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Florida State: Prized recruit gets OK to train

Highly acclaimed running back Tavares Pressley was admitted into school and cleared to start training with the Seminoles immediately.

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BY IRA SCHOFFEL

Miami Herald Writer

TALLAHASSEE --

Florida State's 2008 season won't begin for more than two weeks, but its coaches likely were doing a victory dance Tuesday afternoon.

A little more than an hour before the Seminoles' players were to take to the field for their second practice of the day, the university announced that prized running back recruit Tavares Pressley was admitted into school and could begin practicing immediately.

According to a release, FSU admitted Pressley when it received official documentation that he earned his associate degree from El Camino College in California.

Pressley, who will be a junior this fall, missed 13 practices before he donned a helmet for the first time Tuesday evening. That workout was closed to the media, and the university declined to make coaches available for comment.

But earlier this week, offensive coordinator Jimbo Fisher and running backs coach Dexter Carter said they didn't think the missed time would be a significant setback.

"If he can catch that rock, get that handoff and make people miss and go the distance, I don't care if he misses every single one of the two-a-day practices," Carter said. "As long as he knows the plays, athletic ability will take care of itself."

When Pressley, who is 6-1 and 215 pounds, signed in February, Fisher suggested that he was talented enough to compete for a starting job immediately. Senior Antone Smith rushed for 819 yards last season and has looked sharp in preseason camp, but Fisher has expressed a fondness for bigger running backs. Smith is listed at 5-9 and 190 pounds.

That competition could heat up as soon as Saturday, when the Seminoles hold their second full scrimmage of the preseason. Per NCAA "acclimatization" rules, Pressley won't be able to practice in full pads until he has worked out twice in shorts and twice in shells (helmet and shoulder pads).

"That's going to be a time for him to get back on his feet and get going," FSU strength and conditioning coach Todd Stroud said. ``From a conditioning curve, he's going to be behind the eight-ball. But at the same time, we have some time with him. As far as preparation goes, I think he can learn what he needs to learn. There's plenty of time to do that."

Before he heard the news that Pressley had been admitted, Smith said he wasn't overly concerned about the competition.

"It doesn't bother me at all," Smith said.

``That is what [Fisher] wanted, a big back to come in and do what I do. But I am not going to let up at all, I am going to keep doing what I do. I control what I do and who will start. If I do my job on the field, there is no doubt in my mind that I am going to start."

Rivals.com rated Pressley as one of the nation's top 15 junior-college players last season.

He rushed for more than 2,000 yards and scored 34 touchdowns during stays at two junior colleges. He signed with Florida State after considering Colorado, Nebraska and others.

FSU still is waiting for freshman tailback Jermaine Thomas to return to practice. Thomas worked with the team for one week, but coach Bobby Bowden said there was a "glitch" in his admission paperwork. Thomas has been out since Saturday.

He and fellow freshman Carlton "Ty" Jones also are expected to contribute this season.

The Chronicle of Higher Education

August 22, 2008

Emergency Alerts via Facebook and MySpace Are New Ways to Reach Students

By JEFFREY R. YOUNG

Colleges are experimenting with Facebook and other social networks to notify students about emergencies like crimes and floods—and get vital information in return. Most emergency-alert systems send out warnings. But social networks give students a chance to add on-the-scene reports or trade information if trouble hits. In addition to cell-phone and e-mail alerts, the social networks also give colleges yet another way to reach students in a crisis.

The prospect has some safety officials excited by the possibilities of letting students trade crisis information over Facebook and MySpace, but others worried that it could open an alert system up to misleading rumors.

The University of Maryland at College Park set up a Facebook group last month for "emergency awareness" at the university. Any emergency message that the university issues on its other alert systems, which can go to cell phones, university Web pages, and e-mail accounts, will also be posted to the Facebook group. The group also lists tips about emergency preparedness, photographs of drills by emergency staff, and other information.

"Students aren't using traditional methods of getting information from authorities," said Maj. Jay Gruber, of the university's police department. "So I wanted to think outside the box and think of ways that students do get information."

Mr. Gruber also had to think outside his own comfort zone. He did not have a Facebook account before he embarked on this project, so he had a couple of student employees give him a tutorial on social networking.

So far, only campus police officials are allowed to post announcements to the group's main discussion area, though there is a smaller discussion area that participants can use, and Mr. Gruber said he might soon open the group up further. "I'm interested in working out how it could be a two-way platform—not only out to people but in to us during an emergency."

A group of researchers at the university is also working to build a prototype of a homemade social network for the university's Web site designed for use in emergency situations. The project is an outgrowth of work by Ben Shneiderman, a professor of computer science at the university, and Jennifer J. Preece, dean of the university's College of Information Studies. They published an article in *Science* last year proposing that local governments develop social networks to supplement 911 emergency hotlines.

Mr. Shneiderman said he got the idea after typing "911" into Google and getting no useful results. "I said, "Something is wrong here—I think of the Web as my source of communication."

Now a graduate student at Maryland, Philip Fei Wu, is building a prototype for university use. "We hope to create a platform to allow students to communicate, to exchange ideas, to comment on ideas" in an emergency, Mr. Wu said in an interview.

Experimenting With 2-Way Communication

One concern is that people could make false reports to the emergency system. But Mr. Wu said that the system, called a community-response grid, would be self-correcting. "If I'm saying that I heard a gunshot near the stadium at a certain time," but there wasn't any such activity, Mr. Wu said, "then other students would come up and say 'I was there at the same time and I didn't hear anything.'"

But not everyone is sold on allowing two-way communication on university emergency-notification systems.

Officials at the University of California at Los Angeles have been working with MySpace to build a system that will automatically post emergency alerts to a university MySpace page. The project has not yet been officially announced, but it should be ready in the next few months, said David S. Burns, emergency manager for UCLA.

The project was proposed and led by a Sara Cohen, who worked as an intern in Mr. Burns's office while she was a graduate student at UCLA. Ms. Cohen lived in New Orleans in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, and found MySpace and Facebook to be the best sources of information then because cell-phone networks and other communication systems suffered outages, and she thought the university could proactively use social networks in future disasters.

Mr. Burns said the university hopes to share the computer code it has developed with other colleges. "It's not as easy as it sounds" to automate the process, he said.

But the university plans to turn off all ability for users to comment on the MySpace page, to keep rumor and false information off the site, said Mr. Burns.

At least a few other colleges—including Florida State University and the University of Iowa—are also exploring creating MySpace or Facebook pages for use in emergency alerts.

The Daily Breeze

Letters to the editor

August 21, 2008

A tidal wave of tax plans

Here we go again, folks!

Inflation is storming in (up to 5 percent, not even counting energy and food), certificates of deposit are really low (4 percent or so), houses aren't selling, unemployment is rising. So what are the politicians and school administrators advocating? Put some meaty tax bonds on the ballot in November!

We have the ultimate in non-accountability in our Los Angeles Community College District. The district had us pass not one but two huge tax bond issues (which appear on your home tax bills) a few years ago to assure us of quality education, quality educational sites and quality instructors for the students of all ages in our county.

The voters were told that the Community College District had great plans to revitalize, restore and improve the district.

So billions of dollars in bonds were issued and we taxpayers will be paying and paying. But what about accountability? What happened to the construction projects that were supposed to be done at various campuses? What happened to the monies?

The Aug. 13 Daily Breeze reported that "Construction begins at Harbor College," and I quote: "The district has been criticized for mismanaging the \$2.2 billion in bond funds, and some promised projects have been canceled." The article ended with: "The district's Board of Trustees moved earlier this year to place an additional \$3.5 billion bond measure on the November ballot."

A billion dollars is 1,000 million dollars, or \$1,000,000,000, and that is not petty! If you all vote for this, and the other bond issues (see below), and are not concerned with any accountability, I have a neat bridge in Brooklyn that I would like to sell you.

What other money issues am I alluding to? Our governor is considering raising the state sales tax, the Los Angeles County Supervisors are considering an additional county sales tax. And they hope to have these issues on the ballot in November. This looks like a wipe-out of the middle class.

It seems to me that all phases of government should have to tighten their belts and start to save, as we middle-class folks have been trying to do.

You can get just so much "blood" out of a turnip!

I know I am going to vote "No" on every bond issue. Show me accountability!

- AUDREY CARLAN

Rancho Palos Verdes

Hi-Desert Star

Community college activates emergency text system

August 20, 2008

JOSHUA TREE — Copper Mountain College officials announced Tuesday they have activated AlertU, an emergency alert notification system that enables the college to send critical text updates to students, faculty and staff during a campus emergency.

With AlertU, school administrators can send text alerts to subscribers' mobile devices and communicate critical information in real-time.

“Finding new ways to help keep our students and employees safe is always a top priority, and AlertU is another tool for our campus to help us stay informed and connected,” said Dr. Roger Wagner, superintendent and president of the Joshua Tree college.

There are no fees to subscribers for enrolling in the service; however, standard text message rates apply.

AlertU is a Web-based, emergency SMS text alert notification platform designed by Waterfall Mobile for enterprises, institutions and school campus communities.

“AlertU is a great way to mobilize large campus communities quickly and easily,” said Jason Saroyan, director of business development for Waterfall Mobile. “With AlertU’s patent-pending two-way messaging, emergency administrators can gather real-time updates from crisis zones and relay critical information.”

AlertU is available to Copper Mountain College students, faculty, staff and others on the campus community. Friends and family are also able to receive alert updates.

To subscribe, text CMC to 253788 (ALERTU) and reply Y to confirm, or sign up online through the widget on the school Web site, www.cmccd.edu.

For information, call the college at 366-3791, extension 5442.

SignOnSanDiego.com

MiraCosta College rejects grand jury's suggestions

August 22, 2008

The MiraCosta College board of trustees has decided to notify the county grand jury that it will not implement recommendations the jury made in a May 27 report aimed at improving ethics at five community colleges in the county.

In a unanimous vote Tuesday, the community college trustees also declared they could not comment on the grand jury's recommendation seemingly most aimed at MiraCosta – a suggestion that it gave former college President Victoria Muñoz Richart too much money in a severance deal.

Richart received cash, salary and benefits amounting to almost \$1.6 million in June 2007, in return for her departure that month.

The board said Tuesday that it could not comment on the deal because the issue is the subject of a lawsuit.

Resident Leon Page has sued the Oceanside-based college, saying the sum given Richart amounts to an illegal gift of public funds.

Community colleges have until Monday to respond to the jury's report, which criticized four of the five community college districts in the county for various practices. Palomar College in San Marcos was the exception.

All five districts, Palomar included, responded that most of the recommendations are “not warranted or reasonable.”

In addition, the San Diego County Board of Education replied Aug. 13 that it does not have the statutory authority to unilaterally make many of the changes requested by the grand jury.

Assistant chief a public-safety veteran

Imani Tate, Staff Writer

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Glynn Johnson, 54, heeds good advice. It's a trait that has helped in the protection of people and property in Los Angeles County.

The 31-year veteran of the Los Angeles County Fire Department in May succeeded retiring Assistant Chief John Nieto as the department's Division 8 chief. Johnson supervises stations in Pomona, Diamond Bar, Walnut, Industry, La Puente, Hacienda Heights and Rowland Heights.

Johnson, a Los Angeles native, intended to follow in the footsteps of his grandfather Ben Ayers, a Los Angeles Police Department detective who worked with policeman Tom Bradley before Bradley became the city's first black mayor.

Johnson was the first black cadet in the El Segundo Police Department at age 18 and went on to earn an associate degree in police science at El Camino College. He then worked as a LAPD officer in the Hollywood division for two years before his wife, Bonita, suggested the county Fire Department could better satisfy his yen for protecting others.

"She was my inspiration," Johnson said, smiling. "I thought it was a good plan and job. And I was still in public safety."

Johnson liked the excitement of putting out fires and protecting others. He also liked firefighters' hours, using the 10 days of 24-hour shifts and 20 days of freedom each month to return to school.

He completed training at the Fire Academy, joined the county department as a regular firefighter in 1978 and later earned a bachelor's degree in organizational management at the University of Redlands and a master's in education from Pepperdine University.

Johnson has never regretted the decision to shift from police work to fire safety. His sense of service and duty was nurtured by family elders; his homemaker mother, Blanche; and his father, Kenneth, an aerospace engineer.

He met his future wife when she was a secretary to then-LAPD Lt. Bernard Parks, now a Los Angeles city councilman. The Johnsons have two daughters, Arika, 26, and Amber, 24.

Johnson held a variety of jobs with the county Fire Department before assuming responsibility for its eastern division. His experiences gave him knowledge of fire suppression for a variety of communities and terrains.

Sometimes the commute was "brutal," admitted the Riverside man, who endured a 300-mile drive as fire prevention chief protecting the county's western region from Lancaster and Palmdale to Catalina Island.

County Fire Chief P. Michael Freeman "had mercy on me and sent me to Battalion 15 in Pomona, where I was in charge of seven stations. I had to concede I'm not a young man anymore. I always love the work, but the commute was killing me," Johnson laughingly conceded. "Now two guys do that job."

After the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, the Department of Justice and Homeland Security recruited Johnson for the Chemical, Ordnance, Biological and Radiological national defense team. For three years, he taught fire chiefs, police chiefs and command officers how to respond to terrorist attacks, adding the federal responsibility to his county duties.

Johnson earned a commendation from the county Board of Supervisors for helping rescue a woman and her infant son from floodwaters in San Dimas Canyon in January 2005.

Service to humanity "is a joy and a responsibility," Johnson said. "Whenever I've had any doubt about my ability to do anything, Bonita has been there to remind me I can meet the challenges.

"Firefighters live and work in the community and are highly visible. It feels good to be in a grocery store, doctor's office or restaurant and people come up to you and say 'thank you' or kids stop by the station to say hello.

"I don't mind being on the front line of defense and protection," the chief said.

Leticia Pacillas, community services representative, said the division staff "is happy to have him. His knowledge and professionalism made the transition to new leadership easier for all of us. He's no stranger because he's worked all over the county.

"He's helping me learn from new perspectives," she added.

San Dimas Public Safety Commission member Paul Kirby said he instantly liked and respected Johnson when they met years ago.

"He's above most, one of the finest gentlemen I've ever met. He takes his job very seriously and is an asset to the department," Kirby said. "I hated to see him leave San Dimas, but I'm happy about his continued success."

Sac Rat

All Things Sac State Football

Not Step'n in it

August 27, 2008 by [admin](#)

The following is an interesting story that involves a Hornet basketball recruit, an unverifiable college transcript, and a junior college basketball program having to forfeit last year's season and go on probation. It appears due diligence done by Sac State prevented inheriting a future problem.

Oxnard College will forfeit its entire 2007-08 men's basketball season and be placed on probation for the 2008-09 campaign after it discovered evidence that one of its starting players was ineligible to compete because of an invalid transcript, according to college president Richard Duran.

Jonathan Malloy, who played in 30 of the Condors 31 games last winter, was set to attend Sacramento State on a basketball scholarship this fall when a year-old transcript from Compton College alerted administrators at the NCAA Division I school.

August 27, 2008

Oxnard College forfeits basketball season

By Joe Curley

Oxnard College will forfeit its entire 2007-08 men's basketball season and be placed on probation for the 2008-09 campaign after it discovered evidence that one of its starting players was ineligible to compete because of an invalid transcript, according to college president Richard Duran.

Jonathan Malloy, who played in 30 of the Condors 31 games last winter, was set to attend Sacramento State on a basketball scholarship this fall when a year-old transcript from Compton College alerted administrators at the NCAA Division I school.

Informed by Oxnard College administrators, Western State Conference commissioner Aviva Kamin ruled on the subject earlier this week.

"We are compelled by the (California Community College Athletic Association) to self report," said Duran. "We recommended that we forfeit last season, which has been accepted by the commissioner and she put us on probation for the upcoming year.

"We have to remain clean and follow all the rules."

Malloy, a 6-foot-4 guard averaged 14.1 points and 6.9 rebounds last season.

Duran admitted Oxnard officials, prompted by the questions of Sacramento State administrators, discovered the issue "probably by accident."

"We checked with (Compton) and found out that (the transcript) wasn't theirs," said Duran.

"We met with Jonathan. He doesn't know how it got there."

The origin of the transcript remains a question mark. Ventura County Community College District chancellor James Meznek said Wednesday that private investigator Walter Johnson, who has been investigating the Oxnard and Ventura men's basketball programs since November, will be asked to look into the issue.

"We don't know if the student has engaged in anything inappropriate," said Meznec. "There is no blame anywhere. We have not had time to investigate it."

The transcript dates from a period when Compton College, which has suffered through recent accreditation and financial problems, was being run by El Camino College.

"At the time in question, Compton had lost their accreditation so they should have been El Camino transcripts," said Duran.

Sacramento State coach Brian Katz did not return a phone message, but Malloy does not appear on the roster listed on the team's official Web site, <http://www.hornetsports.com>.

Duran said the issue has prompted the school's administration and records department to "fully review" the transcripts of all athletes.

"It's very difficult to pick up a violation like this," said Oxnard athletic director Tim Harrison. "If you can imagine trying to verify every transcript from every athlete, we have 150 student-athletes and verification of official documents is a process that we are revisiting.

"If it looks authentic then we deem it authentic (and this transcript) appeared to be authentic.

Harrison said the probation signified "just a closer look, just a closer evaluation from Aviva and the conference."

The Condors finished 17-14 last season, including 10-2 in the Western State Conference's North Division, good for second place behind 11-1 Ventura College.

The forfeits spoils a heroic chapter in the history of Oxnard College basketball. The Condors pushed rival Ventura in the conference race last winter despite playing the majority of their conference games with six or seven healthy and eligible players.

"I consider what those kids accomplished last year to be a miracle," said Oxnard coach Jason Cunningham, who was an assistant under Jeff Theiler last season. "For anything to get in the way of that would be a tragedy."

Theiler, who remains on non-disciplinary, paid leave as a result of the on-going investigation of the Oxnard and Ventura programs, was surprised, yet unmoved.

"You can't change what happened," said Theiler. "The kids had great performances on and off the court. They did what they were supposed to do. None of that goes away."

"I don't know the details of this thing, but when this happens, you don't erase what happened. I'm obviously still proud of the kids from last year."

The Star reported in May that Ventura College breached CCCAA housing rules when former head coach Greg Winslow sublet a Ventura house to his players.

Therefore, third-place Moorpark, at 7-5, could be in line to be awarded last year's WSC North men's basketball title.

Moorpark athletic director Howard Davis didn't seem interested in hanging a banner earned via forfeit.

"Every community college athletic program would be susceptible to this type of (issue)," said Davis.