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## Ratliff Makes Good on Fine, Aids Catholic School



A punishment for a Trail Blazer has turned into a gift for students at a North school.

Portland Trail Blazers center Theo Ratliff presented a \$35,000 check recently to De La Salle North Catholic High School during a student assembly.

Interested in supporting literacy and education programs for minorities, Ratliff presented the check to De La Salle North to receive a \$35,000 fine he incurred from the NBA team last season for missing weight-lifting sessions.

The donation will support the school's Corporate Internship Program for two years. The internship program enables De La Salle students to work one day a week to help offset the cost of their education and to experience a real-world workplace environment. Ratliff's gift will go to minority students serving their internship in the Trail Blazers' front office.

De La Salle provides a Catholic, college-preparatory education for youth that do not have the resources to participate in a private academic environment.

"Providing every opportunity for kids to have an even playing field when it comes to education and career opportunities is extremely important to me and my family," Ratliff said. "We are impressed with the leadership and resources that De La Salle provides and see it as a great place for Portland kids and look forward to working with their students."

De La Salle opened with 71 ninth graders in 2001 and now has three classes with a population of 193 students. The program is modeled after Cristo Rey Jesuit High School, a 6-year-old, corporate internship-program school in downtown Chicago.

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The school's goal is to develop tomorrow's community leaders by making education accessible to aspiring and motivated young people. The program ethnically diverse, at-risk youth opportunities to succeed in small classes, expectations, personal attention, parent involvement, active participation in the Internship Program and a longer school day in a 10 ½-month school year.

For more information about De La Salle North Catholic High School, visit the Website, [www.delasallenorth.org](http://www.delasallenorth.org).

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