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Alumnus Cameron Burrell Ready to Shine with Harlem Globetrotters

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Cameron Burrell received a memorable gift on October 24, 2023 – a day before his 24th birthday.

Two days after trying out in Atlanta, Burrell earned contract to play for the Harlem Globetrotters. He is one of nine members of the 2024 Globetrotters rookie team.

“It was special, for sure.”

That moment was a culmination of hard work and a chance to regain belief in himself.

Before coming to Lindenwood University as a graduate student in 2022, Burrell lost his confidence and knew he needed to build himself back up as a basketball player. Lindenwood head coach Kyle Gerdeman provided Burrell with that exact opportunity.

“Coming to Lindenwood was like a rebuilding year for me to try to get confidence back in myself again,” Burrell said. “That’s something that Gerdeman helped me with. It was something I worked hard for.”

Burrell seized the opportunity and flourished on the basketball court during his graduate season for the Lions.

He led the team in rebounding and scored a season-best 24 points against Western Carolina University on November 20, 2022. Burrell helped lead the Lions to an 11-21 record, including a 9-4 mark at Hyland Arena.

After the 2022-23 basketball season ended, Burrell settled back home in Chicago, where he continued to work out and develop his basketball skills. His dream was to follow in his brother Romelo’s footsteps and play professionally overseas. That plan didn’t come to fruition.

During the offseason, Burrell was nominated to participate in the Darkhorse Slam Dunk contest. Though he didn’t partake, word of his nomination through social media began to spread. It eventually caught the attention of Globetrotters recruiter Tom Schubert.

Around August 1, 2023, Burrell's cell phone buzzed.

Schubert was on the other end. He offered Burrell a tryout.

Burrell traveled to Atlanta in mid-October carrying a bag of mixed emotions with him.

"Going into it, I was kind of nervous because I really didn't know what to prepare for," he said. "I know it's basketball, but there's other (aspects) tied into it. Just not knowing what to expect in the tryouts, I was kind of nervous. I was really excited (about) it as well. (I had) a lot of nervous energy. Once I got to the tryouts and on the basketball court, it was just basketball at the end of the day."

He eventually was offered a one-year contract with the Globetrotters.

Burrell's time at Lindenwood and his ability to reestablish confidence and belief in himself are testaments to Lindenwood's mission of providing real experiences that lead to real success. Burrell capitalized on his opportunity to gain invaluable experience that has led to sustained success on the basketball court.

"When I got to Lindenwood, the thing ...was maximizing your opportunity, and (Gerdeman) gave me a chance at Lindenwood to do that and be myself, whereas at a lot of other places I couldn't do that," Burrell said. "Just maximizing my opportunity and taking advantage of what was in front of me. That's what helped me focus, knowing what I have to do to get myself in a better position."