

# EXPOSURE



## A FAST BREAK OF CONFIDENCE

*Beyond the sport: Candice White*

Story by [Fresno State](#)

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Candice White wasn't always one of the top shooting guards in the nation. A few years ago, a heavy weight of doubt and insecurity tied Candice down like an anchor. It overtook any semblance of confidence she felt as a high school basketball player.

A native of Modesto, she remembered being recruited to play basketball at various universities. Most schools were Division II — an intermediate level division of competition in the NCAA that is an alternative to both the larger and better-funded Division I.

Some college coaches would tell her she would be successful. Others would say Candice

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“You can’t be mad at them for being honest,” Candice said. “But it was hard because I already have this fear of failure.”

Accepting an offer from a Division I school, Fresno State, was nerve-wracking but simple. She liked the coaches, the players and the facilities, and felt like Fresno State was the right place to pursue her educational goals in health and human services.

“But it was still hard to overcome the fear of not being good enough to play at a Division I level,” Candice said.



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## A fast break of confidence



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# DRIBBLING WITH DOUBT

The doubt continued weighing Candice down well into her freshman year. Only playing 11 games, Candice feared her coaches didn't believe in her.

She remembered countless emotional phone calls to her parents.

"I would always talk to my dad, saying, 'Dad, I don't think I'm good enough to play with these girls. I don't know what I'm going to do to get that edge,'" Candice said.

Her father would advise her to stay focused and keep trying.

Her mother attended nearly every game, pompoms in hand, even if Candice was sitting on the bench.

Candice's older teammates, five seniors, had the utmost confidence in her abilities. They encouraged her to shed the weight of her insecurity, knowing that Candice's time to shine would come soon.

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"That was one thing that made me think, 'Don't be an anchor on your team. Be that sail that helps your team keep going,'" Candice said.

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# FREE THROW

There was no one moment when Candice untied the anchor of doubt and insecurity and set herself free. It was gradual.

It was going to practice early to rebound for the starters. It was four to five sessions at the gym each day. It was playing basketball against men's basketball team members during her free time. It was dribbling a basketball while watching films for class.

"I was trying to do everything I could so that the coach couldn't *not* play me," she said.

The dedication paid off, and Candice slowly shed the weight of her insecurity.

In her sophomore year, she started all 33 games in the backcourt and earned an All-Mountain West honorable mention.

As a junior, she led the league in scoring at 18.9 points per game. Candice was the only player in the league during the conference season to rank in the top 15 in scoring, rebounds, assists, steals, free-throw percentage, 3-point field goal percentage, 3-point field goals made per game, defensive rebounds and minutes.

Candice was selected to the All-Mountain West team following her junior year and was selected to the five-member All-Mountain West preseason team.

Recently, she was selected as one of 10 candidates for the Ann Meyers Drysdale Award, which is given to the top shooting guard in the country.

"I think her freshman year, when she came in, she realized that she needed to put extra work in," head coach Jaime White said. "From that point on, she was committed to working harder than anyone in the off-season. For her, it paid off big, with her scoring especially."

Now a senior, Candice is finishing the season with a confidence she didn't feel four years ago. For the second year in a row, Candice leads the conference in scoring, and she ranks third all-time on the Fresno State scoring list with 1,658 points.

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"Everyone's gone through a struggle at some point in their life, but it's about how you approach it," Candice said. "My support system keeps pushing me through day by day. I think mentally through life, a positive mindset can get you really far."

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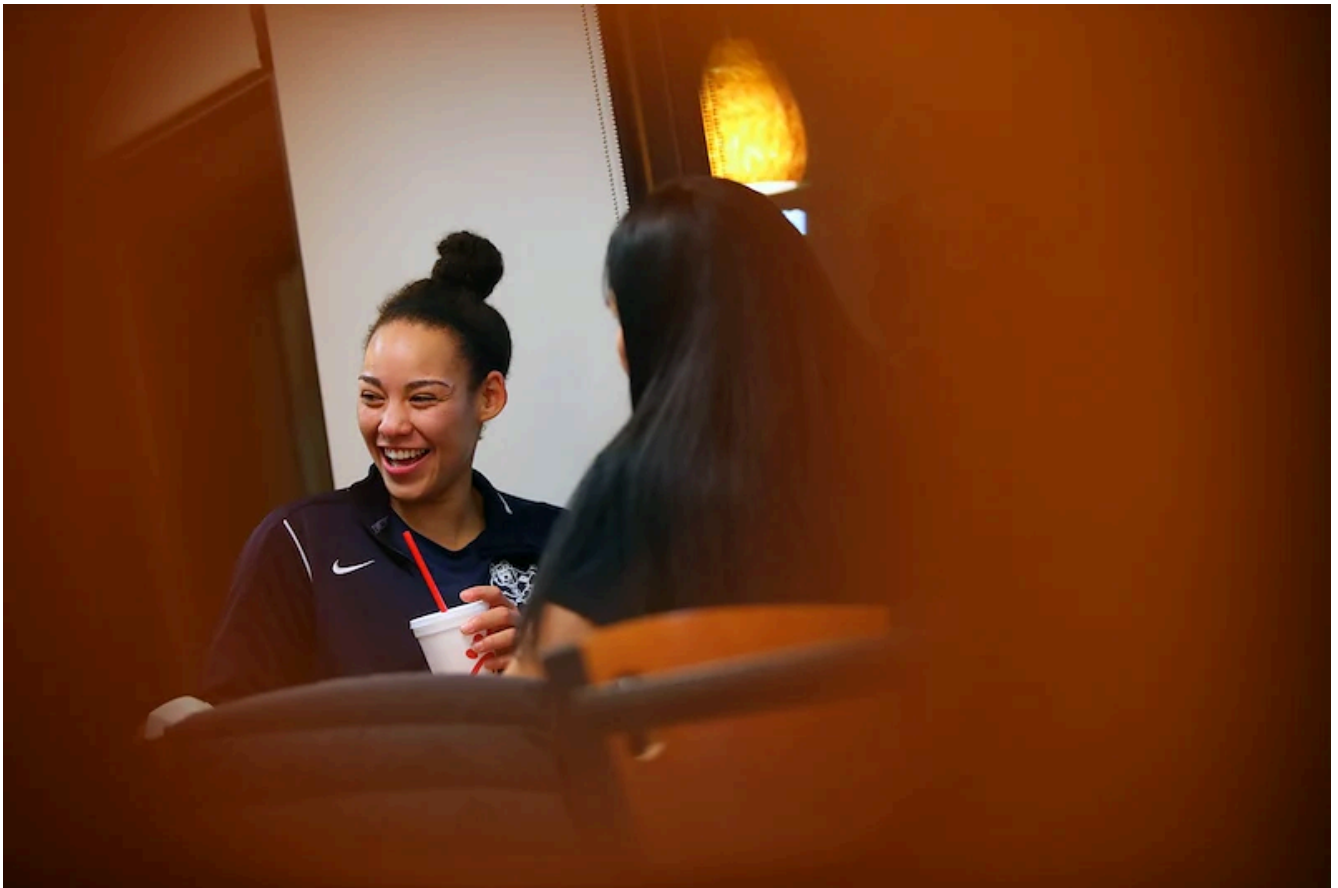
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## **SUPPORT CANDICE AND OUR STUDENT-ATHLETES.**

Footnote: *Photos by Cary Edmondson, Story by Esra Hashem, Video by Chris Samaro — University Brand Strategy and Marketing*

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