



SPORTS

Boosting academics

MAM basketball tourney raises \$20K for computers

BY ANNE CHAMBERS
Special to My Life

Last week 149 youth basketball teams hit the courts, playing in **Memphis Athletic Ministries'** Classic Basketball tournament, the nonprofit organization's largest fundraiser of the year.

Games were played at MAM's Grizzlies Athletic Center off North Airways, plus six satellite locations: Second Presbyterian Church Woodlands Presbyterian Church, Sacred Heart Catholic Church, Mississippi Boulevard Christian Church, Evangelical Christian School, and New Hope Christian Academy.

The tournament concluded with the ninth grade high school and eighth grade middle school championship games. The Bolton High Wildcats ninth grade boys won the ninth grade boys championship game. In eighth grade action, the Cordova Cougars boys won their championship division and the Schilling Farms Lady Stallions girls were champions in their division.

Approximately \$20,000 was raised from this year's tournament, which will be used to establish computer labs in new MAM sites, four former City of Memphis community centers, as well as other MAM centers located in economically under-resourced neighborhoods. Computer labs will enhance MAM's academics and personal financial responsibility training programs offered at all 12 MAM sites to over 750 at-risk youth, ages 6 to 18.

These computer labs will be staffed with trained MAM personnel. Youth who attend MAM's after school programs must participate in academic and personal financial training studies to play on a sports team. The goal is to help at-risk youth improve reading and math skills, graduate from high school, and learn lifelong money management skills. In addition to the school age youth, these computer labs will also serve older unemployed youth by requiring them to participate in computer-based classes to help them improve their personal status in order to use the recreation facilities.



At the Memphis Athletic Ministries' Grizzlies Center, University of Memphis basketball coach Josh Pastner took a moment to visit with Sydney Smith, Elise Holden, Amber Braxton, Marisa Knox, Madison Rozier, Gabrielle Little and Madeson McCaster.