

WHOA! BEPO: Campus Security takes on the intramural basketball scene



With Belmont's fall intramural sports in full season, Campus Security has launched its own 3v3 basketball team with hopes of creating a stronger and safer community around campus.

"We really never know when building that relationship in advance is going to be critical for having somebody call us, that's really the one big reason for the team," Chief of Campus Security Pat Cunningham said. "We don't exactly know where it's going to pay dividends, but I know it'll save lives."

Four members of Campus Security staff chose to compete in intramural basketball because they viewed it as a chance to interact with students in a positive way while not in a security uniform.

Officer J.R. Hunter, captain of the team, is an intramural veteran. He has competed in a variety of sports like tennis, futsal and volleyball in his six years at Belmont.

Cunningham shared the idea of forming a Campus Security intramural team with Hunter a year ago.

"He came to me, and he mentioned something about wanting to set up where we're more involved with engaging the community and the students," Hunter said.

Hunter gave an immediate "yes" and quickly contacted several of his co-workers.

Before long, Sam Dismuke, Montarious Campbell and Corey Thompson became his teammates.

“I knew that Sam played basketball, Monta played sports, so I knew he was a little athletic,” Hunter said. “Corey played a little bit too, so I figured we should get the fellas together and have a little fun.”

Officer Dismuke, Hunter’s first shift partner, plays point guard, scoring baskets and managing the team’s duties.

At only 21-years-old, Dismuke enjoys playing with students because he feels like he can connect and relate to them the most.

“I have fun playing ball, but I enjoy interacting with the students,” Dismuke said.

Cunningham believes the younger members of Campus Security like Dismuke are a key component for connection with students.

“I think it brings different perspectives, it’s good to have some younger officers who can associate with everything from social media to just the culture of today,” Cunningham said.

Officer Campbell, 23, who works second shift, is another younger member of the team.

“Just vibing with the kids makes me feel like I’m still a kid myself,” Campbell said. “Coming out here and playing keeps me young, it keeps me on my toes, it’s really fun and I’m glad to be here.”

Campbell might be the most eager of the four-man team and is committed to the team’s mission.

“I’m willing to do anything just to build engagement and connection with the students,” Campbell said. “Getting out here and being with these students, it’s amazing and really a blessing.”

Third shift sergeant Corey Thompson rounds out the team, embracing the opportunity to get out and show people that he isn’t just a rule enforcer or someone in a security uniform.

“With this, I get to play basketball and communicate with people on a different level, really focusing on interaction and networking,” Thompson said.

When he’s on shift, Thompson won’t hesitate to talk to a student he has played against in the gym.

Together, all four make up a ‘natural fit’ of a team that isn’t focused on how many games are won or how many points are scored.

“I think they’re less concerned about winning. I don’t think they’re there because they want to win the championship, I think they’re there because they enjoy the interactions and the competition,” Cunningham said.

Hunter makes sure the team has the same mentality.

“Of course, we want to win, but it’s still fun to get out there, talk with the students, workout and get some exercise all at the same time,” Hunter said.

For the Campus Security 3v3 squad, it’s bigger than basketball.

“To a large degree, if we can be a part of the community and if students can see us that way and they know some of our guys or they play ball with them, I think we’re much more effective as a department,” Cunningham said.

This article was written and photographed by Landen Secrest. October 2022. Belmont Vision Student Newspaper.