

5-year-old memorialized with prayer vigil

By Hayley Burgess
News Editor

Candles and a picture were on display to approximately 80 students and faculty gathered in the University Center Lounge Nov. 23, from 7p.m.-8p.m. for a memorial service for Shaniya Davis.

Davis was kidnapped Nov. 10 from her home in Fayetteville, and her body was found in a ditch off of a rural road Nov. 16 near Sanford.

Her burial service was held Nov. 22 at Manna Church in Fayetteville where nearly 2,000 people attended.

NBA player Shaquille O'Neal became moved about the little girl's death and paid for the service.

Davis' kidnapping and death has garnered national attention to the area. Her death has been the main discussion on Nancy

Grace and her father was interviewed on the Oprah show.

It has also brought together her community as a vigil was held close to her home the same day she was found dead.

The mood for the vigil was set with gospel music playing before the memorial started. Candles in white paper bags lined the stage and the podium.

UNCP student Tiffany Leake organized the memorial vigil with the help of the Association of Campus Entertainment.

Leake revealed she didn't know Davis, but said she shares an experience with her because Leake was kidnapped when she was 9 years old.

"I did not know this child, but if you look at a picture of this child, why would you have to know someone who was raped and killed to honor them,"

Leake said. "I knew I had to do something. I was one of the blessed ones."

Leake began the service by reading Luke 18:16 and giving the audience statistics of kidnapping victims to let the audience know how serious of a situation kidnappings are.

Leake was very emotional while talking about Davis and how close Davis' death hit her.

"Words cannot express the grief I felt," Leake said.

Simone Bey read a poem called "My World" in honor of Davis.

Following the poem, the microphone was open for anyone to speak about the impact Davis' kidnapping and death has had on them. Only one student talked about their experience.

Bradley Lockhart, Davis' father was invited by Leake but did not

attend the service. Leake said she understood that it this was a difficult time for him and his family, but still wanted to do something for him.

Leake also wrote a poem to Davis' father, framed it and sent it to him through the funeral home.

Davis' mother, Antoinette Davis, is being charged with human trafficking and child abuse involving prostitution. Mario McNeill is charged with murder, rape and kidnapping in the case.

At the end of the service, a bucket was placed by Davis' picture for anyone to donate money to the Shaniya Davis Memorial Trust Fund that will go to her father's family.

If you would like to donate to the Trust Fund, visit the nearest Wachovia Bank.



UNCP student Tiffany Leake describes her feelings about the death of 5-year-old Shaniya Davis. Leake organized the candlelight memorial and fundraiser.

ASO awards two \$100 scholarships at pageant

By Yujin Lee
Staff Writer

It was a full evening of words, music, dance and learning about Africa at the first Mr. & Miss African Student Organization pageant, which was held at Nov. 11 in the Moore Hall auditorium.

Musheerah Ali won Miss ASO and Tyree Taylor won Mr. ASO at this event. Both Ali and Taylor were awarded a \$100 scholarship.

The event raised

money for the organization and let University students know what Africa is truly about under the slogan of a showcase of African Royalty, according to the president of ASO Andrew Young.

With the goal to educate attendees that Africa is not a country, but a continent of diverse peoples, the five pageant contestants each had to choose a representative country. They also had their own platform.

"The criterions to choose winner were

freestyle competition with introduction, formalwear with on stage question and African wear with speech of their platform. Speech is the biggest part among these criterions," Young said.

The platform of contestant Francina Abenogwe was about taking success back home; Abenogwe represented and is from Nigeria.

Contestant Doc Dillard represented Burkina Faso and delivered a speech on its community development.

Contestant Simone Salij El Bey, who represented the Republic of Congo, addressed women empowerment not only in all of Africa, but also in general.

Chns Spencer, who represented Ethiopia, made a speech about building a bridge of wisdom between Africa and the University.

Musheerah Ali, who represented Sudan, talked about empowering Africa with the University community.

The last contestant,

Tyree Taylor, who represented Egypt, emphasized the role of dance in life.

"Egypt is the first place where dance developed. Dance makes you happy. Do dance," he said.

There were also African praise dances from Zimbabwe and a full slate of African music.


"I got to see different African cultures like the outfits and different types of music," sophomore Charles McCorkle said.

"Especially I was impressed by their

speeches. For me, as a person who don't know much about Africa, the speeches gave me more information about its culture," he added.

According to Young, the Mr. & Miss ASO pageant is going to be held annually.

"We should have more focused on advertisement. We will do more for next ASO pageant and I would like to work together with other organizations," he said.



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Jan 15: Blood Drive
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