouth."

Maura encourage her fellow Rattlers to take action and get involved.

"It's really easy to become overwhelmed by everything that's going on in the world" she says, "but we need to be concerned about what's going on in the community."

PROGRAM

Oct. 27

Night Out for Cancer

Lee Hall, 8 p.m. - 10 p.m.

Oct. 29

Halloween Howl

Tallahassee Museum of History & Natural Science
3945 Museum Drive
6 p.m. - 10 p.m. 575-8684

ACME R&B Halloween Party

American Legion Hall
229 Lake Ella Drive
9 p.m. - 1 a.m. 222-3382

Nov. 2

National Election Day

Nov. 3

J.L. King Lecture

Author, "On the Down Low"
Lee Hall, 7 p.m. - 9 p.m.

Nov. 10

Rattler Cinema

"I, Robot" and
"Independence Day" at Lee Hall, 8 p.m.

Nov. 11

Veteran's Day "Working"

Tallahassee Community College stage play Turner Auditorium, Nov. 11 - 13 8 p.m.

PROPS

Journey presents the top five hottest products on the market

Design
Johndel Barrett

• Night Owl Keyboard •

\$40

If you are known for waiting until the night before a paper is due to type it, this one is for you. The transparent keyboard lights up so you can type without error or without keeping your roomie awake. The keyboard also contains splash-, crumb- and ash-proof features for late-niters who eat, drink and may light candles while they work. To keep your muscles strong, the ergonomic keyboard is also divided for wrist support.

For more information, visit www.gadgetshop.com.

• Vivitar's 6-in-1 Multimedia Handheld •

\$70

With the ability to function as an MPEG4 camcorder, digital still camera, PVR (personal video recorder), MP3 player and digital photo frame, Vivitar's DVR390H offers a lot of electronic versatility. Supported by a mere 4.17 x 2.8 x 1.26-inch frame, the handheld features a lithium-ion battery that can store more than 20,000 still images, 15 hours of VGA movies and over 5,000 MP3 files. The 6-in-1 also offers a 3.6-inch color LCD.

For more information, visit www.engadget.com.

• Sanyo MM7400 by Sprint •

**\$325 -
\$345**

Sprint's new video camera phone offers full GPS support. With a 16-MB memory card, the phone has ready link and two-way text messaging capability. The 176 x 220 Pixel TFT display features 65,536 colors. The stylish phone comes with changeable faceplates and over 70 polyphonic ring tones.

For more information, check out your nearest Sprint PCS store or visit www.sprintpcsinfo.com.

• Timex Bodylink System •

**\$125 -
\$300**

This new watch isn't your average timepiece. The four-device system uses the latest digital technology to monitor athletic performance. The digital heart rate sensor collaborates with the data recorder, which measures speed and distance, to track and stores fitness information. Paired with a global positioning system and a stopwatch, the watch can be connected to a PC to organize and analyze the data.

For more information, visit www.timex/bodylink.com.

• Def Jam Fight for New York by Electronic Arts •

\$49.95

Three times longer than Def Jam's original, Def Jam Vendetta, this EA game combines five extreme fighting styles and uninhibited hip-hop music in a battle to rule an urban underworld. The game features more than 40 hip-hop celebrities such as Busta Rhymes, Flava Flav, Lil' Kim and Slick Rick. With the ability to street fight, master martial arts, wrestle, kickbox or fight submission-style, each opponent has enough choices to become the victor. The game is available for Xbox, GameCube and Playstation 2.

For more information, visit www.eagames.com.

THE SCENE



Photo: Jamaal McKnight



Photo: Natrice Bullard



Photo: Jamaal McKnight

1. "Put your hands in the air!" The Royal Court escorts get drunk. 2. The Rev. Jesse Jackson receives a basket of goodies from SGA. 3. "Come home Charlene." Anthony Hamilton serenades the ladies at the Civic Center. 4. Melissa Mitchel sings a song for students on the Set. 5. "FAMU! FAMU!" The Strike team gets ready for the first home game. 6. An Omega Psi Phi 'Bruh' educates MTUu . 7. The Presidential Nine pose with a future high stepper.



Photo: Jamaal McKnight



Photo: Natrice Bullard



Photo: Jamaal McKnight

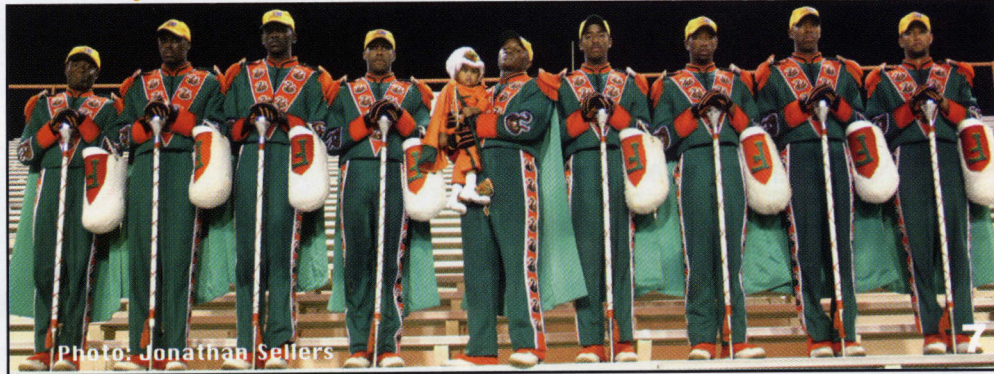


Photo: Jonathan Sellers

Showcase



Illustration by Johndel Barrett

Frank Sinatra called him "The Genius."

Ray Charles had it all. The voice. The style. He defied segregation of the '50s and '60s in the same clubs that spurred his career. For 73 years he was untouchable.

The musical phenomenon died June 11 of complications from liver disease. But this October, actor/comedian Jaime Foxx will bring the musician to life.

In the upcoming biopic "Ray," Foxx chronicles Charles' growth as he evolves from a blind and poor Southern child into a world-renowned pianist. "Ray" is set for national release in theaters Oct. 29.

Foxx also has it all: The voice. The style. The comedic flair that landed him his own sitcom.

The parallels — although contrasting — don't end there. Charles was diagnosed with glaucoma around age 6. Foxx learned to play the piano about the same age. Charles launched his career in a divided world of black and white. Foxx launched his career on "In Living Color."

Charles fits perfectly into

one of Foxx's stand-up routines. You could almost picture the gravelly voice, upright posture and rigid smile. But in stand-up, Foxx could only imitate Charles.

In "Ray," Foxx becomes him.

The film, directed by Taylor Hackford, begins in 1948 as Charles heads to Seattle to play at a jazz club. Flashbacks help viewers piece his past together in Albany, Ga.

— **FAST FORWARD** ▶
from witnessing the death of his brother to his addictions to heroin and women.

Featured hits include "Hit the Road Jack," and "Mess Around." Foxx also sings some of the vocals in the film. But Charles re-recorded a lot of his hits for the motion picture.

With all the Oscar buzz already surrounding the biopic, it's apparent that Foxx has come a long way from "Booty Call." Adding "Ray" to his expanding resume including "Ali" and "Collateral," Foxx has proven to be a "genius" in his own right.

— Russell Nichols and Diamond Washington

Let the people say Amen

Sherman Hemsley personified all that is loud and feisty as George Jefferson on the hit television show "The Jeffersons," which began airing in 1975 as a spin-off of "All in the Family."

Ten years later, Hemsley was moving on up the aisles as Deacon Ernest Frye in "Amen," which first aired on NBC on Sept. 27, 1986. Once again, he was up to his usual characteristics as a sarcastic swaggerer. It was vintage Hemsley.

In the first television sitcom to focus on religion, Frye was a lawyer and sneaky deacon of the First Community Church of Philadelphia, which his father founded. Frye's daughter, Thelma (Anna Maria Horsford), was a single 30-year-old who was

RePLAY

constantly looking for love. The Rev. Reuben Gregory, portrayed by real-life minister Clifton Davis, was an understanding and kind-hearted character whom Thelma silently and sometimes verbally longed for. Rolly Forbes, played by the late Jester Hairston, was the clever elder of the church.

The show highlighted the endless conflict between Frye and Gregory, giving insight into the political and humorous sides of the church and the community as a whole. Despite the deacon's best intentions for the church, Frye's stubborn nature wouldn't allow him to give control to anyone, especially

to Gregory. Ironically, Frye's efforts usually fizzled and he had to depend on Gregory to bail him out.

That's when the chatty Hetebrink sisters — Amelia (Roz Ryan) and Casietta (Barabara Montgomery) — would step in; those honorary

The first television sitcom to focus on religion

church board members who loved to ridicule Frye.

Thelma also played a key role in the success of the show. The socially awkward adult often contrasted her clever and cunning father with her childlike ways. Often, Thelma would cry "Daddy" in her classic whiny voice to convince the deacon to change his mind about something or to use his shoulder to cry on.

Thelma and Frye's eventual marriage closed the gap between Gregory and Frye and symbolized Thelma's newfound maturity.

In the series finale, which aired July 27, 1991, Frye held a telethon to raise money to solve the church's financial problems and he was also promoted from a lawyer to a judge.

"Amen" pioneered a new genre by shining light on the black church.

— Darian Magee

The morning after auditions

Story Christina M. Deans

Design Robbyn Mitchell

Out of Character

The cast list was posted.

Arion J. Friday avoided it all morning. He occupied his time with ROTC training and calculus. But the 20-year-old theatre student knew he had to face it.

It was mid-afternoon when he stepped toward the board outside of the theatre office. He looked around for any fellow theatre students. None. There were only strangers waiting for the elevator in the shadows of the hall.

"I'll just walk up and take a look as if I'm just reading a flier," Arion thinks. It wasn't like him to be nervous.

Tacked to the board was a list of roles for the essential theater production "Extremities." There were eight names. Four of them were the characters in the play: Marjorie, Patricia, Terry and Raul. Next to those names were the students who were selected to portray those characters.

Everything around Arion became blurry as he skimmed the list for his name.

The Few, The Proud

Two days earlier, Arion stood outside the Foster Tanner building dressed in black slacks and a crisp white dress

shirt. He walked into the room gripping the monologue with his hand.

Even when the number of auditioners was cut down to half, Arion still felt a tingle in his fingertips that reminded him to be humble.

"It was one thing to be confident," Arion said. "But to be cocky was another."

After a few quick run-throughs, Arion's number was called. He read his lines. They were a little shaky at first. But he adjusted and read just as he rehearsed.

The next day, he made callbacks.

Although Arion was confident in his performance at the auditions, he knew others that had done just as well. The real test would be callbacks that night.

Judgment Day

The piercing buzz of the alarm clock sliced through his sleep the morning the list was posted. It was 4:30 a.m. Once he gained consciousness, Arion focused on his Marine ROTC routine.

He jumped out of bed, stretched and threw on his gear before sprinting out the door to the ROTC unit. Outside, the sky was still very dim, the grass was

soft and wet underneath his boots.

At 7:30 a.m. he sat down in the cafeteria to eat a bowl of Raisin Bran, a bagel and such, all of which he capped off with a comforting cup of hot chocolate.

He returned to his Paddyfote dorm room. Arion's mental track switched gears from marine-in-training to student-on-a-mission. Calculus II was his next challenge.

During class, the concepts of calculus kept escaping him.

After class, Arion saw Jessica Hamilton, one of his classmates.

"Hey AJ, have you seen the list?" she asked.

He swallowed.

"No, not yet," he replied.

Later that day, he returned to Tucker Hall hoping to find a friendly face at the Charles Winterwood theater. However, all he saw was a confusing cloud of students roaming from class to class.

He stood in front of the callboard gazing at the list of names. Standing there, Arion had to conquer the fear that haunts many: rejection.

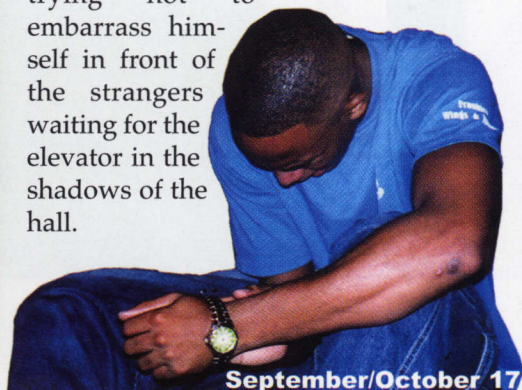
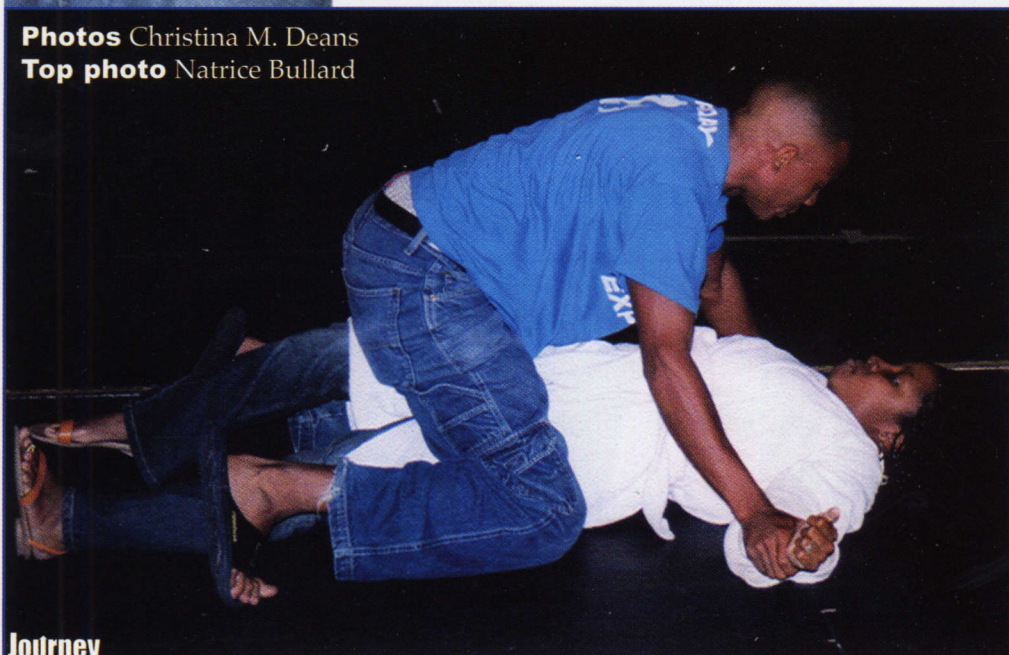
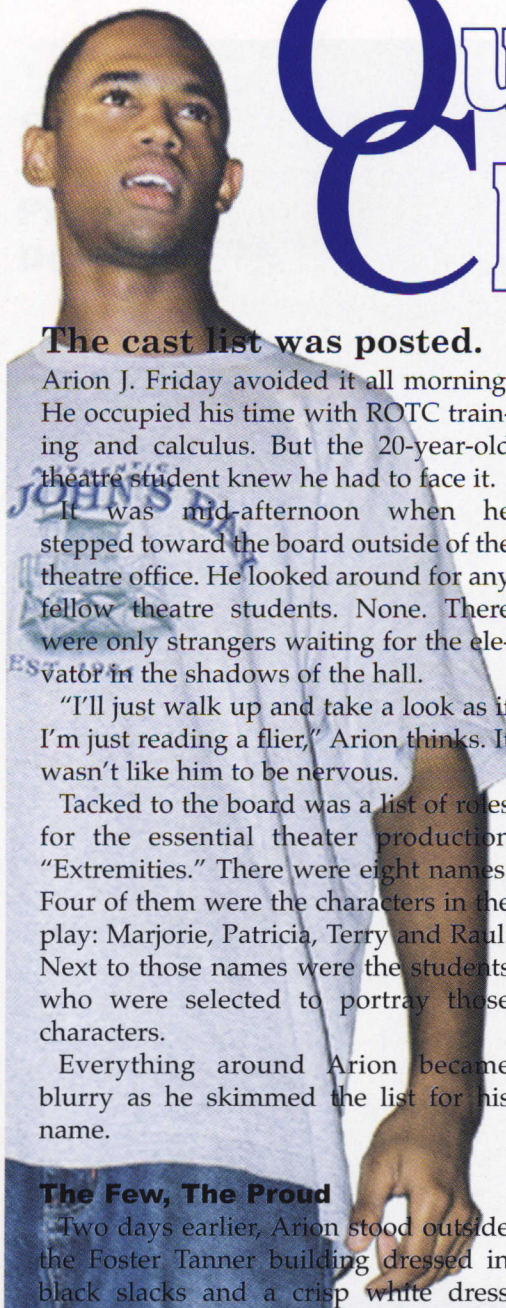
He spots Raul's name. Next to it, his eyes skim over the letters: Arion J. Friday.

He made it.

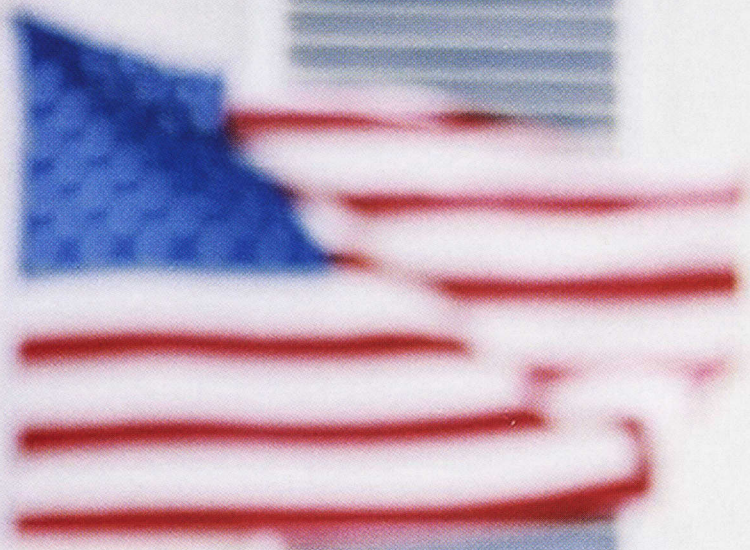
"Don't freak out in front of these people," he tells himself.

He had proven himself. He would not portray a character. He would become Raul.

With a gentle nod, Arion strolls away, trying not to embarrass himself in front of the strangers waiting for the elevator in the shadows of the hall.



Photos Christina M. Deans
Top photo Natrice Bullard



“TUG OF WAR

Story Russell Nichols

Photos Natrice Bullard

Design Lauren Lake



Spring semester 2003

The phone rings once.

He sits on the edge of his bed on the second floor of apartment 168.

It's almost 9 a.m. He is on his way to a test he studied all night for. He grabs his backpack, slings it over his shoulders and walks toward the door.

The phone rings again.

He pauses and looks around the room for it. His thumb fumbles over buttons until he finds "talk" and presses it.

"Hello?" he asks.

The man's voice is monotone, almost mechanical. Formalities were brief, but the message held the resonance of a morning bugle.

"I don't know how to tell you this but you've been activated," the man told him. "You are to report to Fort Lauderdale tomorrow."

The phone slips from his fingers once he hears the dial tone. Aquil Abdullah was called to sacrifice schooling for the military service.

* * *

In the next few days as Aquil scurries to pack his clothes and say goodbye to his friends and teachers, Edmond Randle Sr. waits for a call from his son.

The last time he saw him was the week before Thanksgiving in 2002. Edmond Jr. was headed to Texas for training. When Mr. Randle learned he was enlisting again, he feared for his son's life.

But whenever they speak over the phone, Edmond's voice reveals no fear. What Mr. Randle cannot understand is the selection process.

"Why wasn't anyone else picked?" Mr. Randle asks.

"They need the best and that's what they're going to get," Edmond replies.

Mr. Randle knows that any efforts to try and change Edmond's mind would be pointless. His boy — the one who used to imitate the Marching 100 Slow Ones at band practice — is now a man.

Summer 2003

About three units are packed in 15 to 20 vehicles. They just left Camp New York in Kuwait and Iraq is a three-day drive away. Aquil sits silently crammed between several soldiers.

"Is this for real?" he keeps asking himself.

The road slithers over rises, scoops into depressions and moves through small towns whose names he can't pronounce and won't remember. The convoy jolts across the expansive plains — layered with landmines and heavy with heat — and into the horizon where the khaki colored sand and sky kiss.

Their vehicle stops. They usually pulled to the side of the road after sundown.

"We're stoppin' here?" a soldier asks.

Aquil can't see much, but the staccato of gunfire echoes out there somewhere in the distance; where Operation Iraqi Freedom bears no resemblance to 10 p.m. newscasts back home.

It's been years since he's been back home. Never once did he think he'd end up here.

The house where Aquil grew up sits in the east country part of St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands where mango trees dot mountainsides. There, he was raised on Koran scriptures and plantains.

After he got his diploma, he took a year off to sort out his destiny. During that year, flashy National Guard commercials lured him:

Get the money you need for college! Tuition! Books! Join the Guard today! Make a difference!

Why not? How else would he get to college?

"I knew my parents didn't have the money like that," he said.

He joined the Florida Army National Guard in the summer of 1997 and enrolled at FAMU that fall. He was part of the 708th Maintenance Division based in Quincy. He was deployed with the 743rd Maintenance Division based in Fort Lauderdale.

Guard training was more often than he

thought it would be. The so-called two weeks in the summer became "whenever you're called."

Even if that meant war.

* * *
Edmond is stationed in Taji, 30 km north of Baghdad. He hasn't spoken to his father in a while. He knows his father is against the war.

He's had front row seats to the war on terrorism, where the bodies of civilians and unknown soldiers litter the ground ...

It's been about three months since Edmond landed in Iraq. Here, he's had front row seats to the war on terrorism, where the bodies of civilians and unknown soldiers litter the ground and the thin red line runs thicker every day.

Edmond grew up in Miami in a three-bedroom house near Pro Player Stadium with one sister and about 50 cousins under him. He collected Jordans and lived to play NBA Live, but his heart was always in music. At first it was the drum, then it was the keyboard. Then in 9th grade, he got into the trumpet.

He graduated from Central High School in Miami in 1995 and followed in his father's footsteps, which led to FAMU's Bragg Stadium, where Mr. Randle was a part of the Marching 100 from 1974 to 1980. Edmond got accepted to FAMU on a music scholarship, but lost it when he declared pharmacy as his major. He didn't know he had to major in music.

He needed more money to cover tuition. To compensate, he hoisted bags and checked in passengers as a Delta Airlines baggage clerk.

The money was good. Not good enough. He enlisted in the Army as a soldier for the 2nd Battalion, 20th Field

Artillery Regiment of the 4th Infantry Division based at Fort Hood, Texas.

It was his only option if he wanted to finish school.

Late Fall Semester 2003

It still smells like dust and diesel fuel. About seven months ago, Aquil's unit set up camp in Tikrit, Iraq, north of Baghdad.

Across the road sits an abandoned warehouse that holds remnants of an Iraqi airfield: piles of missiles and aircraft parts, the ghosts of those they're hunting.

There are no real showers or bathrooms. The officers constructed a makeshift out-house. The hollow basins of drums serve as toilets and every morning, one of the soldiers has to burn the bucket brimming with feces.

"Shit-burning detail," they called it.

It's a little before 5 a.m. Aquil gets to go home for R&R. It's still dark and hazy outside.

He shoulders his bags to the vehicle outside and climbs into the back, his body still halfway asleep. About 20 minutes pass when the vehicle pulls to the side of the road.

"What's goin' on?" one soldiers asks.

A tire on one of the vehicles of the convey went out.

While they are on the side of the road, three Humvees scurry past them. Within minutes, the vehicle stops again.

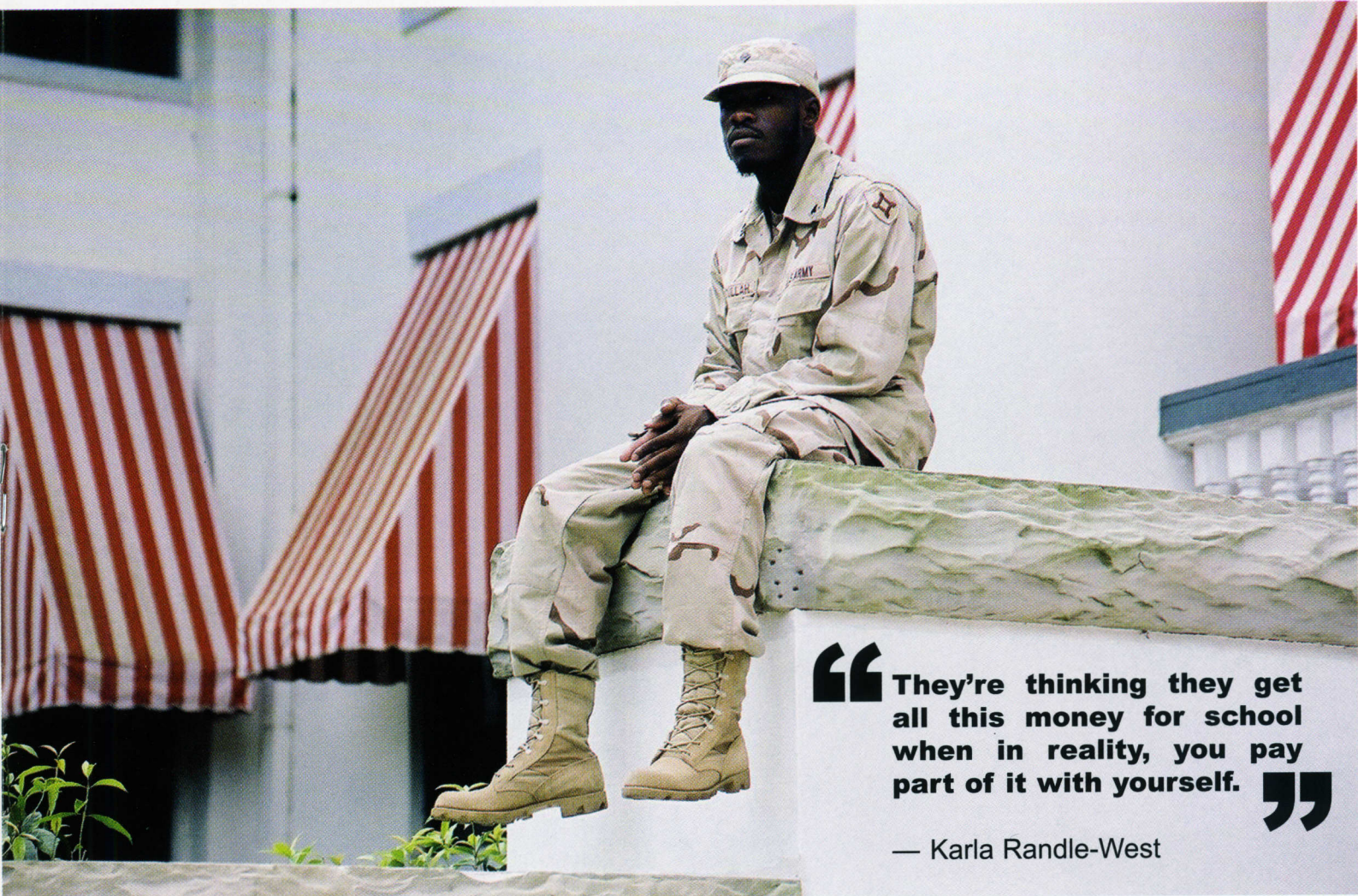
"Everybody out of the vehicles!" one of the sergeants yell.

The intensity in his voice lets them know it's no drill. Aquil and the other soldiers who were headed home leap out of the vehicle wearing flak jackets and clutching their weapons.

There has been a bomb. Smoke from the burning Humvee wafts into the murky sky, and pieces of U.S. maps flutter in the wind.

The soldiers huddle in the middle of the road pointing the muzzles of their weapons in all directions. Aquil stands with his back against the vehicle. His narrow eyes dart from the right to the left.

Then he hears shots.



“They’re thinking they get all this money for school when in reality, you pay part of it with yourself.”

— Karla Randle-West

“Yeah they got small arms firing over to the left,” the sergeant yells. “We need four more guards up front!”

Aquil, gripping his M-16, moves to the front of the vehicle. Off to the side of the road, blood oozes from a body cloaked in a white sheet. Another body lies with entrails jutting out from his belly. Aquil swallows and fixes his steady gaze ahead where more officers try to help another fallen soldier who is downed.

“I need you to go to the side of the road and pick up any (bombs),” the sergeant commands, “and pick up any American debris.”

I should’ve stayed on base, Aquil thinks. It don’t make no sense comin’ out here to do this just to get home.

* * *

A few weeks later in Taji, a few miles south of Tikrit, Edmond and other soldiers from his unit climb into a Bradley Fighting Vehicle.

It’s Saturday. Today they are on surveillance sweep duty. Nothing new.

The engine of the Bradley rumbles to life. They pull away from the base and drive to the designated area. The Bradley trudges along the road.

Edmond and the unit steer the Bradley along the path combing the road for any bombs.

They miss one.

It was buried beneath the gravel on the side of the road. The explosion is deafening. The bomb spews scorching pieces of shrapnel into all directions.

They try to regain control.

It’s too late. The 30-ton vehicle tips, flips over and tumbles into the field beside the road. The Bradley explodes, sparks shoot into the air and the fire crackles as it begins to swallow the vehicle. Heavy, black smoke billows into the sky, and the smell of burning fuel quickly drenches the area.

Spring semester 2004

The birthday cards came before the body.

Karla Randle-West, Edmond’s mother, was planning a homecoming party for his arrival in March.

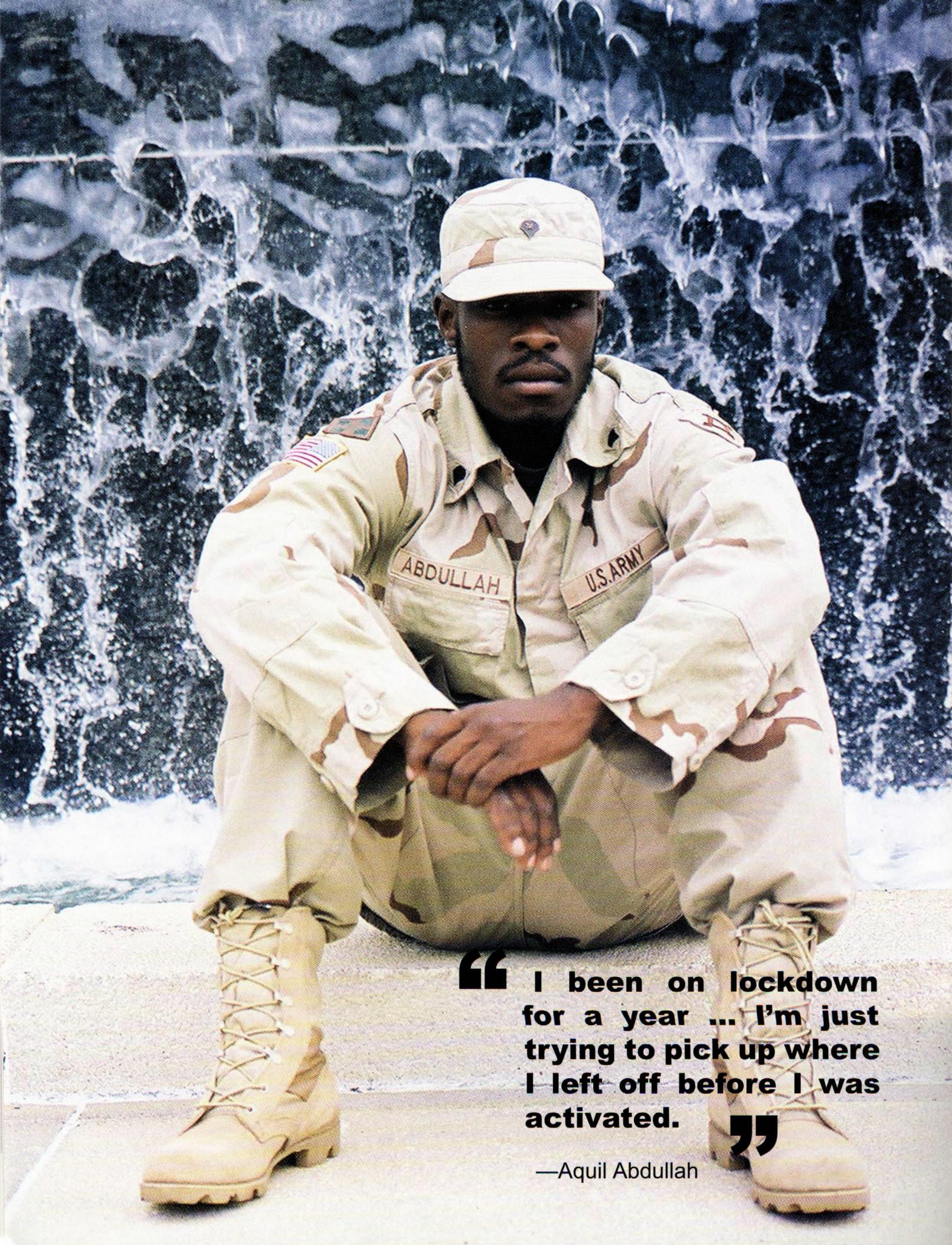
It’s Jan. 17, the same day as the explosion in Taji. She hadn’t heard from him since the day after New Year’s.

“Mom, you worry too much,” he would say over the phone. “Everything’s going to be fine. I’m coming home soon.”

Still, she didn’t like the whole idea of children fighting in the war. Let alone her own.

“They’re thinking they get all this money for school when in reality, you pay part of it with yourself,” Mrs. Randle-West says. “We got all these kids dying and they don’t really know why.”

It’s late in the afternoon that Saturday and she sits at the funeral of her best friend’s father.



“ I been on lockdown for a year ... I’m just trying to pick up where I left off before I was activated. ”

—Aquil Abdullah

By the time she makes it back to the house, the sun has retired behind the horizon and darkness shrouds the sky.

An hour later, there is a heavy knock at the door. Standing there are two men in uniform.

She slams the door. A surge of panic shoots through her body. *Not my baby, not my baby*, she pleads to herself. *Please God, not my baby*. She hesitates and opens the door again.

"Ma'am, can we come in?" one of them asks. His voice is monotone, almost mechanical.

"No," she tells them. But they wouldn't leave.

Edmond died in the explosion one week before his birthday, bringing the U.S. military death toll in Iraq to 500.

* * *

Aquil arrives back in the States in March. In retrospect, he feels the past year was a waste of time. There were no real threats, no intense fights, no weapons of mass destruction.

"I wasn't gung-ho to kill nobody," he says. "We shouldn't even have been over there that long."

In April, he enrolls in Tallahassee Community College for some credits. Each night, he returns to his room. This place gives him the peace that has been missing ever since he answered that late ring on his way to a test more than one year ago.

Fall Semester 2004

In Miami, Edmond's room looks the same as he left it. Old pictures of friends hang on the wall. Old clothes hang in his closet.

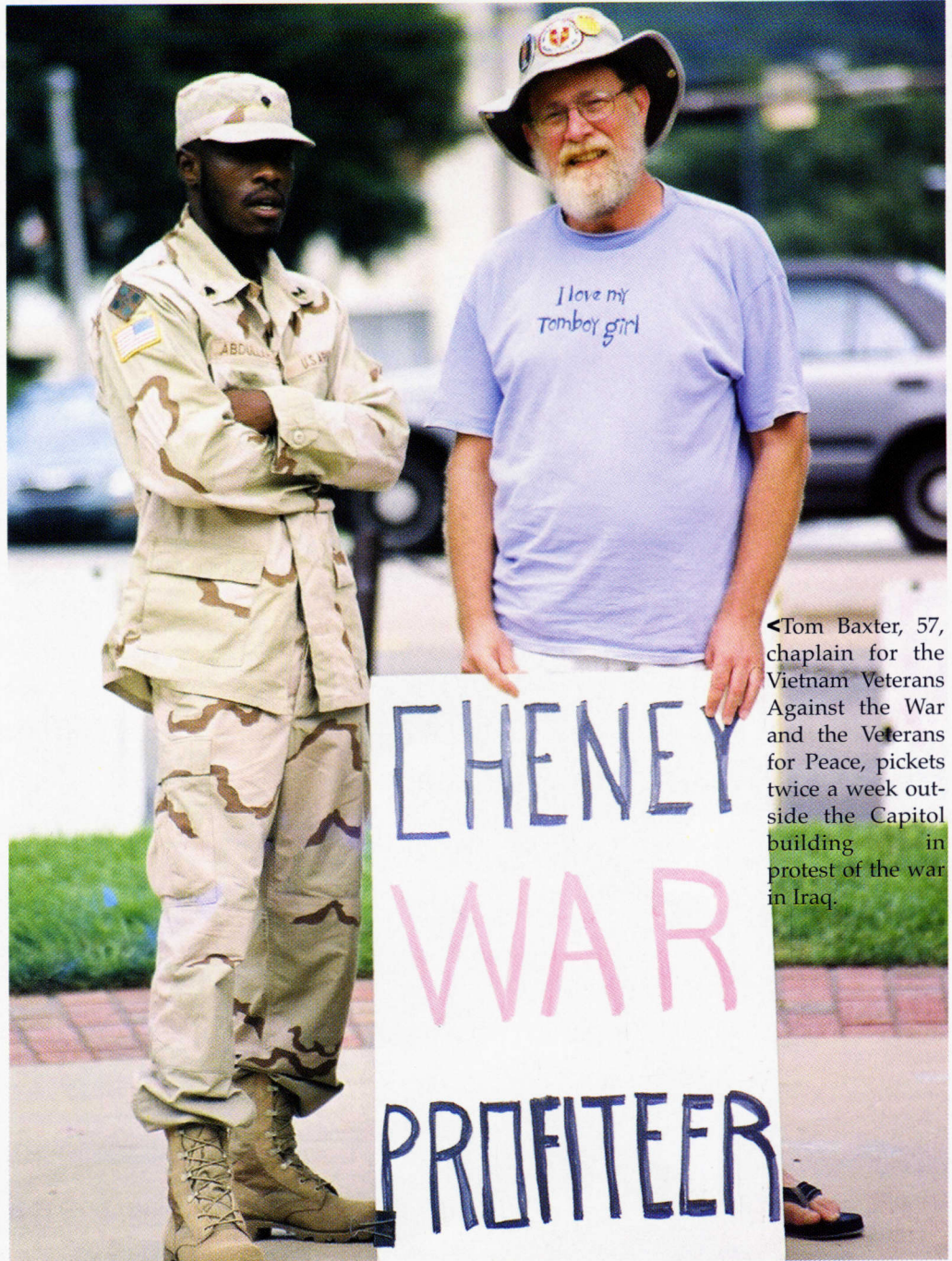
"I have it set up as if he's coming back," Mrs. Randle-West says.

She turned the den into a memorial adorned with plaques and pictures from Iraq that will never be explained.

War wounds still swell in the house near Pro Player Stadium.

"It's almost like, if we pull out now," Mrs. Randle-West says, "they all died in vain."

At the memorial service, The Marching 100 stood around the gravesite as still as soldiers, their brass instruments shimmering as the sun paid its last respects.



◀Tom Baxter, 57, chaplain for the Vietnam Veterans Against the War and the Veterans for Peace, pickets twice a week outside the Capitol building in protest of the war in Iraq.

Almost one year later, Mrs. Randle-West still craves the comfort of his words.

"As long as I could hear his voice, I was all right," she says. "But I've been unable to hear his voice for nine months now."

Sometimes she goes into the den to talk to him. To hear him. To feel him.

"It just seems like he's away and he'll be back," Mrs. Randle-West says. She pauses. When she speaks again, her voice trembles. "All he wanted to do was get his degree."

* * *

Aquil sits on the edge of his bed on the

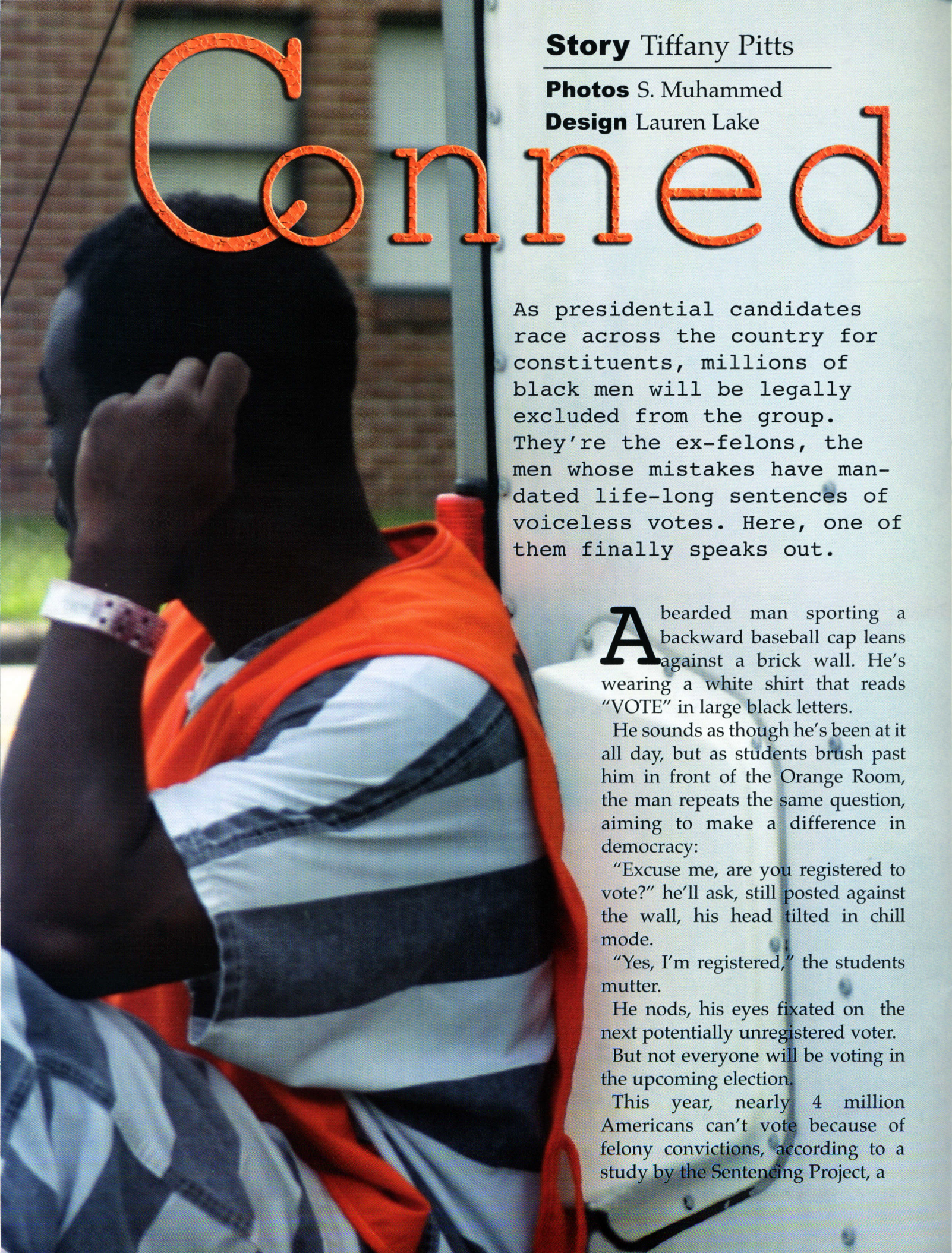
second floor of apartment 168. Raindrops pelt the windowpanes. A hurricane swirls in infrared splashes on his muted TV.

The U.S. military death toll in Iraq has surpassed 1,000.

At this very moment, National Guardsmen are on hurricane duty. He should be with them, but Aquil hasn't contacted the Guard since his return.

"I been on lockdown for a year," he says. "I'm just trying to pick up where I left off before I was activated."

Aquil is 25 now, one year younger than Edmond was. One year away from a degree Edmond will never see.



Story Tiffany Pitts

Photos S. Muhammed

Design Lauren Lake

Conned

As presidential candidates race across the country for constituents, millions of black men will be legally excluded from the group. They're the ex-felons, the men whose mistakes have mandated life-long sentences of voiceless votes. Here, one of them finally speaks out.

A bearded man sporting a backward baseball cap leans against a brick wall. He's wearing a white shirt that reads "VOTE" in large black letters.

He sounds as though he's been at it all day, but as students brush past him in front of the Orange Room, the man repeats the same question, aiming to make a difference in democracy:

"Excuse me, are you registered to vote?" he'll ask, still posted against the wall, his head tilted in chill mode.

"Yes, I'm registered," the students mutter.

He nods, his eyes fixated on the next potentially unregistered voter.

But not everyone will be voting in the upcoming election.

This year, nearly 4 million Americans can't vote because of felony convictions, according to a study by the Sentencing Project, a

non-profit research and advocacy organization.

Even though more than 1 million of these people have completed their sentences, they are still locked out of their civil rights.

NO VOTE, NO JOB, NO LIFE

Stopping by several college campuses during his "Hope Is On The Way Tour," the Rev. Jesse Jackson was another man on a mission to get young people to vote.

Jackson had just spent more than an hour recreating the 2000 presidential election for FAMU stu-

"Once you serve your time you are an ex-felon ... You should have the right to vote. There should be no double jeopardy."

— The Rev. Jesse Jackson

dents. Thousands of votes were tossed out back then, he told them.

It can't happen again.

A student shot her hand in the air.

"What are your thoughts on felons being ineligible to vote in the state of Florida, especially since a large population of them are minorities?" she asked.

Silence lingered in the room as the audience waited to hear Jackson's response.

"Once you serve your time you are an ex-felon," he said. "You should have the right to vote. There should be no double jeopardy," Jackson said. "There are 90 percent of felons who are high school dropouts, 80 percent who are non-violent offenders and 75 percent of them end up right back in jail."

Sitting in the back of the auditorium was 23-year-old Qashawn Garrett. Six years ago, secret exchanges of crack for cash almost made him another statistic.

When he was 17, Qashawn was sentenced to spend 18 months in prison for possession of an illegal drug and for carrying a firearm.

In the auditorium, Qashawn's mind traveled between his present accomplishments and his past disappointments. He began to feel his breathing intensify.

"Felons don't just lose their right to vote ..." Jackson continued.

Qashawn was beginning to lose

his grip.

"They also can't get no job," Qashawn shouts.

Heads turn to the back of the room. An older and more mature Qashawn sat calmly while puzzled eyes gazed at him.

"Yes, losing your civil rights means more than losing your right to vote," Jackson said, "and if jail was truly used as it was intended for—a means to rehabilitate people and not punish them—then once a person has served their time, they should be given their rights back."

Florida is one of seven states that deny ex-felons the right to vote unless they take the necessary steps to restore their civil rights.

Once those rights are gone, ex-cons also lose the ability to get job licenses, preventing them from

ever becoming realtors, beauticians and pharmacists.

The Sentencing Project estimates that nearly 13 percent of the nation's black men — 1.4 million in all — are disenfranchised.

One in three black men in Florida can't vote because he's a felon, according to the Sentencing Project.

Jackson leaves the campus around 8 p.m. to watch the first presidential debate on TV downtown in Tallahassee.

But Qashawn is still left with the struggle to have the same rights as everyone else.

STRUGGLING THROUGH STEREOTYPES

"Excuse me, are you registered to vote?"

A member of the Student Government Association tries to wave down Qashawn as he walks out of the auditorium.

"No. I can't vote," he tells her, his voice filled with frustration. "What do you want me to do? I can't vote."

Qashawn started as a hustler when he was growing up in Pensacola. He couldn't see past his environment. He had nothing but cars and money on his mind, living a life that forced him to carry a gun for protection.

But the police had a to uphold the law. They caught Qashawn, a minor, with a deadly weapon.

"It's sad to say," he recalls, "but going to prison was like going to a family reunion. It's so many black men locked up, serving time."

Reality began to sink in as Qashawn thought about becoming another statistic.

"Once I got out, I had to cut all my old friends loose," he said. "I stopped drinking and smoking weed. I realized the only way I was going to make it in this world was if I got an education."

Qashawn earned his A.A. degree from Pensacola Junior College and enrolled in the engineering program at FAMU. He plans to graduate in the spring.

The only way Qashawn can get his rights back is if the government pardons him or if the governor restores his rights.

"Honestly, I think it's ridiculous," he says. "The process is so tedious. I filled out my application over a year ago, and I haven't heard anything from anyone since then."

"It's a shameful aspect of Florida law," says Ion Sancho, Leon County Supervisor of Elections.

"Once (felons) pay their debts to society, they should be able to start over."

But that doesn't happen in Florida, he says, and it's hurting blacks more than anyone else.

"The process of taking away one's voting rights was a part of the Constitution developed from the Civil War designed to prevent newly freed African-American slaves from participating as members of society," Sancho says.

"It was successful then, and it's still successful in 2004."

Jill Bratina disagrees.

"Our clemency process reflects our efforts to protect the public from individuals who have caused harm in the past, while providing a fair opportunity for felons to regain their rights and participate in all aspects of our civil society," said Bratina, Gov. Jeb Bush's com-

munications director.

Sancho said he's witnessed the law's disparities for himself.

"I've seen Gov. Bush turn down an appeal time after time, with no reason," Sancho said.

Qashawn said he's talked to the governor himself. When he met him, Qashawn said he told him about his accomplishments and how he only had one more semester until graduation.

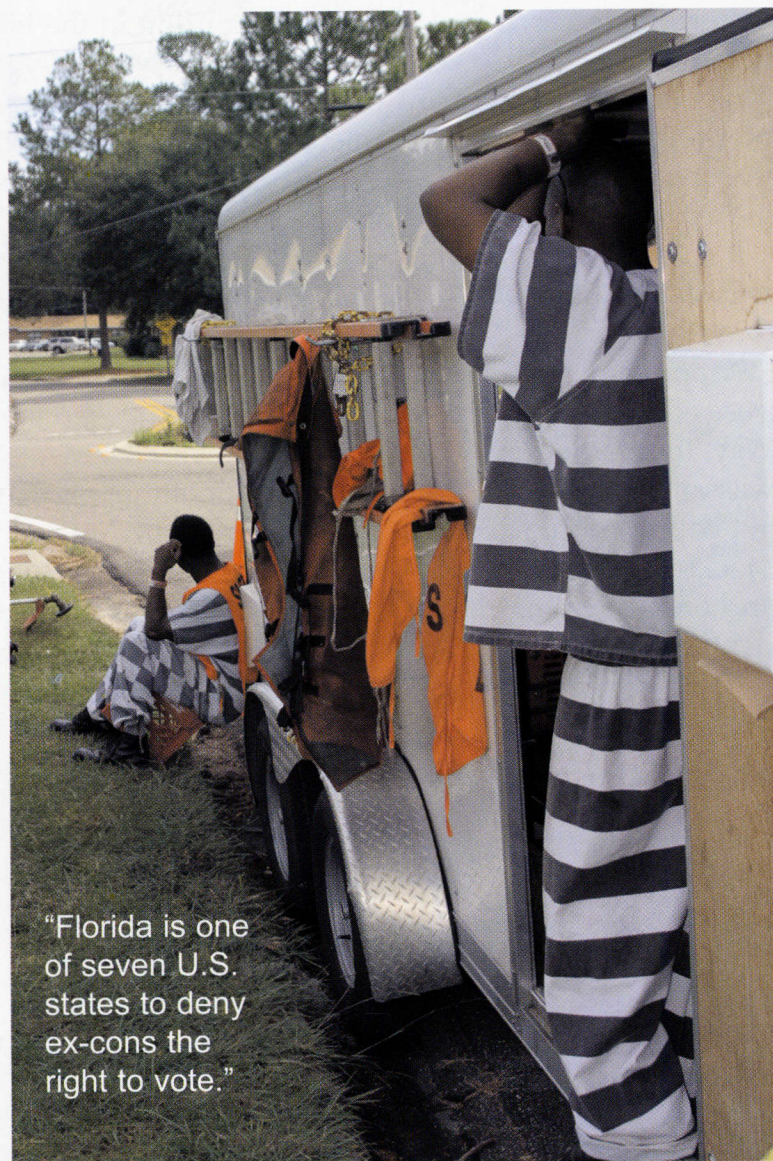
"He looked at me as (if) to say, 'How did this happen? How did we let him slip through the cracks?'" Qashawn said. "A lot of people out there still don't believe that black people can be successful."

"It's a difficult situation for a lot of us, but for me, I'm not afraid because I'm defeating the odds, I'm working and I have one semester left before I graduate."

Slowly, the aggression in his voice begins to disappear.

It's been years since Qashawn snuck around street corners, dodging the police and one week since his encounter with Jackson.

It's after midnight, past his bed-



"Florida is one of seven U.S. states to deny ex-cons the right to vote."

time. Qashawn's sitting at home with his girlfriend, about to get ready for bed.

He takes a deep breath, releasing all the frustration from his past.

"I'm going to do what I have to do to be treated like anyone else," he says.

"I want the same things just like everyone. I want a wife, kids ... a good job."

In the morning, Qashawn will be a student getting ready for class. In a week, he'll be an employee getting ready for work.

But on Nov. 2, none of that will matter. He'll still be an ex-con who can't vote. **J**

IN THE HOUSE

Home ownership 101

Story Michael Bean

Design Robbyn Mitchell

Photo Lauren Lake

The heat of July finally settles in the city of Tallahassee as he pulls into the driveway.

He opens the door and silence greets him. A slight fresh, floral scent mixed with the smell of new carpet surrounds him. He lays his things on the table, plops down on the sofa and clicks on the television.

It took him months to find his home, but Brandon Freedman has finally arrived.

The 22-year-old senior had his share of bouncing from dorm to apartment. He wasn't satisfied with what he was finding.

"I wanted to invest in a home as early as I could," Brandon says. "The home will appreciate in value, depending on upkeep and the market, and I felt confident with getting started with a home when I did."

Brandon's business administration background has taught him the value of investing. And even though the Atlanta native's first house is in Tallahassee, he doesn't have to stay here for the sake of the house. After he graduates, Brandon plans to rent the house out to others, which would keep his name on the

property.

Brandon has lived in his house on the east side of Tallahassee since 2001. But he's not alone. The 2000 U.S. Census Bureau reports that 38.3 percent more of today's single students are buying homes than the students of 1990. It's a sign that more people are buying homes before having a family.

It may also be a sign that financing a house in your 20s is easier than you may think.

The Report Card

"Your credit report should be the first item on the checklist," Brandon says. "Always keep an eye on your (credit report) to check for mistakes."

By making a large investment in his house and building his wealth on it, Brandon is also setting himself up for a good credit history.

Your credit report simply keeps track of you for all things financial. You may thank Experian, Equifax and TransUnion — the country's three largest credit bureaus — for keeping tabs of your employers, the credit applications you have submitted, your residence and your student loans.

(Continued on page 28)

“Your credit report should be the first item on the checklist.”

— Brandon Freedman, homeowner



Take seven steps toward buying your first home

1. Get money – Save for your down payment, closing costs, moving and other expenses.

2. Leave me a loan – See a lender and get pre-qualified for a mortgage loan.

3. Favorite things - Make a list of the features you want in your home.

4. Real talk - Choose a real estate agent who will show you properties around the area where you plan to live.

5. Check it out – After you find a place you like, be sure to get a professional home inspector to assess the property.

6. Fill in the blanks - Contact your mortgage lender to complete your application.

7. Closing Time - Sign all of the mortgage documents, receive the deed and pick up the keys to your home. It's official! You're a homeowner!

Checking your credit report and fully understanding it will help make buying a home easier because you'll know where you stand financially. You can get your report by visiting Web sites such as www.equifax.com or www.FreeCreditReport.com.

Any time a credit company requests to view your credit report, it's marked on your report and remains for two years. Having credit shows your ability to manage money, but too many credit applications could pose a problem.

Student loans, although deferred until graduation, show up on your report as financial obligations. These loans will stay on file until about five years after you finish paying them off.

When financing your home, your lender will also want to make sure you have a steady job. Employment is recorded to keep track of how often you change jobs and if you are currently employed. Most lenders expect at least one to two years with a company or steady income to constitute financial stability.

The Blueprint

Once you have cleared your credit, the next step is to develop a plan. Explore communities big and small.

You also need to plan to live in your new home for at least two years. Renting it out will keep your name on everything and lengthen the amount of time you are able to hold assets financially.

Next in the plan comes the fun experience of shopping around. Observe areas too expensive to get reasonable design ideas. Travel to areas below your price range to gain creativity. Either end of the spectrum will reveal ideas you never thought of.

And while you're out, don't forget about location. Brandon wanted a home close enough to the highway

so he could easily get on the road back to Atlanta. His house is also close enough to school that commuting isn't a hassle when he needs to get to campus.

You should spend at least four to six months to look for your new home. After this, money is the name of the game, specifically your down payment and mortgage.

Routine inspections and minor repairs should be completed before move-in to make sure the home is in tip-top shape. Soon, you can pull into the driveway and open the door to an abode that is truly yours.

Homecoming

Moving into a new home means more than space and independence. The grass will need to be cut. The carpet will need vacuuming. That new bathroom won't smell new forever.

"It was a shock when I moved in," Brandon remembers. "It was household chores all over again."

Regular maintenance is another expected habit to get into. Have a plumber and electrician on hand in case of mishaps. Small repairs no longer take only a phone call to housing offices.

Of course, your new house-keeping skills will evolve as you plan to take care of all the amenities. For now, you can think of things to come.

You'll walk through your door and all your belongings will be in place because you were the last one in the house. You'll smell your air fresheners. You'll tweak the placement of picture frames on your end tables. You relax in your home as any homeowner would.

Make sure you're prepared for that day so you, too, can join the millions of singles who own homes with an edge of confidence. It will be the day in which you will have finally arrived.

singled OUT

Story Shayla Cooper

Photos Natrice Bullard

Design Shaunda Head

For one student,
homework goes
beyond school

The alarm clock sounds at 6 a.m. Another long day ahead. Theresa Davis is in bed, trying to wake herself up. Looking ahead, she wonders: "Is today the day they cut the lights off?"

As Theresa prepares for her day of classes, she must also get her 10-year-old daughter, KeShauna, ready for school. Just as most parents do, Theresa must perform her morning motherly duties. After making sure KeShauna has brushed her teeth and washed her face, Theresa makes certain that her daughter's homework, glasses and

house keys have all been packed away in her book bag.

As somewhat of an independent child, KeShauna, a fifth-grader at Hartsfield Elementary, dresses herself and makes her own breakfast. Meanwhile, 25-year-old Theresa watches CNN, has a few sips of green tea, a bite of a bagel and some fruit. Before KeShauna leaves their apartment for school, Theresa checks to see that her clothes match and hair is not "all over her head."

But even after all of this, Theresa's day has not begun.

(Continued on page 30)

The public relations student from Jacksonville has classes and work ahead of her. She decided to attend FAMU in August of 2003 to get the "black college experience." She chose to travel 198 miles to the state's capital rather than stay in Jacksonville and attend Edward Waters College, a private historically black college. But Edward Waters College was not only thing Theresa left behind in Duval County.

Balancing Acts

During the afternoon, if Theresa is not in class or at an internship, she is at home cooking, cleaning and checking over her daughter's homework.

Theresa's evening schedule is unsightly compared to many college students. She has two part-time jobs and because she is seeking to gain more income, she is looking for a third job: a full-time one.

At work, she fears that at any moment she will receive a call telling her that her apartment has burned down or that someone has kidnapped her child. Until her mother returns home, KeShauna is occupied by Nickelodeon, the Disney Channel and her cat Kitty Pooh — the cost of after-school activities is just too much.

Sometimes, Theresa's friends help out.

"There have been times when I pick (Keshauna) up from the house after school," said Shayna Tutson, a junior broadcast journalism student also from Jacksonville. "For example, we tried to throw Theresa a surprise birthday party and I picked her up so she could be there."

Theresa admits that being a student and a single mother has been difficult.

"It's hard because I've got to juggle my school work, my employment, or lack thereof, plus homework," she said. Somehow, Theresa makes this all work. But because she is busy working on her degree, parenthood has somewhat been placed on the backburner. While Theresa is not home, KeShauna misses the comfort and affection of her mother.

"I do miss my mom," KeShauna says. "I miss her because I can't have her warm hugs and kisses. I can't tell her what I did and learned in school."

According to a study conducted by researchers at the University of South California, "unwed teen mothers may drop out of school, but it's more than pregnancy that ends their education." Factors such as study habits, home life and economic advantage all play a role.

Theresa refused to discontinue her education. "If I drop out of school, then what? Migrant farming? Day labor? I know someone's got to sweep the streets, but it ain't me," she said. "I was

destined for better, I can feel it."

But being a young, single mother, Theresa will admit, is no easy job. At times, Theresa has a hard time handling everything.

"Moving to (Tallahassee) and not working for so long has ruined my credit and made me broker than I've been in 10 years," she said.

Whenever she finds a moment to relax and take time for herself, she enjoys reading anything she can find or spending time at Little Talbot State Park, a secluded beach in Jacksonville. When times get rough and the everyday pressures start to bother her, Theresa turns to God in prayer.

Young, Black and Unwed

Although young, single mothers are seemingly becoming more and more commonplace, the number of single mothers is steady. On the contrary, <http://www.singleparentcentral.com> reports that the number of single fathers is on the rise.



Theresa struggles with the idea that her daughter is not growing up in a two-parent home just as she did. She says she hopes KeShauna does not hate her for the decisions that she has made in her life. "Sometimes life just doesn't work out the way you want it to," Theresa said, "but I don't know if she understands that."

While many other young single mothers have the help of their parents or perhaps their child's father, Theresa is doing this all on her own. The father of her child is serving a life sentence in prison, her mother is in a nursing home in Jacksonville and her father is deceased.

Theresa and KeShauna take trips back to Jacksonville two or three times a month to make sure that her mother is being taken care of properly. Theresa is making ends meet all by herself—without the help of child support or welfare.

Although Theresa is taking care of her child by herself, she is not completely alone. She has surrounded herself with a great group of friends. "They help me by making me laugh and listening to me whine and making me laugh about my whining," Theresa said.

Tutson says she has learned from Theresa. Although they have lived totally different lives, she says she understands Theresa's struggles by seeing them firsthand.

"While talking to Theresa I've discovered that, as far as financially, life was a lot easier when they were in Jacksonville and I know it breaks her heart to know that she can't provide for KeShauna the way she used to," Shayna said. "But she does keep in mind that, in the long run, KeShauna will benefit."

Theresa admits that she struggles with asking for help.

(Continued on page 31)

"I have a problem with inflated pride and ego, so I rarely ask for help, even when I need it," Theresa said. "I do believe, though, that God will not send me anything that I cannot handle. So far, He hasn't."

For young parents who are having a difficult time, there are programs all across the country that are more than willing to lend a helping hand. There are many books such as "Surviving Teen Pregnancy: Your Choices, Dreams and Decisions" by Perry Bergman and magazines such as *Working Mother*. Web sites such as singleparentcentral.com offer tips to help single parents deal with their everyday stress and worries. A few of these tips include getting help if you need it, doing one nice thing a week just for yourself and going out on a date.

For the time being, Theresa has suspicions about following the dating tip, especially when it involves men in Tallahassee.

"I do talk to some dudes here," Theresa said. "I don't bring them around when KeShauna is awake. You gotta be real careful about that. I don't want to have a revolving door of strange men. That would mess with her mind."

She fears "evil lurks in the minds of men" and that some guy might look sideways at her daughter.

Experience: The Best Teacher

To the other young single mothers still in school, Theresa sug-

gests that you get a move on with your schoolwork, but work at a steady pace. "Spend as much time with your child as you can before they realize that you messed up. Maybe if you get out of school and get a good job, they won't realize that you messed up in the first place."

Becoming a parent changes your life in so many different ways. Being a young single parent can change your life in many more.

Theresa says she wishes her life were different every second each day. Don't get her wrong. She says KeShauna is an angel and a blessing from God. She has not had any behavior, health or school problems. She is what drives Theresa to wake up every morning and keeps her fighting to do and have better. The only thing she wishes is that she was more like typical mothers.

"I'm not like all the other moms," Theresa said. "I guess because I don't have any problems out of her and she seems to be happy all the time, I figure maybe I'm missing something. Like, maybe she's not really happy, but I'm so wrapped up in myself, I'm missing the signs."

If Theresa could narrow it down, there is one thing she said she loves about being a mother.

"My daughter is well-behaved and I get to take all the credit. She is a little soldier," Theresa said. "She always knows just what to do. She loves me, and I think she's starting to notice that I'm no good. She still loves me, though. Still."

CHEAP Chill Spots

Journey takes a tour of the capital to find the hottest locations for less cash.

Place: Imax Theatre

Where: Challenger Learning Center 200 S. Duval St.

What you can expect: An awesome movie experience. The Imax Theatre mainly shows educational films, but they do occasionally show movies that are seen in regular movie theaters such as "The Matrix Reloaded" and "Harry Potter." The best part of the Imax experience is the huge screen; it is so big that it makes you feel as though you are in the movie.

Cost: \$6.50 for students

(Continued on page 32)



Photo by Natrice Bullard



Photo by Collin Chapelle

Place: Pockets Pool and Grill Restaurant

Where: 2810 Sharer Road

What you can expect: A fun-filled night of being silly. If you want to go let loose with your friends, then Pockets is the place for you. Not only do they have pool tables they also have karaoke. Pockets is a fun place to go if you have the ability to laugh at yourself or others. If you get hungry while you're there they also serve food like burgers, wings and fries.

Cost: Free Karaoke; Pool \$ 7; Food \$ 3 – \$8



Photo by Collin Chapelle

Place: Tallahassee Mall/ Governor's Square Mall

Where: 2415 N. Monroe St. / 1500 Apalachee Parkway

What you can expect: To be transported to another world. Going to the mall is always fun whether you're buying something or not. Malls are like foreign countries; you'll see different groups of people and cultures, stores that sell strange things and even different eateries. Each time you go it's a new experience and new things to see and do. Some people go to shop and others go to observe, so do whatever works for you.

Cost: Free



Photo by Natrice Bullard

Place: Kosta's Grill

Where: 1312 S. Adams St. / 2043 W. Pensacola St.

What you can expect: Excellent Sandwiches. Kosta's is a Greek sandwich shop that has everything from subs and salads to gyros and burgers depending on which location you go to. Kosta's offers a little something for everybody. Some of their menu items include Greek salad, Philly cheese steak, chicken salad sub, chicken tenders, turtle cheesecake, chips and soft drinks. If you like Subway, then you'll love Kosta's. FYI: the location on Pensacola Street has a larger menu than the one on South Adams Street.

Cost: \$.75 – \$ 5.99

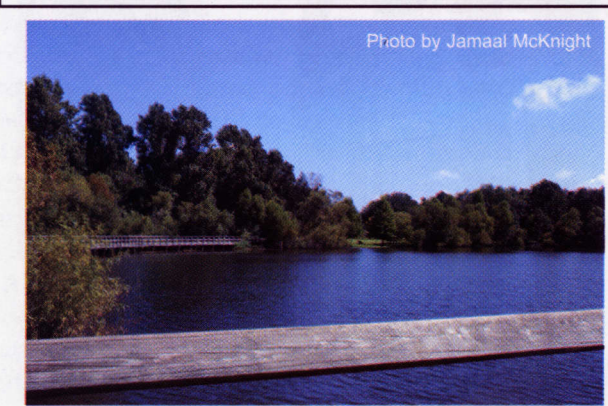


Photo by Jamaal McKnight

Place: Parks: Tom Brown/ Jake Gaither/ Lake Ella

Where: Tallahassee

What you can expect: An enjoyable day of whatever you decide. Parks are a great way to have fun and save money. You can have a picnic, barbeque, invite friends and have an outside game day or just enjoy the scenery.

Cost: Free

Beauty on a Budget

Looking nice for a low, low price

Perspectives

Story Ellen Fields

Design Shaunda Head
Photos Jamaal McKnight

Who says being fashion savvy has to take a lot of money? You can be just as stylish on a budget.

Shopping in secondhand shops or thrift stores can help you save a lot of money and give you that one-of-a-kind look that you are searching for.

Secondhand shops offer a huge variety of clothing. Most shops only carry merchandise that is gently used and of good quality. One of the best things about shopping in thrift stores and secondhand shops is that you have the ability to bargain the price of some items.

Talethia Hudson, a frequent shopper at Plato's Closet, says she goes there to buy accessories like purses and sunglasses.

"Before I found out about Plato's Closet, I was spending more than \$200 for designer handbags and I came here and found a \$150 Coach bag for only \$35. As long as they sell them for this cheap I will never buy another designer bag from a department store."

At secondhand stores, you can also find anything from casual to chic attire.

Some stores normally carry a good selection of vintage T-shirts, so if you like the punk look, you can take it to the next level by adding some one-of-a-kind shirts to your collection. You can find these items in Tallahassee at stores such as the Goodwill, which has many locations, or the Salvation Army, located at 2131 Jackson Bluff Road.

If being chic is the look you're going for, try to take pictures of the look you want to achieve from your favorite fashion magazine.



Magazines such as *Lucky* and *Shop* provide pages of shopping information for the latest trends that complement any budget. Having a visual guide will help you to find items which closely match the particular style you are looking for.

A good place to look for more high-end retail is a consignment shop, such as Elite Repeat Consignment Shop, located at 3348 Mahan Drive.

"It is smart to shop in secondhand stores, it helps you to save money and look great," says Sharon Brewer, the owner of the shop.

At Elite Repeat Consignment Shop, you can find a lot of dress shirts, pants and formal wear. They also carry some business suits and blazers, for all of you trying to achieve the Usher/Kanye West look.

(Continued on page 34)



>Velvet Vintage



Their items range anywhere from \$15 to more than \$100.

If you are really into accessories, then you should visit Velvet Vintage, located at 2401 W. Pensacola St. The store specializes in clothes from the 1920s to the '70s and they have a wide selection of jewelry, hats, purses, sunglasses, rings, pins and chandler earrings.

Their items also range in price, starting at about \$20.

Plato's Closet is a resale store that specializes in teen fashion and carries popular clothing brands such as Express, Abercrombie & Fitch, American Eagle among others. Their items start at \$3 for select brands of shirts. They also carry shoes, belts and other accessories. Plato's Closet also buys and allow you to trade clothes.

While getting a bargain for your clothes is always a good thing, to look great, you don't always have to go out and buy something new. You can also jazz up some of the items you already have with creative alteration.



Dimensions

BRAGG STADIUM HOME of the RATTLEERS

SCHOOL DAZE

School spirit
comes in different
flavors.

Whether you're
cosmo or casual,
your school colors
can show who
you are and reflect ...

your style

Photos Natrice Bullard
Design Shaunda Head and Johndel Barrett

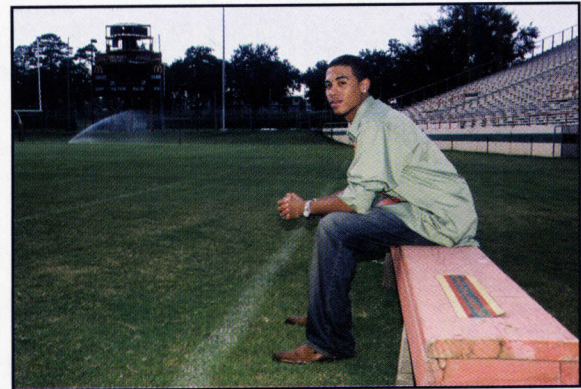
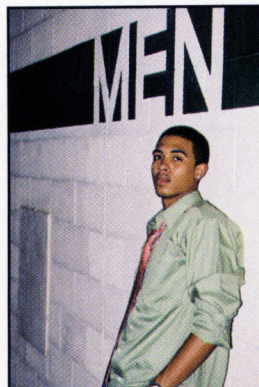
Styling Natrice Bullard
and Rasheed Crawford



**Favorite part of
FAMU football
games:**

“Halftime because I like
to see the band and all
their formations”

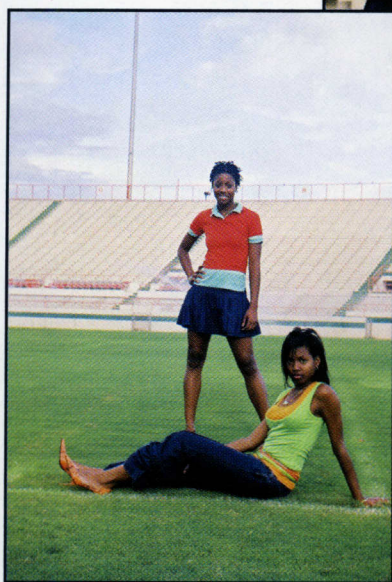
Model: Angel Suri
Clothes: Model's own





Favorite thing to do after the game:
(Asha) "I usually just chill with my friends."

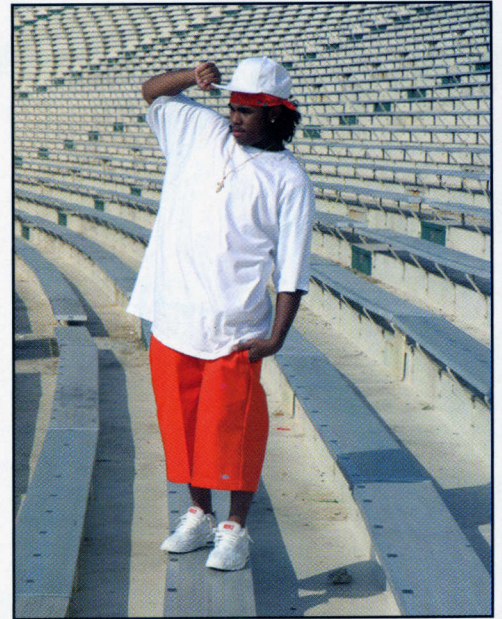
**Favorite
Marching
100 song:**
(Monifah)
"S.O.S
because it
gets everyone
excited."



Models: Monifa Suber, orange
Asha Davis, green
Clothes: Models' own



Model: Maurice Johnson
Clothes: Model's own



Best Homecoming:

“Fall ‘02 because I went to all the events and I went to the club every night that week.”





The Ancient Greeks

Divine Nine Stand Test of Time

Leadership, academic excellence, community service and of course brotherly and sisterly love are the foundation of black Greek organizations. Since the 1930s when the first Greek sororities and fraternities were established on the campus of Florida A&M University, the Divine Nine have had a profound presence on campus as well as in the Tallahassee community.

In 1932, the Beta Nu chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity came into existence at Florida A&M University, becoming the first fraternal undergraduate chapter among blacks in the state of Florida. In the same year, Omega Psi Phi Fraternity became the second Greek organization at FAMU and Zeta Phi Beta Sorority also organized, becoming the first sorority on the FAMU campus. By the end of that year, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority and Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity became part of the FAMU Greek family. Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity and Delta Sigma Theta Sorority followed suit in 1935 and 1937, respectively. In the years to come, Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority (1942) and Iota Alpha Theta Fraternity (1954) were organized on the FAMU campus.

Since their founding, fraternities and sororities have played a major role in the cultural and social aspects of life on and off campus. Not only have sororities and fraternities provided leadership opportunities and social and cultural enrichment for their members, but through various programs and initiatives, both the student body and the Tallahassee community have benefited.

As stated in "The History of FAMU," when Greek letter organizations were introduced on the campus of FAMU, they proclaimed intentions of: raising scholarship standards, creating a better school spirit, aiding the administration in carrying on the affairs of the school, promoting higher ideals, and affording comradeship and a deeper appreciation of community.

The everlasting companionship of brotherhood and sisterhood achieved through fraternal life is about devotion, commitment, and unity. And collectively, the Divine Nine aims to diligently uphold the values, principled and purpose on which it was founded some 75 years ago.



Design Lauren Lake

Photos courtesy of the Black Archives depict the Divine Nine in the 1950s



We're Steppin' Out!