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**HILLMON GEORGE, JR.: THE PAUL HARRIS OF TODAY**

One of the problems in the Community of Havelock is instilling the importance of education to the younger generation. Another part of this problem is to help young men realize that being “smart” is cool and that this will help them to succeed in whatever they do. Paul Harris was a man who organized the first Rotary Club “in fellowship and friendship”. While Mr. Harris was President of the Rotary Club, he transformed the club into a Service Club by organizing the use of public toilets in Chicago, Illinois. The purpose of this essay is to show why Hillmon George, Jr., is the Paul Harris in our community and what he has done. Also, it is to show how he passes the 4-Way Test.

The Paul Harris of today is Hillmon George Jr. Mr. George is a proud and humble man who is not acknowledge as much as he should be for the deeds he has done and continues to do for our community. As a matter of fact, he does not want much publicity because he does it out of the goodness of his heart. He has said that everything he has learned has been from one of his coaches—Don Lemon. It has been Coach George’s goal to pass this knowledge on to the young men that he teaches/coaches. These are some of the qualities that make him the Paul Harris of today.

Is it true? Yes it is true that in some circles education is not as valued as much as it should be as opposed to sports. Hillmon George, Jr., has worked at Havelock Middle School for at least ten years as a coach of the boys’ basketball teams. Many of the young men who came him initially had either academic or behavior problems. This was because they weren’t taking education seriously, were misbehaving in class and not appearing to care about their education. Mr. George promoted not just sports but the importance of education too. HIllmon George checked their grades, and made them go to study halls. He also made it his duty to not only sometimes bring the boys to practice, but to check with their teachers as well. With his “tough love” and guidance, all of these young men have been successful not just on the basketball court, but in the classroom as well. This “teacher/coach” not only promoted sports but also education. It is his belief that education comes before athletics. While Coach George could have gone to Havelock High School, he has chosen to stay at Havelock Middle School. One of his favorite quotes is “I believe that once you get to ninth grade, you’ve already been molded. I wanted to be able to catch them at the point where I could mold them into young men”. Mr. George has done just that. These are some of the qualities that would help him to pass the 4-Way Test.

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Is it fair to all concerned? It is fair because Mr. George turns these boys into respectful young men. Also, he not only helps them to become great athletes, but he also helps them to understand that to make it anywhere you have to get a good education. It is also fair because Coach George is also showing them how to make it in life. He makes sure that their pants are pulled up and to look like young men, and to also be respectful of authority. He doesn’t let them use excuses such as being raised in a single-parent home or living in a “bad” neighborhood. Some of the young men who are being raised in a single-parent home call him both Coach and “Dad”. These are some of the qualities that would help Hillmon George, Jr. to pass the 4-Way Test.

Will it build goodwill and better friendships? Yes it will and has built goodwill and better friendships because he teaches these young men to respect not just him but each other and authority as well. A team that is against each other will never be successful. A team that strives together and is successful must respect each other in order to build a bond. Hillmon George has helped to build this bond because his teams have won five straight basketball championships. From these championships, you can see that his team has brought great brotherhood and respect for themselves, each other and authority. He has also brought goodwill by making productive citizens of these young men. Some of his former athletes probably would not have made it through high school without having respect for themselves. Coach George has also brought goodwill with prayer. He has the team pray before and after each game, and has also encouraged them to pray for everything else. This has also changed some of these young men because they are seeing that if they put in the work and the time—God will help them the rest of the way. Again, these are some of the qualities that would help him to pass the 4-Way Test.

Will it be beneficial to all concerned? Yes!! What Mr. George is promoting and instilling in these young men is very beneficial. He has helped many young men accomplish their goals. For example, Bruce Carter, who is now with the NFL’s Tampa Bay Buccaneers. Bruce Carter was one of Coach George’s young men. When Bruce Carter was drafted by the NFL, the first person he called was Mr. George or as he calls him “coach”. He called thanking him for pushing him to do better and to strive for greater glory. Another example is Pharoah Cooper who is currently playing for the University of South Gamecocks and is a direct result of Mr. George. Both of these athletes were molded and pushed to do better. Also he has made these young men both students and athletes. He has also helped countless unnamed young men to do the same. These, too, are some of the qualities that would help him to pass the 4-Way Test.

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In conclusion, the above shows why HIllmon George, Jr., is the modern-day Paul Harris in our community and why he would pass the Rotary 4-Way Test. He has had an impact not just on the community, not just young men, but young females as well who need to know the importance of education. I personally want to thank him because what he has done for the community is absolutely breathtaking. Coach George is not only a good citizen but a fantastic leader and role model for the entire community.

Works Cited:

www.rotary.org/myrotary/en/rotarys-founder