BZA
Case No. 16598
Exhibit No. 25

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO.16598
EXHIBIT NO.25A1

The Bridges Academy

(Formerly Academic Enrichment Center)



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A HISTORY OF BUILDING BRIDGES

The Bridges Academy is a multi-dimensional program designed to meet the educational, cultural and social needs of the child from the age of two years through the eighth grade, in addition to serving the child care needs of the working parent. Since 1977, students, parents and teachers from nearly 40 different countries have participated in its components - the Pre-School Foundations Division, the Preparatory School, the After-School Enrichment Program, the Summer Fun Camp and the Convention Child Care Service.

The Bridges Academy began in September 1977 as After-Care Centers. The goal of the After-School Enrichment Program is to provide a wholesome, safe, educationally and culturally stimulating environment for school aged children between the hours of school dismissal and the hour of their parents' arrival. It offers small group and occasional individual tutoring for students in need of remediation during a daily homework/study hour. Enrichment activities in the arts, organized games and sports, independent study and research, skill reinforcement and after school clubs are available to the students until they are called for by an authorized care giver. The After-school Study and Adventure Program is prepared for children from first through eighth grade or six to fourteen years old. It is our contention that the establishment of constructive after-school habits in the early years will carry throughout the teen period, thus insulating the child from idle boredom with its consequent hostile acting out.

The after-school program "Bridges" education and child care and fosters the spirit of cooperation between home and school.

The second component of The Bridges Academy evolved in June of 1978. After Care's Summer Fun Camp started with one van and 25 campers. Through a delightful summer of experimenting, working and playing, and all around good times, the Summer Fun Camp became a mobile day camp that provides its participants with a wide variety of enrichment activities and exposures that promote the growth of open-minded, well-rounded, well-behaved personalities. Through the mobile medium, boredom is avoided and the campers are kept excited and stimulated all summer long. The Summer Fun Camp has expanded and improved and now includes many activity areas - Swimming Lessons, Cultural Music and Dance, Study Hour, Personal and Social Awareness, Life Skills, Games and Sports, Arts and Crafts, Field Trips, Overnight Camping and sometimes American Sign Language. While the Summer Fun Camp is geared to the second through eighth grader, a similar, slower paced Jr. Campers' Summer Enrichment program is provided for pre-schoolers and first graders. Since 1991, this program has also offered SOARE - Summer Opportunities for Advancement Reinforcement and Enrichment. SOARE provides a half day of intense academics concentrating on reading, math and writing skills.

The Summer Fun Camp "Bridges" school year studies and summer recreation/relaxation, eliminating traditional summer regression.

Upon securing its own facilities in 1979, After - Care, with an expanded focus, became Academic Enrichment Center and embarked on the development of its most vital entity, the Pre-School Foundations. Now, as The Bridges Academy Pre-School, it continues to offer formal education designed to equip the child with the skills needed for success in public, private or parochial school. It is our belief that this formal education of the child should begin at two years of age, after two years in the home or a home like setting, where he/she has received the loving and nurturing so necessary for the development of trust and confidence in others as well as himself. This development, in conjunction with complete toilet training and weaning, frees the child from the demands of babyhood and opens his mind to new worlds - the worlds of written communication, numerical understanding and social interaction. To this end, the primary focuses of the pre-school curricula are on the development of pre-reading and language skills, through the use of methods found most effective for individual groups of children; and the development of citizenship and character through lessons in science, social studies and foreign language. Finally, to assure the growth of a well-rounded child, freedom of expression through physical activities, music and art is encouraged. These goals are approached through the framework of curricula which emphasize positive mental attitudes and positive images of self.

The Pre-School Foundations program "Bridges" a child from infancy to independence.

The most challenging of The Bridges Academy's programs is the grade school. It began as the Academic Enrichment Center Preparatory School in the 1981 school year with first grade. AEC Prep added second grade in 1982 and continued with the third grade in 1983. The Prep School has the simplest of goals - excellence and achievement through skill mastery in accelerated curricula. These goals are met by satisfying all state requirements for public and non-public schools; by maintaining an average 1 to 12 adult/student ratio in order to afford students frequent opportunities for small group and individualized instruction; by integrating and interrelating supplementary subject matter so as to reinforce basic skills; and by molding good character and citizenship through social and cultural exposures. Responding to the requests - indeed, the demands - of both parents and students, the elementary level was extended in 1988 with an expansion to include fourth through sixth grades. The intermediate level continued in 1991 with seventh grade and concluded with grade eight in 1992.

The Preparatory Academy "Bridges" elementary educational foundations and secondary academic success.

Finally, an occasional program of the Bridges Academy is interesting, unique and rather novel. The Academy has provided child care services for conventions. Bridges makes its staff and facility available to organizations convening in the Washington, DC metropolitan area. The primary function of The Bridges Academy during conferences and conventions is to provide wholesome, safe, enriching and creative care for the children of conference participants. The goals of the Academy's Convention Child Care Service are to assure that each child grows politically in understanding the nature, the cause and/or the purpose of the conference or convention in which the parent is participating; that each child grows socially in understanding people from different geographic, socio-economic and ethnic backgrounds, through small and large group interaction in both work and play settings; that each child grows historically in understanding the United States Government through visits to the major seats of government in and around Washington, DC; that each child demonstrates overall growth to parents and other convention participants in a presentation at the end of the conference (time permitting); and that each child thoroughly enjoys a visit with The Bridges Academy family.

Our Convention Child Care Service "Bridges" the professions of parents with the priorities of children.

The Washington Post

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Education Review



BY NICHOLAS WILTON—FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

Pride, Heritage And Values

Minority Prep Schools: The Urban Alternative

By Carolyn Hughes Crowley

WEARING A red, black and green pin of the black nationalist flag on her blouse, Ida Fleming, a teacher of 3-to-5-year-olds at the Roots Activity Learning Center, coaxes her young charges to form a circle around her during the school's morning ritual. "Mama Ida's proud of Brandon, Jamil, Khalil and Shana," she says. As other corn-rowed and T-shirted children hold hands encircling her, she praises them. "Mama Ida's proud, too, of Anjela, Jasmin, Khalia, Talia and Joaquim. Let's all join the circle of love. We're all black sisters and brothers."

Hands joined, they all recite The African Pledge: "We will work, study and listen, so we may learn; learn so we may teach . . . We will have discipline, patience, devotion and courage. We will live as models, to provide new direction for our people . . . We are African people . . ."

Carolyn Hughes Crowley is a Washington, D.C., free-lance writer who writes frequently about education and health.

The day has begun in its usual manner for pre-primary children at the 100-pupil, prekindergarten-to-eighth-grade Roots Activity Learning Center, one of about 15 Washington-area private minority neighborhood schools. Most are black-owned and operated; others are Islamic or Christian oriented. Enrollments range from 35 to 350.

"We don't have Black History month here," said Fleming, a University of the District of Columbia senior majoring in early childhood development who has taught at Roots almost every year since it started in 1977. "We have black history every day. We emphasize how great we are. When the students feel good about themselves, they feel good about everybody."

Like other independent schools in the District, Roots is licensed by the Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs and reports annually to the District of Columbia Board of Education. But one important difference between Roots and other schools, said director and founder Bernida Thompson, is that Roots chooses educational materials that contain positive racial images to "counteract the negative images that

—Continued on page 19

Minority Private Schools

An Urban Alternative

Continued from page 1

society often portrays of black people." Portraits of famous black women and men and maps of Africa hang on the walls to show the children the importance of black achievement.

But, says Thompson, "We're not anti here. We're an antidote to the poison called racism." Thus, she said, Roots' African orientation helps children develop self-esteem and an appreciation of a "strong and mighty heritage."

NATIONWIDE there are about 12,000 children enrolled in about 250 private minority neighborhood schools in the United States, according to a report from the Institute for Independent Education, a four-year-old national organization for private schools serving nonwhites. The schools, staffed, attended, owned and operated almost entirely by minorities, serve blacks (more than 80 percent of the schools), Hispanics (12 percent), Native Americans and Asian-Americans. About 44 percent of the schools began in the early 1970s, when many parents were "disillusioned with their lack of control and their inability to affect change in public schools," said IIE Director Joan Ratteray. Now, many schools, here and elsewhere, have long waiting lists.

Most of these schools, more than 80 percent, receive no money from government, foundations or corporations, Ratteray said. The average annual tuition is $1,783, less than a third of the tuition at private schools catering primarily to whites. Because one-quarter of the families whose children attend these schools earn less than $15,000 a year, many schools have a sliding scale for families unable to afford the full tuition, or provide

—Continued on page 20



BY DUDLEY BROOKS—THE WASHINGTON POST

Teacher Ida Fleming goes over schoolwork with Jasmine Johnson, 5

Minority Private Schools

Continued from page 19

opportunities for volunteering that is credited against tuition.

Local schools, like their national counterparts, are funded almost entirely by tuition. Teachers' salaries range from $12,000 to $15,000, and many schools lack facilities (audiovisual equipment, libraries, computers, gymnasiums, play grounds) and services (transportation, free meals or student-purchased meals) found at other public and private schools. Most institutions operate in buildings originally constructed for other purposes and subsequently converted into schools. The Academic Enrichment Center in Washington, for example, is in a building that once housed a martial arts studio and a radio-television store.

At the Academic Enrichment Center, where there are nine full-time and five part-time teachers for 130 students, "you're like an octopus," said nursery school teacher Laurese Low. "You're teaching, writing at the board and hugging a child." But the size of the school has its advantages, Low noted, because staff members know every child's name and his particular needs.

Despite the lack of equipment and facilities, directors and heads of these schools say their curricula are comparable to, and often better than, those of the public schools. And, many parents and educators say, they produce academically successful students. While studies include basic reading, math and writing, many schools introduce foreign languages (Swahili is a favorite), sciences, higher math and computers at an early age. In addition, the students' studies are guided by family values, cultural traditions and in some cases religious doctrines.

One of the area's oldest black private schools is the Nannie Helen Burroughs School, founded in 1909. Like Roots, the school is all black, but its emphasis is different. "We work with our kids in a Christian environment," said Principal Mattie Robinson. "We stress the three B's: the Bible, development of the brain—learn all you can—and the broom. Clean up your environment, morally and physically." Its graduates should have "a system of values enabling them to say no to drugs, sex and smoking."

Another school with a religious emphasis is the Sister Clara Muhammad School, one of 40 Islamic schools nationwide. It stresses academics, discipline, history, the Sunna of Prophet Muhammad, Arabic conversation and memorization of the *Koran*. The teachers, all Muslims, introduce Islam in every academic course. All girls aged 4 and older must cover their hair. During the month-long fast of Ramadan, students fix food for the poor at shelters. They also do volunteer work at an orphanage.

Director Sister Khaleedah F. Haris said, "When students leave here they should maintain Islamic discipline and a belief in the oneness of Allah. They should stand firm and rightly grounded."

The emphasis on cultural traditions is evident at the Nation House Positive Action Center/Watoto School—Watoto is Swahili for child—where teachers weave lessons about and references to African culture into all their classes. Children wear African dress and adopt, if they don't already have one, an African name for use at school. Each morning they recite the school pledge in Swahili and English, and they call adult staff members "mama" and "baba," Swahili terms of respect.

"Our objective is for our students to maneuver in any environment they find themselves in, be confident in projecting who they are and what their heritage is and feel an obligation to perpetuate it," said Watoto co-founder and Director Agyei Akoto.

All the students and teachers at Watoto are black. Though it and other schools cater almost exclusively to black children, whites and other minority students may apply and some schools—the Academic Enrichment Center, for example—have a handful of non-black pupils. Nonetheless, Akoto said he would discourage a white parent from trying to enroll his child.

"His attendance here would cause him stress because our cultural orientation is Afrocentric and it emphasizes our West African heritage, the slave trade and the experiences of slavery in this country," Akoto said. "I'm not sure a white child would identify comfortably with our cultural and ideological orientation."



BY DUDLEY BROOKS—THE WASHINGTON POST

Raasan Reynolds, left, completes a current events reading assignment while Roots Activity Learning Center Director Bernida Thompson and student Charles Marson watch

How does this educational philosophy affect children? Barbara Patterson, executive director of the Black Student Fund, a 24-year-old organization that recruits black students for local private schools, says she understands the reasons black parents want their children to attend a school that emphasizes black culture and that provides strong black role models.

But Patterson said she also felt that "single race education misses something critical, which is the ability to learn to communicate with people unlike yourself. That's what education is all about."

Will Johnson, an associate professor in the department of psychoeducational studies at Howard University, said that he opposed one-race schools. "One-race schools are not means to reach all children, because they are not necessarily geared to all children, given their cultural makeup and exposures and socio-economic situations," Johnson said.

On the other hand, Kofi Lomotey, assistant professor of educational administration at the State University of New York at Buffalo and national secretary of the Council of Independent Black Institutions, says he believes "a student will do better academically if his culture is at the center of the curriculum." Lomotey said students at the CIBI's 50 member schools are required to take one of two nationally standardized tests.

The results, Lomotey said, show that "our students perform one to three years ahead of their public school peers, once they have been with us for one year."

At Roots, fifth to eighth grade teacher Kamau Robinson says tests show most students performing two grades ahead in all academic work. "We have some with test scores showing their work at the 10th and 12th grade level. Most work at the national norm . . . That's our objective at our school—to get at least all our students at the national norm," said Robinson.

Parents, teachers and educational administrators say that where minority independent schools are successful, that success is due to the schools' small classes (10 to 15 students); the individualized attention and instruction received by the students; parental involvement that creates the atmosphere of an extended family; a caring atmosphere; and feelings of self-esteem and confidence the schools instill in the youngsters. The average pupil to teacher ratio is one to 14 at local schools.

Students say they like the individual attention and the emphasis on black culture and black history that they get at schools like Roots, the Academic Enrichment Center or the Nation House Positive Action Center/Watoto School. Quentin Mason, a Roots student since he was 4 years old and now in the sixth grade there, said, "Most public schools don't give as much information about the heritage and history of my people." And, he adds, "Our teachers put us on track. They guide us through learning as we work together."

Stephen Lyles spent one year at Roots before graduating in June. Now an honors student at Archbishop Carroll High School, he says Roots helped prepare him to do college-level work, even though he is only 14. The school, Lyles said, helps "you realize who you are on the inside. Every child left school with a lot of hope he can make it in the world. Be upright, disciplined and intelligent [teacher Kamau] Robinson told us often. The most important value I learned at Roots was no matter how hard things were for me to accomplish, I felt in my heart and mind I could accomplish them."

—Continued on page 22

Private Schools

Continued from page 21

Stephen's guardian, Janice Lyles, a quality assurance coordinator with the District Government, believes Stephen spent an excellent year at Roots. "He got a good strong foundation in his heritage," she said. "He built up his self-confidence. They worked diligently, closely and well with the students, and the students experience love, warmth and caring." ■

Choosing a Minority Private School

FOR MANY parents the process of choosing a minority private school occurs in three stages, reports the Institute for Independent Education in *Dare to Choose: Parental Choice at Independent Neighborhood Schools.* First, families decide to remove their children from public school—usually citing overcrowding or the inability of teachers to provide sufficient individual attention to the needs of the children—or not enroll them there in the first place. Then they look around for "a good school." They select a private minority neighborhood school that meets those characteristics. Once they see their children's experiences in the new environment, the families usually decide to keep their children there.

Sitting in a classroom recently, nine mothers explained why they had decided to enroll their children in the Academic Enrichment Center. "It's like a kibbutz because it's an extended biological nurturing family," said Dr. Alyce Gullattee, a psychiatrist at Howard University Hospital. "Parents in public schools feel impotent because they can't do anything. All that is removed when a child moves here. This is the way a community school ought to be, but isn't."

When pupils are graduated from AEC, a pre-kindergarten to 6th-grade school, Gullattee thinks they will have a "thorough grasp of academic subjects. They will have the ability to think abstractly and be well-rounded. They will feel comfortable to go after whatever they want to by knocking down roadblocks."

"We don't expect them to be intellectual apologists for having mental prowess," she said. "If you're smart, you're smart . . ."

Other mothers agreed. "We don't want athletic scholarships," one said. "We want academic scholarships."

If the children had their way, some would never leave the school building. "When school is closed, my daughter Valerie, 5, will bang on the door to get in," said Alva Padmore, a divorced Marine Corps staff sergeant. At the end of the day, Padmore said, when she comes to pick up Valerie, "she doesn't want to leave. 'Come on, honey, it's time to go home,' I tell her. 'No, Mom, I'm in school.' "

Her daughter has attended the school for three years, and AEC so impressed Padmore that she has turned down special assignments three times so Valerie could remain there. Recently, Padmore accepted a new assignment as a legal affairs specialist in Norfolk, Va.

"I won't find another school with the expanse of knowledge AEC has given her," Padmore said. "It's like leaving a family. I've been to four duty stations, and I haven't found this closeness with teachers, staff and other parents. Valerie has asked me if she could stay, suggesting some teachers' names." ■

—Carolyn Hughes Crowley

THE COLOR OF THEIR SKIN

BY JUAN WILLIAMS

Raising children in a race-conscious—if not always racist--society is one of the toughest challenges black parents face today.

"They don't let black people in there," I said.

"Why not?" asked my seven-year-old son.

This was not the 1950s. This was not Mississippi. This was the spring of 1987, and we were driving to Grandma's house in Washington, D.C. My wife, two children, and I had stopped for a red light in front of the Masonic and Eastern Star Home. Since its opening in 1902, this nursing home for the elderly had never admitted a black man or woman. I explained to Antonio, my son, that some whites prefer not to talk, eat, or play with black people, especially older whites who grew up when segregation was legal and never attended school or worked with people who had black skin.

Antonio strained against his seat belt to look at the large white antebellum building set in what is now a black neighborhood, our neighborhood. Then he looked at his fair-skinned black mother and said, "I'd bet you could get in there, Momma." His mother said maybe so, but she wouldn't want to because she is proud to be black.

Our five-year-old daughter, Regan, who had been silent, suddenly added, "And anyway we couldn't visit you because our skin is brown, right, Momma? But if you want to go, Momma, it's okay."

"I wouldn't go anywhere that you couldn't go," said my wife.

To raise black children in the late 1980s is to step behind the veil of pleasantries and euphemisms with which adult Americans, black and white, drape the still-explosive issue of race. In the 1960s, after the Civil Rights Act and the Voting Rights Act had passed, many people assumed that the job of raising a black child would become little different from that of raising a white child. With the breakdown of rigid segregation, national attention and government dollars were focused on giving poor black children access to middle-class experiences through programs like Head Start. The main handicap facing these children, the thinking went, was not race but poverty; a middle-class upbringing would be the panacea.

But today, black middle-class and upper-class parents, who often work with and have gone to school with whites, find that raising a black child still poses special challenges. Some want to create a paradise of toys and fancy clothes and schools for their children, as if money will blot out the distinction of race. But such an environment often leaves black children unprepared to live in a society where race is a throbbing, ugly issue.

How do you help a black child face a lifetime of dealing



ILLUSTRATIONS JULIAN ALLEN

Despite the positive social changes of the last 20 years, black children still receive messages of inferiority — both subtle and overt.

ELMA GARCIA

with the reality of racism? The Boy Scouts, 4-H clubs, schools, and even church programs help children learn and adjust emotionally to the adult world of work and social responsibilities. But who helps children deal with growing up black in a predominantly white America?

The Basic Question

For me, as a black parent, the principal tension is between raising a child who feels good about himself (as an individual and a black person), and also raising a child who can function in a race-conscious—if not always racist—society. A black child has to be aware that the mainstream white society often judges black people as less intelligent, less attractive, and less trustworthy. A black child has to live with that generalization without letting it destroy him or his dreams. What a paradox: He has to accept his minority status and its handicaps in order to have the self-confidence necessary to move beyond them.

To raise a black child without any notion that he is viewed differently because of his race would be disastrous. Eventually, he would explode in bitterness: He would be incensed when he discovers, as sooner or later he must, in his social life or at work, that he is seen not as a person—Antonio, for example—but as "the black guy" or, worst of all, "that nigger."



For black children raised in predominantly white communities, visiting a poorer, all-black neighborhood for the first time is often bewildering.

This tension is far greater if the family is poor. In 1985, 43 percent of all black children were living in poverty. They are no more at home in the black TV world of "The Cosby Show"'s Huxtable family than in the white TV world of the Colbys on "Dynasty." A poor black child has to learn that he is worthy and capable of competing—despite the heavily negative images of his race and his class that he sees in the outside world.

For black families who rarely encounter a real live white person, it is even more difficult to raise a child who will be able to deal with whites. Ironically, though, such a child does have some advantages. Researchers have found that black children in southern states who have little contact with whites have higher self-esteem than northern black children in integrated settings, because southern blacks get positive reinforcement from each other and relatively few negative signals from whites.

The other side of that challenge occurs for blacks growing up in white neighborhoods. A black friend moved to the suburbs to give his son an all-American childhood—neat lawns, well-kept playground equipment, academically superior schools—but few of his neighbors were black. He decided to take his son to a black barbershop in the city to expose him to more blacks, specifically black men. But as they rode through black neighborhoods on the way to the barbershop, the boy cowered in fear. Most of the blacks he had seen were on TV, and they were foul-mouthed comics, thugs on street corners, drug dealers, tough cops, whores, and Mr. T. And now, seeing an all-black neighborhood for the first time, he could think only of the television characters. He didn't see himself as one of them, and he didn't want to be beaten up and robbed by them. Understandably, but ironically, he didn't feel comfortable around people who looked like him.

The issue of racial identity has critical importance if a black child is being fully prepared for life in America. "I want my daughter to be aware that there are differences between blacks and whites," said a mother interviewed for the 1980 Toddler Infant Experiences Study, which looked at the childrearing experiences of 30 middle-class black families in Oakland, California. "She can't do certain things white kids can. She's got to understand that they'll get a break faster than she will."

About half of the black parents in the study said that by the time their children were two-and-a-half they began to discuss race, and all the parents said they and their children had encountered some form of racism. The researchers describe these experiences as "the mundane extreme of racism" in the eighties: During an ordinary everyday activity such as shopping or dining out, an incident occurs that creates racial tension for both the parent and the child.

One mother described going into an ice cream parlor where the waitress simply ignored her. "I had a difficult choice to make," she said—whether to "walk out and face the kids' howling or sit there and sizzle." The same thing happened to another black parent in a restaurant. "You keep sitting there," she said, "wondering when you're going to get waited on, watching everybody else being waited on, and it just makes you feel bad. And then it makes you want to be violent; you're wondering if you should get up and do something."

About 80 percent of the black parents in the survey said they had experienced discrimination at the hands of a sales clerk. "Typically, they mentioned that sales clerks waited on others before coming to them," the researchers reported. "A number of parents described incidents, such as going into a bank to transact business with an officer, or shopping in a store that featured high-priced merchandise, only to be suspected of being too poor to be a serious customer."

More than half of the parents interviewed agreed that

being black adds stress to their children's lives. "Proceeding through the socialization process [of childhood] is complicated for children, filled with hazards and high points," says Harriette Pipes McAdoo, a professor at the Howard University School of Social Work. "It is even more difficult for black children. They have a double developmental task. They must incorporate the dominant values of our society. These values insidiously include devaluation of those who are nonwhite. At the same time they must incorporate the values of the black community, which often are in conflict with the dominant society."

The contrast in values can be both stark and subtle. There is the positive value blacks place on certain facial features that are often disparaged by whites, such as a broad nose or lips. Then there are contrasting political values: Blacks are often more cynical than whites about government and authority in general, questioning whether black neighborhoods get equal protection from the police and attention from city hall, and openly speculating as to the role race plays when it comes to school suspensions, grades, and athletic events. Whites tend not to see the racial angle unless it is conspicuous.

Have Times Changed?

Raising a black child may have become a different sort of challenge since the end of legal segregation in the United States, but from a child's perspective the world hasn't changed all that much. According to test results reported to the American Psychological Association in August 1987, black children today feel as much racial inferiority as their counterparts did 40 years ago, before the passage of civil rights laws.

The tests, first given to black children in the 1940s by Dr. Kenneth Clark and his late wife, Mamie Clark, were cited by the Supreme Court in its 1954 decision that put an end to legal segregation in the public schools. In these tests the Clarks found that two-thirds of the black children preferred white dolls to black dolls and routinely saw black dolls as less beautiful and less intelligent. In the repeat of the Clark tests last year, two-thirds of the black children still preferred white dolls. "The thing that disturbs me the most about the results of the new study is that there is no improvement in the self-esteem of black children—they still get messages of inferiority from all sides," says Clark, now professor emeritus of psychology at the City University of New York.

TO RAISE a black child without any notion that he is viewed differently because of his race would be disastrous.

What *has* changed, according to the experts, is the "societal context." With more and more black role models in toys and books, it is easier for parents to strengthen black children's racial awareness and pride. "Parents can reinforce positive attitudes in black children," says Judith R. Porter, a professor of sociology at Bryn Mawr College in Pennsylvania, "and these positive attitudes now appear to increase throughout

RACE: AN ISSUE FOR ALL PARENTS

Although society at large greatly influences racial attitudes, racism really begins in the home. "Children want to be just the same as their parents," says Alayne Yates, chief of child psychiatry at the University of Arizona College of Medicine. So when children hear jokes about Chinese who can't drive or Mexicans who are lazy, they'll often assume these caricatures are true.

For both parents and children, exposure to people of different races (or the lack of it) is a crucial influence on the development of attitudes toward race, according to Kerby Alvy, a white psychologist who has worked for more than 20 years in Watts, Los Angeles's largest black community. And unfortunately, watching television is how many Americans, especially whites, get such exposure. Although there are a few thoughtfully scripted television shows with integrated casts, opportunities are scant for white children to see black or Hispanic families living ordinary lives. The images offered on TV tend toward the extremes: the ruthless black criminal, the million-dollar-a-year athlete.

■ **MEETING FACE TO FACE.** Without some minimal direct contact with people of other races, children can come to see these individuals as threatening, according to Alvin F. Poussaint, an associate professor of psychiatry at Harvard Medical School and script consultant for "The Cosby Show." To avoid the development of prejudice, "parents don't have to preach to their kids, but they can project positive racial values," he says. "The best way to do this is to live in an integrated way — in mixed neighborhoods, with friends of various races. I also think people should buy toys and books representing all races."

Alayne Yates agrees. She suggests, for instance, that "if you are white and you want your child to be comfortable around black people, you should find a daycare center or nursery school where there are black children." Beyond that, Yates says, parents should encourage relationships between their children and children of other races. "See that the kids do things together," she says.

Yates has worked with teachers in schools serving large American Indian populations, and she says that the white teachers who have the most success with Indian children are those who show nonverbal acceptance and affection. "Parents could do the same thing [with children of other races] in their own child's presence. Touching and eye contact communicate warmth and set a good example for children to follow."

■ **SPEAKING UP.** Phyllis Harrison-Ross, director of the community mental health services at the Metropolitan Hospital Center in New York City, says parents should be willing to discuss racial issues, but should make sure that awareness of the differences among races does not lead to prejudice. "For instance, if the bully in daycare happens to be black, the color isn't what's bothering the other kids initially. But they may begin to relate the color to the characteristic. Parents should say, 'Yes, he's a bully, but all bullies aren't black, and all black people aren't bullies.'" Parents must take the initiative, Harrison-Ross says. "Don't assume that because the kids don't talk about race, they aren't thinking about it."

— Jordan Andersen

childhood and crystallize during the junior high school years."

Still, Harriette McAdoo of Howard University tells a painful story. She used to say regularly to her baby daughter, "Look at Mama's beautiful brown baby." But one day when the child was three, she jumped onto the bed where her mother and father lay talking and said, "I wish I was white." McAdoo told her daughter she was quite pretty as a black child. "I was trying to give her all the reinforcement I could before she hit the big wide world, with all of its prejudice, but the morning she said that I knew the world had already hit her," McAdoo recalls.

The world hit me, growing up in Brooklyn black and poor, though race was never discussed in front of me by adults —black or white. The closest my mother ever came was a gem of insight like "You don't know 'mean' until you work for a white man." I heard other parents tell my friends to "stop acting like a nigger." Even without much discussion, though, race was an issue for me.

Several assumptions were clear, if unspoken. For example, on each grade level the best classes at the local public school were all white, and the worst classes, for the "slower" kids, all black. The classes in between were racially mixed but predominantly white. The message was unmistakable: Blacks are not as smart. Similarly, all the teachers for the top classes were white, as were the principals, the policemen, the school board, the mayor, and the governor. On television blacks were rarely seen as anything but domestic servants. Advertisements never featured blacks. That was the accepted way of life. And I never heard anyone complain about it until the late sixties and the dawn of the "black is beautiful" era.



Many of television's images of blacks tend toward the extremes: from foul-mouthed comics to model athletes, from domestic servants to ultratough guys like Mr. T.

Race was more overtly an issue for my wife, who grew up a middle-class, light-skinned black in Washington, D.C. For her family and their friends, the goal was black achievement in education and in professional life. They could afford to frequent the city's finer restaurants and shops, and there confronted upper-class whites, thus testing the limits of segregation.

My wife's parents never said so to her directly, but their success and their middle-class lifestyle were indications of what was expected of her. Her father's income as a doctor enabled the family to live in a beautiful home in an integrated neighborhood, and his professional status gave her entree into a tightly knit group of middle-class blacks. She knew black judges and policemen and principals. She was a member of Jack and Jill, a group that held social events and sponsored outings to introduce middle-class black children to museums, opera, and, most important, one another. There were enough middle-class blacks in Washington to form a separate cluster, distinct from poor blacks.

Looking for Answers

In the eighties, race is more openly discussed by black people generally. It is also a more explicit and pervasive issue for black parents. The question is how to help a child develop positive racial attitudes.

One problem my wife and I had to face at the outset was daycare. When Antonio turned one, we were living in a working-class/poor black neighborhood in Washington. Having grown up in urban areas, we felt emotionally and racially connected to the people, politics, and problems of the city. We saw the suburbs as plastic. At work most of our colleagues were white. We were not seeking more integration so much as wanting to sink roots into the black community.

But living in a poor section of town, where we could afford a starter house, had its down side, especially when it came to daycare. We decided to hire a woman to come into our home every day to care for our children, who were born 18 months apart. We found a working-class black woman, very maternal, full of hugs and love, but she was not very verbal. She tended to let the children sit in front of the TV all day while she did housework. My wife asked her to skip the housework and instead take the children on walks, read to them, and play with them. None of her previous black employers had asked her to do that, the babysitter said, but eventually she got used to the idea and it worked out fine.

The next challenge arose when Antonio became attached to specific television programs. In cartoons there are few black characters, but many of the villains dress in black, like Darth Vader, or have black hair. Heroes are still fair-skinned, with blue eyes and blond hair. Antonio's first love in the toy world was He-Man, a mythic white man of muscle who, with his friends, fought the forces of evil. (Until recently none of the He-Man characters was black.) This didn't matter to Antonio. I mentioned the absence of blacks to him but he was indifferent. Eventually I stopped talking about it. I felt that maybe it was unfair to burden him with my scars.

The same white-is-wonderful theme set the tone for my daughter's toys. Although there are black Cabbage Patch and Barbie dolls, the ones advertised on TV are always the white

versions. Regan wanted what she saw on television—that was reality for her. But my wife made certain that Regan also had black dolls and all the accessories so she would want to play with the black dolls as well.

As Antonio grew older I would point out the mayor and the police chief, both black men, when they appeared on television. His attitude was "so what?" He was equally unconcerned by what I saw as negative racial stereotyping: that the crooks or bad guys tended to be dark figures, but never the good guys. Possibly he didn't know enough to understand. Also, Antonio is lucky. His own family includes several positive black role models: His father is a journalist, and his mother has a master's degree in social work, as does one of his grandmothers; his grandfathers are a doctor and a fight trainer; his uncles are a senior bank vice-president and another doctor.

A MOTHER told me how her three-year-old girl jumped onto her bed one morning and said, "I wish I was white."

What About Schools?

Inevitably, for parents black and white, the big decision is education. For us it was a question of whether to use the city's besieged public schools. The few preschool programs in our poor black neighborhood were crowded and not intellectually stimulating. My wife was driving the children to the suburbs for a half-day program, which added an hour to her workday, but we both felt that the effort was worthwhile. We also felt that living with black people and being part of the city, with its black mayor, was important. We felt torn.

Kindergarten was looming closer and the public schools in our neighborhood had a bad reputation. Should we send the children to private—and predominantly white and upper-class—schools? My wife and I had gone to predominantly white colleges in the Northeast. Both of us knew black people there who were not comfortable with other blacks as well as black people who, out of alienation and insecurity, stayed together in a small clique for every meal, every ball game, every class. One of the goals we had for our children was that they start out in a school that made them feel comfortable with themselves as black people and comfortable with other people who were black. The happiest black people we know—people who are fulfilled personally as well as professionally—function well in black American society. That is where most of their lasting friendships are formed.

Another argument against starting the children's elementary education at a mainly white private school was that we did not want them subjected to lower expectations. We did not want a well-meaning white teacher who would be satisfied with mediocre performances from two cute black children on the assumption that they were doing as well as black students could do. We wanted black teachers who would see two bright black children from a middle-class, two-parent family and expect them to be at the top of their class.

Fortunately, we found just such a school in Washington. The Academic Enrichment Center is a storefront private school on the Georgia Avenue business strip. It is run by a caring but demanding black principal. We've checked the children's academic progress carefully—including having them tested—and they are doing well. Achievement and excellence are encouraged there, whereas in some of the city's public schools, black students who do well are accused by other students of "acting white." Being part of a black student body also offers Antonio and Regan a chance to compete with other smart black children.

The curriculum also has a cultural emphasis. At age four Regan knew a poem about Martin Luther King, Jr. Her favorite song from one school play asked, "When will Soweto be free?" She can do the latest urban dance, called the snake. When she colors a face in her coloring book she usually uses the brown crayon. (In my boyhood set of crayons, the hue called "flesh" was off-pink.) Unfortunately, the school only goes to third grade, but by then we can consider an integrated private school because our children will have had this grounding in a black academic and social setting.

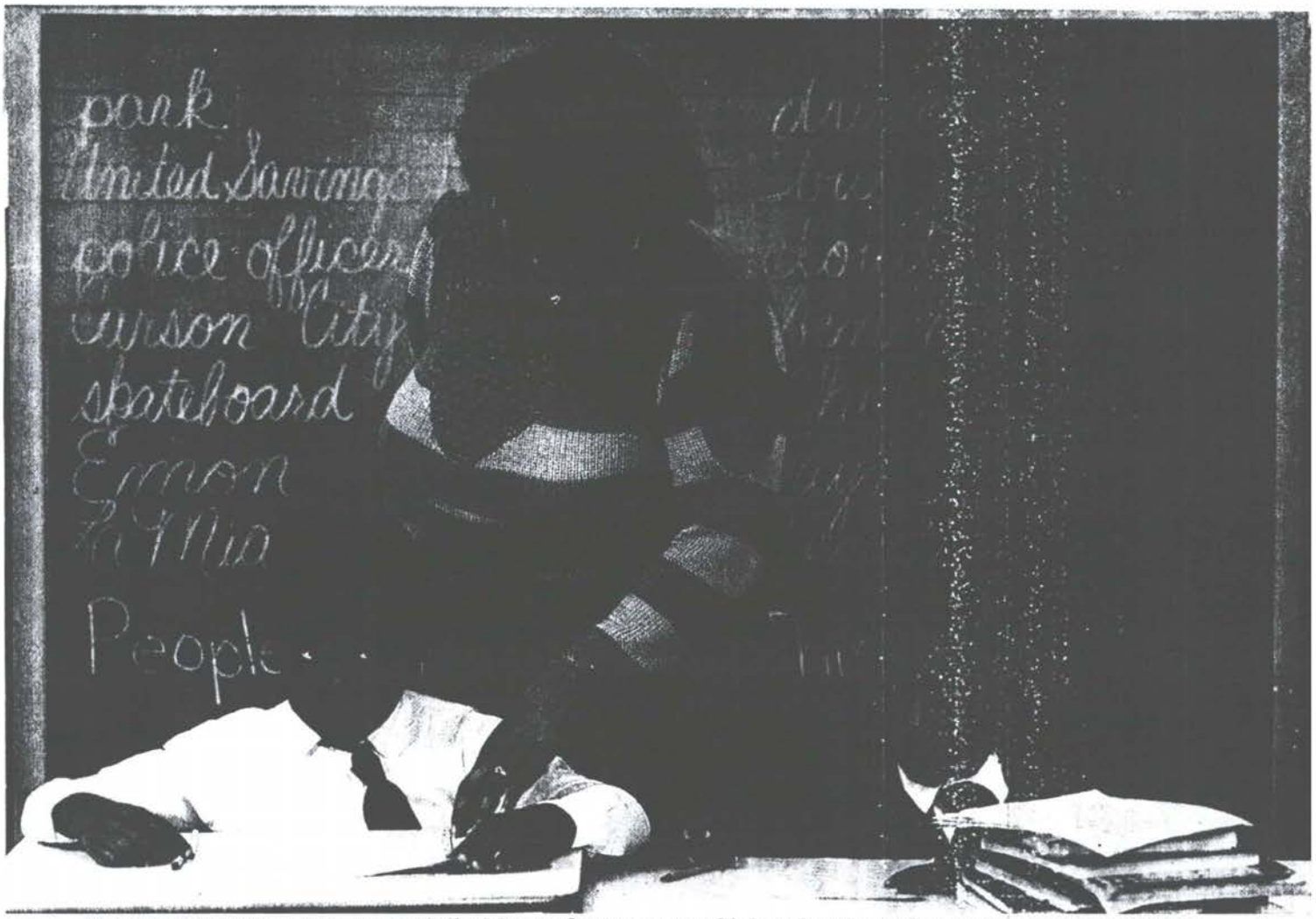
Our neighborhood is another learning ground. The Takoma section of northwest D.C., where we live now, is a vibrant, middle-income black area with a few white families. Our children identify strongly and happily with their black neighborhood. But that is only part of the lesson here.

As I watch Regan and Antonio grow up I see them also learning how to mix with people who have less money and different attitudes. The neighborhood is mostly middle class but there are also a number of working-class families. In this basically safe environment Regan and Antonio deal with sharing with kids who don't have bikes, and kids who want to take away their bikes, and bigger kids who break their toys. By age four and six they had been exposed to loud talk and words like *faggot* and *pussy*, and when they brought such words home my wife (I demurred on this point) explained what they really mean and why they are offensive. Our kids have also learned that drugs are a real danger that could come from the ice cream man, a neighborhood friend, or a stranger.

The lessons my children are now absorbing at five and seven I myself learned much later in life. I grew up in tough neighborhoods, and my mother tended to be overprotective. In my neighborhood there was no risk-taking with older kids or kids from other social classes; the threat of a knife or worse eliminated it. I almost never talked with my mother about sex or drugs, and certainly not at age seven.

In raising any child the goal is to help him or her become a strong, confident person who can compete in the world and also develop good relationships with others. A black child must learn to handle racial conflicts as well. The struggle to bring up black children who understand the unfairness of racism but will not be paralyzed or embittered by it is at the heart of the civil rights movement today. And the crux of that struggle is the goal of bringing up black children who will be strong enough as adults to form stable, happy black families. □

Juan Williams is a writer for the Washington Post Magazine.



Stacy Marsh-Williams of the Academic Enrichment Center oversees third-graders Devon Greene (left) and Jason Alston.

EDUCATION

Black Schools Go Beyond the ABCs

SUMMARY: A perfect curriculum for a child is hard to find, and a growing number of black parents in the Washington, D.C., area are turning to private schools set up specifically to deal with black children's needs. Emphasizing black culture and tradition, these schools work to develop students' confidence and sense of self, goals parents say are difficult to achieve in predominantly white private schools. Small classes, parental involvement and low tuition are other hallmarks of these institutions.

Nine years ago, Lillette Green-Campbell mapped out the perfect curriculum for her toddler.

"I wrote up what I wanted her to have and said to myself, 'You're crazy. Nobody's going to do all that except you.' "

With that realization, Green-Campbell became one of a growing number of black educators to take matters into their own hands.

Today, her Academic Enrichment Center in Northwest Washington, D.C., draws 125 youngsters ranging in age from preschool to third grade. All are black.

The center is one of more than a half-dozen similar private institutions in Washington. Receiving no federal or local funding, these institutions cater almost exclusively to the needs of black children, though white children may apply and some of the schools have a handful of white students. Size and curriculum focus may vary, but all these schools offer small classes, intense parental involvement and low tuition when compared to most predominantly white private schools.

The number of black private schools and their enrollment figures are hard to come by, because private school regulations and reporting requirements vary around the country. But officials at private school organizations are judging from their membership that the number is growing.

"There are more blacks interested in establishing black-owned and -operated schools that serve black children," says Adolphus Spain, chief of the nonpublic schools accreditation branch for the

"We try to encourage the children to think from a black perspective, and our emphasis is training to develop a responsible black community."

Maryland State Department of Education. Only 12 schools have come to Spain's branch for accreditation, eight of those in the past two to three years, he says, but he feels certain that there are more.

Several organizations have been formed to provide technical assistance and other support for black independent schools. Kofi Lomotey, president of the Council for Independent Black Institutions, has about 50 schools in his organization, and he guesses that more than 500 similar schools are operating nationwide. Five years ago Bob Woodson set up the National Center for Neighborhood Enterprise, which has about 350 schools in its membership. Eighty percent of those are black.

The black independent schools place a strong emphasis on developing students' confidence and nurturing self-identity — goals difficult to achieve in predominantly white schools, say parents and school directors.

"Parents say they want [their children] to feel confident and good about themselves, have self-pride," says Bernita Amerson, who founded Roots Activity Learning Center in the District of Columbia as a preschool for her children. The school now goes through the eighth grade and has about 100 students — and a waiting list.

"Always being in a [predominantly white] setting where they were emotionally attacked by their counterparts, [black students were] made to feel differently, inferior, not with it," Amerson says.

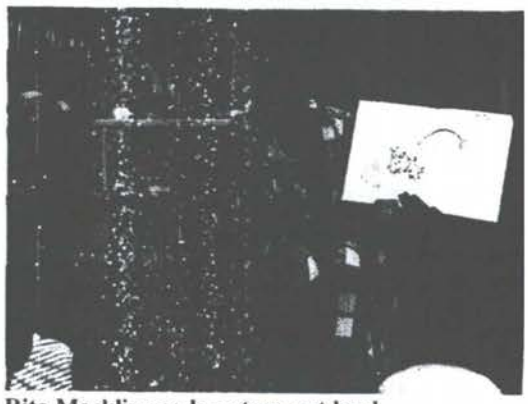
Teachers' expectations of black children in mostly white schools are often low, she adds. "Often a teacher who doesn't want to be prejudiced will try to be just the opposite and allow the children to . . . get by, rather than helping them to meet their potential," Amerson says. "Others feel that the black child is truly inferior."

Even black teachers in public schools may expect less of black pupils, according to Lomotey. "I remember just five years ago I was observing a kindergarten class, and a black teacher was telling the black kids they were dumb," he says. "Most black teachers have been trained by white people. Nobody acknowledges the fact that public schools have been pushing white, WASP, middle-class values.

"The culture that's pushed to our children needs to be our culture," Lomotey adds. "The question is often asked whether this isn't leading to resegregation. This isn't antiwhite — that is a waste of energy. This is pro-black. We try to encourage the children to think from a black perspective, and our emphasis is training to develop a responsible black community. We're teaching them how to operate in a pluralistic society."

More than 200 children are on the waiting list at the 76-year-old Nannie Helen Burroughs School, a black private school with 215 students from nursery school to eighth grade in the District of Columbia.

"Why is it so popular?" asks director Aurelia Downey. "It's because we're seriously disturbed about black children's morals and principles. That child needs more than ABCs. He has to be appealed to to be somebody. Two times a week our children speak in front of the classes to develop themselves. We let them think they're somebody. I hope public schools get back to this."



Rita Macklin reads a story out loud.

Besides emphasizing self-identity for the children, the black independent schools ask parents to play a major role.

The timing of a PTA meeting on a Friday night two days after New Year's Day didn't faze Roots parents, who packed the meeting to standing room only. They volunteered for fund-raising and substitute teacher committees, talked about their schoolwide Kwanzaa African festival and nodded in approval when Amerson announced that sex education would start in the spring.

At the Nationhouse Watoto School, which has 67 students in its converted three-story motel in Northwest Washington, parents can cut tuition by half if they serve on school committees or work part-time at the school in maintenance or clerical jobs.

Parents' fund-raising and volunteer work means these schools can cut traditional private education costs. Tuition at Washington's mostly white private schools ranges from $3,000 to $6,000. The black schools' highest tuition is about $3,000.

Very few black independent schools can offer scholarships or financial aid, and school directors say most of the parents pay the full rate. Parents admit private school is a sacrifice, but many believe it is money well spent.

Byron Johnson, an engineer for a food store chain, and his wife, Mona, a credit union manager, were unhappy with the day-care program their 3-year-old was attending



The Academic Enrichment Center has 125 students in preschool to third grade.

PHOTOS BY KEVIN T. GILBERT/INSIGHT

"Two times a week our children speak in front of the classes to develop themselves. We let them think they're somebody."



KEVIN T GILBERT INSIGHT

Small classes and low student-teacher ratios are attractive to teacher-parents.

and decided to send him to Roots. They were attracted, Byron Johnson says, to "the curriculum, the teachers, the general philosophy here that children are never too young to learn."

Mona Johnson says she can now see differences between her son and his playmates. "He's more independent. He's more responsible. He can communicate what he wants," she says. "We're sorry we didn't have him here sooner. We'll probably keep him here until the eighth grade. I think we're getting a lot for our money."

"Public schools are great," says Larry Long, a District of Columbia schools physical education teacher. He and his wife, Carolyn, a business education teacher in the public school system of Montgomery County, Md., send their two youngest children to Roots. "But some parents can afford to give their children something they feel might be better."

The Longs aren't the only public school teachers sending their children to private schools. At Naylor Road School in the District of Columbia, which has 185 black children in preschool through sixth grade, about 40 percent of the parents are public school teachers in the district and Maryland, according to director Patricia Ward.

Teacher-parents appreciate the small student-teacher ratio at Naylor Road and other black private schools, Ward says. At Roots, parents of the youngest children pay top tuition — $310 a month — to hire one teacher for every eight students.

The major difference among the black private schools is the emphasis in their curriculum on a blend of academics and black culture. Pan-African schools, such as the Watoto school, weave African culture and references into all their lessons. At Watoto, the children must wear African dress. If they don't have an African name, they must choose one for use at school. All the youngsters learn Kiswahili, an East African language.

Instead of being divided into grades, children are placed according to ability in groups that bear African tribal names. Instead of pledging to the American flag, they recite a school pledge, in English and Kiswahili.

"We try to maintain high academic standards, but we also try to use frames of reference associated with black and African culture," says Watoto's assistant director, Kehembe. "We grew up seeing Dick, Jane and Spot and a white house with a white picket fence in the suburbs. Our references are more community-associated."

So in a Watoto English, or communications, class, a teacher introduces a lesson on complete statements by encouraging students to write and perform their own "rap" lyrics.

But at Randall Hyland Private School in the District of Columbia, which has about 85 black students in kindergarten through third grade, headmaster James Nutall "deals with the culture thread a little differently."

"I don't want a black child to spend all of his time looking at blackness — they need skills," Nutall says. Rather than accent blackness, Nutall chooses instead to add contributions by blacks to regular lessons.

At Roots, the emphasis is on academics, although students still get regular doses of African culture. At the PTA meeting, children recited math problems and vocabulary lessons, named parts of the anatomy and showed their stuff on the computer.

"We try to expose our children to numerous things — academic things as well as things around D.C.," Amerson says. "We also give children a cultural understanding and appreciation of Africa and things African."

"We take them everywhere and let them do everything because it's my feeling that one reason there's such a difference in black and white test scores is exposure," says Green-Campbell of the Academic Enrichment Center. "We took our kids to see 'Barnum' at the Kennedy Center, and I had to laugh because one woman came up and said how cute our children looked in their little T-shirts and then asked if we got free tickets.

"We paid the regular price," Green-Campbell adds. "Our parents know that if you want something better for your child, you have to be willing to make the sacrifice. They do it because they see the difference between their children and other children."

At the all-black Wade School in the District of Columbia, which has about 58 students in fourth through eighth grade, all the youngsters take Spanish, and parents pay for their children to travel abroad every summer.

While the emphasis at independent Wade and at Nannie Helen Burroughs, owned by the Progressive Baptist Convention, is mostly academic, the two schools represent black independent schools that have slight religious overtones. Both curricula include Bible study, and both maintain strict discipline, stress study habits and grade students harder than might be expected in public schools.

— Lucy Keyser



Nursery students from Academic Enrichment Center on Georgia Avenue in Northwest Washington share story with teacher-aide Dèlores Spencer.

Center Expands Childrens' Horizons

By Nancy Anita Williams
Special to The Washington Post

Eight-year-old Tamika Gore stretched out her hands, wiggled her fingers and launched into a sign-language version of the nursery rhyme "Hickory, Dickory Dock," whispering the words to herself.

"That's very good," said teacher Alida Hager-Matthews, "now, everybody."

Seventeen pairs of 7- and 8-year-old fingers filled the classroom in the basement of the Academic Enrichment Center with a visual forest of "Hickory, Dickory Dock."

The center, at 6119 Georgia Ave. NW, is a private day school directed by Lillette Green, who began it as an after-school center in 1977 in a storefront.

In seven years, it has grown into a facility for children who are in classes up to third grade. The curriculum ranges from the basics of reading and writing to Spanish, world events, black history and sign language.

"We are not a day care center," emphasized Green, sitting in her crowded office that once was a display window for new and used televisions.

"We are an educational-enrichment center," she said.

"Children are like sponges," she continued in the soft, calm tones of a seasoned teacher. "They can do so much more than adults give them credit for."

At the school, 2-year-olds are expected to master counting, the alphabet by rote and colors. Three- and 4-year-olds learn reasoning and problem solving.

As for the older children, kindergarteners learn American Sign Language, first-graders have dictionary study, second-graders learn proofreading and third-graders the geometry of solid figures, and everyone gets a weekly black-history lesson.

Along with the emphasis on education, the center's other key to success is in providing extra-curricular experiences.

"We do things that parents can't because they are very busy," said Green. "We take our kids to museums, concerts, parks, nature walks; the whole key is exposure."

"I think the reason black kids don't do as well as others on standardized tests is because they are not exposed to as much," continued Green.

"But our kids are, and it shows up on the tests they are given," she said. They scored very high and they all read two and three grades above level."



Photos by Vanessa Barnes Hillian—The Washington Post

Center preschooler Tai Rotan recites the alphabet in front of his class.

The school, nestled between the Golden Touch Beauty Salon and the Holy Mystery Mountain Church, is filled with the offspring of middle-class families in which the mother and father work as dentists, lawyers, mechanical engineers, teachers, police officers, electricians and carpenters.

These parents, most of whom live in the city, have been attracted by the school's accelerated curriculum, which nudges the kids towards achievement levels that their parents demand, and by the school's long hours, 7:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.

Green opened her center as an after-school facility with 30 children in a borrowed classroom; it expanded to become the Academic Enrichment Center in 1979, and is now housed in a former martial arts studio and radio-television store.

It is a year-round facility serving more than 100 youngsters aged 2 to 8.

"I had just finished graduate school and was ready to begin my teaching career," said Green, a single parent, who has a 12-year-old daughter. "But I thought, what am I going to do in the afternoons with my daughter, who had just started preschool."

Green's mother, Ruth Shirley, one of the center's nine teachers, added, "When we first saw this place, it looked so large, I thought, what are we going to do with all of this space? Now we barely have enough space."

Each grade has its own work area, divided from the others by a hodgepodge of desks, bookcases and storage cabinets, and each is colorfully decorated with crayon drawings, cutouts and black-history posters.

In the basement is a fully equipped kitchen used by the nutritionist to prepare breakfast, lunch and afternoon snacks for pupils and faculty.

"The 2, 3 and 4-year-olds are afforded the opportunity to take naps," laughed Green, "but they don't always."

According to Gregory Gillette, whose 5-year-old daughter, Erica, has attended the center for three years, one of the school's major attractions is its low pupil-teacher ratio.

"They have a less than 15-to-1 ratio [15 children to every teacher]; the children receive a lot of attention," said Gillette, a mechanical engineer. "Erica has a real positive attitude towards going to school every day."

The center is self-supporting. Tuition is $210 a month for the preschool and $240 a month for kindergarten through third grade.

The school's active parent support group raises money for extras, such as the school's playground that is filled with the latest equipment, erected by volunteer carpenters—the pupil's fathers.

The center has an after-school program for about 25 youngsters in the first through sixth grades, some of whom are picked up by the center's vans from nearby schools such as Brightwood, Takoma and Shepherd. Until they are picked up by their parents, the pupils work on their homework and have a supervised study and play period.

"I built this place from plywood and milk grates," reminisced Green as she wallked through the crowded learning area. "And I fix everything with duct tape. But our kids do so well when they have to enter other schools after our third grade. Love and attention is so important, and they get plenty of that here."

Choices Difficult For Many Parents

By Patrice Gaines-Carter
Washington Post Staff Writer

First of three articles

When Melvina Kelley started the education of her son Scott, she wanted above all a strong curriculum and an emphasis on discipline, so she sent him to a predominantly white day care center.

In talking to her son one day she happened to ask him what color he was, she recalled, her voice choking. "He said, 'white.' I found out that Scotty [who is light brown] . . . felt darker-skinned people weren't treated as well as whites or light-skinned [black] people at his school. I decided it was time to pull him out of that school."

As an increasing number of blacks scuffle their way into the middle class they can afford to choose an alternative to sending their children to public schools.

This is Black History Month, when many pause to recall black accomplishments. This choice faced by middle-class parents grows out

See HISTORY, Page 8, Col. 1

Choices

HISTORY, From Page 1

of a tradition of black emphasis on education and the civil rights movement. How black parents make these educational choices will write a new chapter in black history.

The Washington Post gathered a group of middle-class black parents with young children who are still wrestling with the selection of schools and a second group of parents who are now sending their children to private schools.

The five parents in the first group had children from 4 months to 9 years who were currently enrolled in private day care centers or private and parochial schools.

Like their white counterparts, they seek above all schools with solid academic reputations, good discipline and small classes.

But for blacks, particularly this middle-class generation whose ideals were formed in the civil rights days of the 1960s, their decision on a school is complicated by their desire to stay in the city and their desire to develop a black consciousness in their children.

"Teaching black children pride in themselves has to start early, because it can be cut down so quickly in the outside world," said Kelley, special assistant to the executive vice president at American Bus Association. Scott attends St. Augustine, a predominantly black Catholic school at 15th and V streets NW, where he is a fourth-grader.

Mary Futrell, president of the National Education Association, knows well that more and more middle-class parents are opting for nonpublic schools.

"As more and more parents become a part of the middle class they say, 'I'll put my child in another school, a private school,' " she said. "We're at a critical point in the schools, and if black parents don't feel their kids are getting a fair shake, they won't hesitate to go in the schools and take their kids out," she said, noting that public schools are trying to correct some problems such as the disproportionate number of black students being suspended and the disproportionate number of blacks enrolled in vocational programs instead of academic curriculums.

More than 90 percent of black children nationwide attend public schools, but there is a small but growing number of black children attending private schools. For example, in 1975 one of every 16 black students, or 6.4 percent, attended private schools. In 1983 the number stood at one out of 12 black students, or 8.6 percent, according to U.S. Census figures. During that same period, white enrollment in private schools remained at about 20 percent.

Locally, the number of black school-aged children in private schools has remained at 8,000 to 9,000 or about 10 percent for the last five years, according to public school officials. The percentage of black students in city Catholic schools has increased while the actual number of black students in these schools has remained at between 7,000 and 8,000, according to the Catholic Archdiocese.

Joanne Doddy Fort, a lawyer and private school graduate, has enrolled her 6-year-old son Bryce in the Academic Enrichment Center, a private school at 6119 Georgia Ave. NW. He started in day care there, and because the center has classes for the first through third grades, she decided to let him remain.

"My decision to put Bryce in private school was not a decision against public schools," she said. "I needed a program that has a preschool and afterschool program." But she added, "They have small classes, the hours I need, strong academics and a wonderful black history program."

After third grade, she and her husband may send their son to Takoma Park Elementary, their neighborhood school, said Fort, who attended public schools until ninth grade, when she helped integrate Sidwell Friends, a private school in upper Northwest.

"What makes me and my husband uncomfortable about predominantly white private schools, like Sidwell Friends, is that today they do not have the economic integration that they had when I was there," Fort said.

"One of the things those [private, white] schools do is they have a subtle way of saying, 'We are the best . . . . ' " she said. "A school that gives my son a false sense of security can be as damaging as one that gives him no sense of security at all. I benefited from public school . . . being in class with poor, rich and folks in-between, you got to judge people according to what they have in their heads."

The decision to send their daughter to a predominantly black private school has been a wrenching one for Malcolm and Carolyn Barnes. Malcolm Barnes is a former D.C. public school teacher, and Carolyn is a graduate of the city's public schools.

"She is in private school because I want her there," Carolyn Barnes said. "I am pro-private school. I thought she could get lost in a very large classroom in public school."

Kelley Ann, 6, attends Jewels of Ann, at 2011 Bunker Hill Rd. NE, where there is a ratio of 10 students per teacher. "Kelley is shy, and I wanted her to get individual help," her mother said.

"This is something my husband and I differ on," said Carolyn Barnes. She thinks the difference is rooted in her experience in District schools and his experiences in public schools in Pennsylvania.

Malcolm Barnes, executive director of the Adams-Morgan Community Development Corp., said he agreed to keep his daughter at the school because she attended the day care center. But he added, "I'm from Pennsylvania and a product of public schools. We are proud of our public schools. I think the lack of support of public schools by some of the better-educated black parents is part of the reason the schools are suffering."

Next week: Private schools and black society.

Summer Programs And Activities For Child Development

A recent government survey revealed that the amount of available space in Washington's child development, or day care centers is well below demand. The high concentration of single parent households, and the large percentage of women in the work force are the reasons for the shortage of space. The Capital Spotlight is attempting to aid those finding these services essential. Also, public and private schools will give the little-ones vacation time soon. In this article The Capital Spotlight discusses cultural schools, summer camp programs, and child development centers. We feel this will provide a short reference for our readership.

"Children are now entering child care facilities as early as the age of six weeks—these centers are assuming tasks which traditionally were family based," states Ms. Emma Jeanpierre, the very enthusiastic manager of JOYFUL STAR, a month old child development center located at 5123 Georgia Avenue, N.W. Ms. Jeanpierre revealed to me that "Now, early development skills such as walking, talking, and toileting are supervised by child development centers (CDC's). As the child advances in years," she continued, "we encourage positive behavior by teaching self love and self esteem. To us, quality care and education means promoting healthy eating and hygiene habits," Ms. Jeanpierre confides.

One of the more unique activities provided this summer will be a summer enrichment program to be conducted by the Academic Enrichment Center located at 6119 Georgia Ave., N.E. The program, as stated by Ms. Lillian Green, the Director, has the objective of "providing its participants with a wide variety of enrichment activities and exposures that promote—open minded, well rounded and well behaved personalities. Ms. Green further mentioned that children in Washington have an abundance of "educational experiences" located well within the beltway. The Summer Fun Camp while being a mobile excursion to these points of interest also includes specific learning experiences, swimming, arts and crafts, overnight camping (survival skills) and American sign languages. This program is one of many offered at this progressive center. There is a first thru fourth grade lower school which adds a grade each year as the original children advance. The Academic Enrichment Center, which opened in 1977 as an After-care Center, promotes a "stimulating environment" for children between school dismissal and their parents' arrival. The center provides limited transportation from area schools for children in grades one thru six. Remedial group and individual tutoring, along with arts, sports, research and independent study projects are offered. The center's brochure states: "It is our contention that the establishment of constructive after school habits in the early years will carry through the teen period."

In the Washington area other summer educational activities are sponsored by cultural schools where dance, drama, voice and musical skills are gained. One of the more successful schools is the Jones and Haywood School which houses the Capital Ballet. The school was founded forty years ago and is Washington's most active professional (Black) ballet company. Some of the more skillful Black choreographers and instructors, such as Robin Nash, Saundra Fortune and Lynne Williamson Rogers got their start here.

Lynne Rogers founded her own workshop in 1977, and has a total of thirteen years experience as a dance instructor. Lynne's Dance Workshop, located in Trinity Church (at Piney Branch and Dahlia St.) offers ballet, jazz and tap dance instruction to children aged three thru adult. Lynne's Dance Performing Company is an extension of the dance classes and has won local acclaim and received numerous engagement, one of which was during last week's Cherry Blossom Festival activities. Ms. Rogers explained that "making the dance experience both educational and enjoyable" while stressing "discipline", and "putting emphasis on basic technique" is the workshop's philosophy.

A dance center which dates back to 1939 making it the oldest Black School of Ballet in D.C. is the N.E. Dance Academy located on Benning Road, N.E. The school was founded by Bernice Hammond and originally located on You Street during the Black arts and entertainment boom. Ms. Hammond was a young Howard University coed in the School of Fine Arts when she opened the school. Ms. Hammond talked about the grandeur of old Washington and some interesting facts surfaced like the fact the Ms. Louise (Pierre Noel) Jones, a legendary artist in her own lifetime, was Ms. Hammond's professor. The National Symphony Orchestra accompanied her premier of "Ballet Africana Americana" in segregated Washington in 1949. The late Madame Dawson of the Negro Opera Company starred Ms. Hammon in numerous productions. Ms. Hammond obtained the Uline Arena in 1953 and transformed it into a recital hall and subsequently went on to produce many suc-

(See CHILDREN, page 14)

ARTICLES SPOTLIGHTING

AEC PREP / BRIDGES

FACULTY, STUDENTS AND FAMILY

Campbell's Academic Vision

By Henry Nelson

When it comes to educating young minds, Lillette Green-Campbell's formula has been tried, tested and proven effective. It's also very simple: Encourage children, expose them to their culture, give them an opportunity to do even the most challenging work, and then watch them succeed.

Green-Campbell, who says she has the same high expectations, explains: "Kids can do a lot more than adults give them credit for."

She should know. As director of the Academic Enrichment Center in northwest Washington, D.C., Green-Campbell can boast of a school that produces socially well-adjusted students who perform extremely well on standardized tests and usually go on to excel in public, private and parochial schools as well as other settings.

"Our track record speaks for itself," states the center's director, who founded AEC in 1977.

Green-Campbell's concern over the future of Black children was sparked when, as a graduate assistant at Howard, she came in contact with undergraduates who "were totally unprepared to do college-level work."

It was then that she decided to devote her time and energy to working with the very young. "It's important that we give children a good foundation. That's the chief reason I work with younger children, to help see to it that they get a good academic and social foundation," says Green-Campbell, who holds a Masters degree in education from Howard University.



AEC enrolls around 145 students in preschool through grade six. It center offers a multi-dimensional program geared to meet the educational, cultural and social needs of its predominantly African-American student population.

The center's classes are generally smaller than those in public schools, which is something that most parents find appealing.

It also offers an academic program that is far more demanding and intense than that of most public schools, Green-Campbell maintains. She cites as an example the fact that children at the center begin learning foreign languages at the age of four.

"To remain a school we have to maintain the minimum requirements of the public schools. We go beyond that," she asserts.

The Washington Post

DISTRICT
Weekly

THURSDAY, MAY 14, 1998

WARD 4
In Profile



BY HELENA PASQUARELLA FOR THE WASHINGTON POST



BY HELENA PASQUARELLA FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

"We are afraid of bullets," says Barbara A. Young, above, who has lived in the Petworth area since 1961, and won't let her grandson, Leon, 6, play in front of her house. At right, Gracie Baten, left, president of the Shepherd Park Association, talks with Paul and Trish McKenzie, who moved to the neighborhood four years ago. Under the control board, "things have gotten better," Paul McKenzie said.

Faces of Hope

Area Shows City's Promise, Problems

By D'VERA COHN
Washington Post Staff Writer

When Gregory Bridges looks out his front door, he sees the trash that passing drivers toss from their cars, the noisy neighbors police won't shut up, the fence around his yard that took four frustrating months to obtain a city permit to build.

"The service in this city is atrocious," says Bridges, 42, a lawyer who also is an advisory neighborhood commissioner. "You almost have to go in on bended knee to get someone to do their job."

On the same block in Petworth, however, Pat Kelly points out that neighbors are not waiting for the city to solve their problems; they have organized a trash cleanup day this weekend. Too often, she says, people expect the government to pick up after them or kick drug dealers off their blocks—tasks for which neighbors also bear responsibility.

"We can change it," says Kelly, 40, a consultant to nonprofit groups, "but government has nothing to do with that. The Congress can pass all kinds of laws, but it's the look we give kids when they litter that tells them that won't be tolerated."

Bridges and Kelly have lived in the neighborhood since 1994—they are married to each other, in fact. Their divergent attitudes—one hopeful, the

See WARD 4, *Page 5, Col. 1*



BY TOM ALLEN—THE WASHINGTON POST

"Insofar as the city government is concerned, I'm very disappointed," Lillian Cooper-Wiggins said. She complains of the drug dealers and trash-filled alleys in her Crestwood neighborhood. Barbara A. Young faces similar challenges on her block in Petworth, below.



In this election year for the District, this is the second in a series of profiles of each of the city's eight political wards.

Residents Seek More Stability In Neighborhoods

WARD 4, *From Page 1*

other not; one demanding more from city government, the other expecting more from her neighbors—echo the opinions found throughout the neighborhoods of Ward 4.

Their attitudes also underscore the central issue in Ward 4, whose 3,700 acres include a higher share of residential property than any other ward. Residents are passionately concerned about how to keep the stable, pleasant neighborhoods they love from falling prey to drugs and crime, or to the smaller, corrosive nuisances of discarded beer cans, dumped mattresses and missing street signs.

Ward 4 extends north to Montgomery County, east to Prince George's County, west to Rock Creek Park and south to Michigan Avenue. Its northern and western neighborhoods include the lushly landscaped mansions of the Gold Coast elite, the funky Victorians of Takoma Park, the brick colonials and bungalows of Brightwood, Crestwood and Shepherd Park, and the tree-lined campus of the Walter Reed Army Medical Center. These areas are home to many in the city's black middle class; at Shepherd Park Elementary School, only one child in six comes from a poor family.

The ward's south and east encompasses the tidy row houses, apartment buildings and homes of Petworth, Manor Park and Fort Totten, as well as a complex of institutions including the Washington Hospital Center, Soldiers and Airmen's Home and the VA Medical Center. In the seven elementary schools closest to the ward's southern boundary, 80 percent or more of the students come from low-income families.

The commercial spine of Ward 4 is upper Georgia Avenue, a mix of the bustling and the bleak, perennially destined for a comeback.

> "This is such a unique place. No wonder in so many ways it's so dysfunctional."
>
> — Gracie Baten, president, Shepherd Park Association

Ward 4 has an estimated 69,000 residents, including a larger share of longtime homeowners than the city overall and the largest number of registered voters in the city. The ward is 78 percent African American, more so than the city as a whole. But its racial and ethnic composition is changing, as more whites move in, as well as immigrants of all races.

Bridges is thinking of joining the thousands of other middle class black families who have snubbed the city for the suburbs. He is looking at houses in Maryland's Takoma Park.

"I want the same things my parents had," he says. "My parents didn't have to go through kids hanging on the corner and using profanity."

But Kelly is not so sure she wants to leave. There are days when she hates the neighborhood and its crust of problems, but she also believes city life entails a commitment to fight to make things better.

"I always have in the back of my head this dream neighborhood, where people wave at each other and tend their flowers," she says. "I know it can exist. It's a long process of changing the way people think."



Cecil "B.J." Lockhart didn't wait for the city; he installed a fluorescent light outside his insurance company on Georgia Avenue to make his clients feel safe.

WARD 4 *In Profile*

There are parts of Ward 4 that come close to Kelly's dream; neighborhoods where the community groups are well-organized at fending off fast-food restaurants, shelters for the homeless and other threats to their peace of mind. In the well-off northern part of Ward 4, where many of the city's political upper strata live, neighborhood gatherings tend to be potluck socials, not anxious conferences about crime and litter.

Douglas Sloan, an advisory neighborhood commissioner for an area near Shepherd Park Elementary, says of neighborhood nuisances, "I can usually put the screws to somebody and get it fixed."

But residents keep a wary eye on nearby Georgia Avenue, where the drug trade flares up and dies down in response to police crackdowns. And although Shepherd Park Elementary has a good reputation, many parents in the neighborhoods send their children to city schools west of Rock Creek Park or private school.

Among them are Paul and Trish McKenzie, who moved to Shepherd Park from Capitol Hill four years ago, to the disbelief of their suburbanite friends. They love their big house, the energetic community groups, Shepherd Park's strong commitment to maintaining an integrated neighborhood where whites like them feel welcome. But the McKenzies—he works for the Defense Department, she for the Peace Corps—are not willing to trust their 6- and 10-year-old children to the D.C. schools, yet.

Trish McKenzie, 41, says their judgment was validated when the schools opened three weeks late in the fall.

"It outraged us so much," she says, "that they would care so little about the students."

Still, Paul McKenzie, 44, adds: "I notice a difference in what the control board has done. Things have gotten better."

He sees police cars on patrol now when the family goes to church on Sundays. Their city income taxes were processed promptly this year.

Yet both are troubled that the city is being run by the control board and Congress. It's a feeling shared by many in their neighborhood.

"The whole issue turns on self-governance," says B. Ned Sloan, a lawyer, longtime activist for D.C. statehood and Douglas Sloan's father. "The control board—it's a slap in the face, notwithstanding the fact that it was needed."

"Poor city," says Gracie Baten, who succeeded Paul McKenzie as president of the Shepherd Park Association. "I was upset that Congress passed the voucher bill [providing money for city students to attend private schools, over local government objections]. Where does it end? I felt like a lab animal. Dissect, and try this and that, and see if I survive. That's ridiculous. This is such a unique place. No wonder in so many ways it's so dysfunctional."

Thirty blocks south, in Crestwood, Lillian Cooper-Wiggins can supply a long list of how that dysfunction degrades her neighborhood every day:

Drug dealers lounging on the streets. Pay phones, used by those same drug dealers, sprouting like weeds. Daytime drinkers outside a Metro facility on 14th Street, swarming out, bulk, one of which killed a neighborhood cat. Trash-filled alleys. Tree stumps that have been an eyesore for so long that neighbors planted flowers in them.

"Insofar as the city government is concerned, I'm very disappointed because for our taxpaying dollars, we don't seem to get anything," she says. "You tell us to hold on—you're going to be able to provide more services for people like us. In the meantime, we're out here almost fending for ourselves."

Cooper-Wiggins used to be in city government, as head of the Taxicab Commission. She says the control board has not improved her life—"We still have those outrageous salaries, and we still have outrageous contracts being let. It's the same problem we had before. It was looked at as cronyism, but I don't know what it's called now."

Cooper-Wiggins, a retired journalist, sometimes dreams of leaving the city. But she loves her neighborhood, in spite of its troubles.

Despite the alley problem, the street in front of her house is "as clean as it could be," she says. "It's almost like living in the country. The neighbors are nice, and we look after each other.... It's very convenient to Wheaton Plaza or downtown. The parks are here. We can do walks, those kinds of things. It's a mixed neighborhood. You got white, black, everybody, all kinds of churches, all denominations. It's a good area to stay in."

On a modest and well-kept block in Petworth, where she has lived since 1961, Barbara A. Young also intends to stay. But she is worried: She is 60, and there are no young people on her block trying to improve the world. Sometimes, she walks a block out of her way to avoid walking through a group of drug dealers.

The one government service she is happy about, for now, is the public school her 6-year-old grandson attends, a magnet school located in Truesdell Elementary School.

Still, "we don't even let him out the front," she says. "We are afraid of bullets or of cars racing down the street at 80 miles an hour."

Down the middle of Ward 4 runs a stretch of the city's longest commercial corridor, Georgia Avenue, perpetually balanced between decline and glory. (Once it was called Brightwood Avenue, but a senator from Georgia exercised the option of congressional interference and had it renamed in 1906.) President Clinton strolled part of the historic black business section after his 1992 election, leading some city residents to hope his visit was the beginning of a revival for Georgia Avenue.

Here's the good news from recent years: A renovated Safeway, a new Rite-Aid, a new Pep Boys and new senior citizen housing created from a former theater. But there also are boarded-up buildings, too many dingy-looking carryouts, too little parking and too much fear of crime.

"This is a really neat neighborhood," says D. Mark Cooper, executive director of Lutheran Social Services of the National-Capital Area, which has its headquarters on Georgia Avenue. "It's on the brink. It could go either way. But it's held on. It has not gone into slums."

There are a fistful of initiatives, big and small, whose sponsors hope will overcome failures of the past to spruce up Georgia Avenue. The People's Involvement Corp., a nonprofit group, is supervising a study of community needs and desires, expected to be completed in June. Cooper's group wants to buy the five row houses next to its headquarters and renovate them for its own use. Near the Maryland line, a group of District and Montgomery County business and civic people have formed a coalition to work for improvements there.

Lilette Green-Campbell, principal of the Bridges Academy, a private school on Georgia Avenue, recently declared her faith in the city by acquiring several modular trailers. She hopes they will house her preschool students, who now attend class at Emory United Methodist Church across the street.

But Green-Campbell, 49, will need city permission, and she is not looking forward to asking for it. Her past dealings with the city have included year-long waits for tuition reimbursement for subsidized students, inconsistent rulings by building inspectors, seemingly arbitrary rules on sanitation and tuberculosis testing.

"The right hand absolutely under no circumstances knows what the left hand is doing," she says.

As frustrated as she is with city government several miles away, she likes the world at her doorstep. The businesses on her block are stable. She knows the police nearby. Her students have three city libraries to choose in the neighborhood and a park to play in.

"Right now, I don't think much is going to happen here until the mayoral election," she says. "I think the city is being punished for reelecting Barry. Everything is being allowed to fall apart."

Cecil "B.J." Lockhart, 53, is waiting, too. He recently planted petunias in the curbside dirt outside the row house that houses his insurance company on Georgia Avenue. He installed a giant fluorescent light, so his clients feel safe arriving at dusk.

"Sometimes," he says, "we have to take situations ourselves and solve them."

Next week: Ward 7 in profile.



The Shepherd Park neighborhood, with its tree-lined streets and brick

Ward 4: A Statistical Profile

Encompassing the northernmost point in the city, the ward spreads south over more than 3,700 acres, with 87 percent of its land being devoted to residential use, the highest percentage of any ward in the city. In 1991, an estimated 53 percent of the ward's housing units were owner-occupied, also the highest rate in the city. The 1990 census found that 74 percent of the residents were high school graduates and 25 percent had four or more years of college.



Population

- Estimated 1997 population: **69,002**
- Population lost since 1990: **12%**

Population breakdown

Black **54,030** (78%)
White **8,256** (12%)
Hispanic **5,367** (8%)
Asian **1,006** (1%)
American Indian **154**

Supermarkets: 3

Median household income (1997)

Ward 4 **$38,800**
Citywide **$39,792**

Age

Under 18 **19%**
18 to 64 **64%**
65 or older **17%**

Political affiliation

Democrats **39,731**
Independents **5,232**
Republicans **1,834**

Children

- In the ward, 56 percent of the households with children in 1990 were married-couple households.
- Citywide, 47 percent of the households with children in 1990 were married-couple households.

Government employment

- In the ward, 36 percent of employed residents in 1990 held government jobs.
- Citywide, 32 percent of employed people had government jobs.

Private school attendance

- In the ward, 19 percent of children attended private school in 1990.
- Citywide, 16 percent of children attended private school in 1990.

College attendance

- In the ward, 48 percent of the adult residents had attended college.
- Citywide, 52 percent of adult residents had attended college.

Rental housing

- In the ward, 42 percent of the housing units were rental units in 1990.
- Citywide, 54 percent of the housing units were rental units in 1990.

1994 mayoral election

- Primary election voter turnout: Ward 4, 53%; Citywide, 49%
- General election voter turnout: Ward 4, 52%; Citywide, 51%

Primary vote by candidate, Ward 4:

- Marion Barry (D), 10,505
- John Ray (D), 6,415
- Sharon Pratt Kelly (D), 4,271

General election vote by candidate, Ward 4:

- Marion Barry (D), 17,479
- Carol Schwartz (R), 7,069

SOURCES: 1990 Census, Claritas, D.C. Office of Planning, D.C. Board of Elections

The Washington Post

DISTRICT WEEKLY

Getting Into the Swing of Carnival

Revelers Use Feathers, Paint to Make Marvelous Masks

By Vanessa Williams
Washington Post Staff Writer

Gladys Snowden was just supposed to be on hand to help out during a mask-making workshop last weekend at Anacostia Museum.

Snowden, a regular volunteer at the museum in Southeast Washington, had planned to do her usual duties, assisting those who took part in the workshop and cleaning up afterward. But Snowden couldn't help herself.

The dazzling palette, fluffy feathers and shiny beads called her, teased her, pulled her to a corner of the work table where she created her own mask. She painted a brilliant purple face, framed it with yellow and orange feathers and highlighted it with green stones.

"It's so exciting . . . so creative. . . . You can do so many things!" Snowden said, as she dabbed silver glitter along the eye sockets of her mask. "You can just explore your mind. You surprise yourself with what you can put together."

All month long, the museum has explored the history and traditions of carnival to generate interest for its first annual carnival masquerade ball to raise money for the museum.

The Feb. 28 ball will be the first of what officials hope will be a major annual fund-raiser for Anacostia Museum, which is part of the Smithsonian Institution and focuses on African American history and culture.

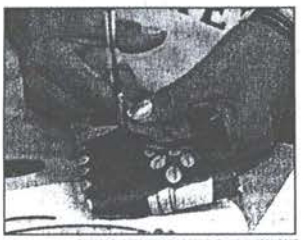
Throughout the Caribbean, the carnival season is in full swing, as is the Mardi Gras celebration in New Orleans. Participants blend African and some Christian religious traditions to celebrate the approach of Lent. (In Washington, Caribbean communities hold carnival celebrations in the summer, when the weather is warmer.)

"We wanted to provide an educational experience for our visitors to learn more about carnival, Mardi Gras and traditions found throughout the diaspora for these celebrations," said Louis Hicks, public programs coordinator for the Anacostia museum.

Carnival and Mardi Gras celebrations are marked by colorful costume parades and parties, so one needs an eye-catching mask.

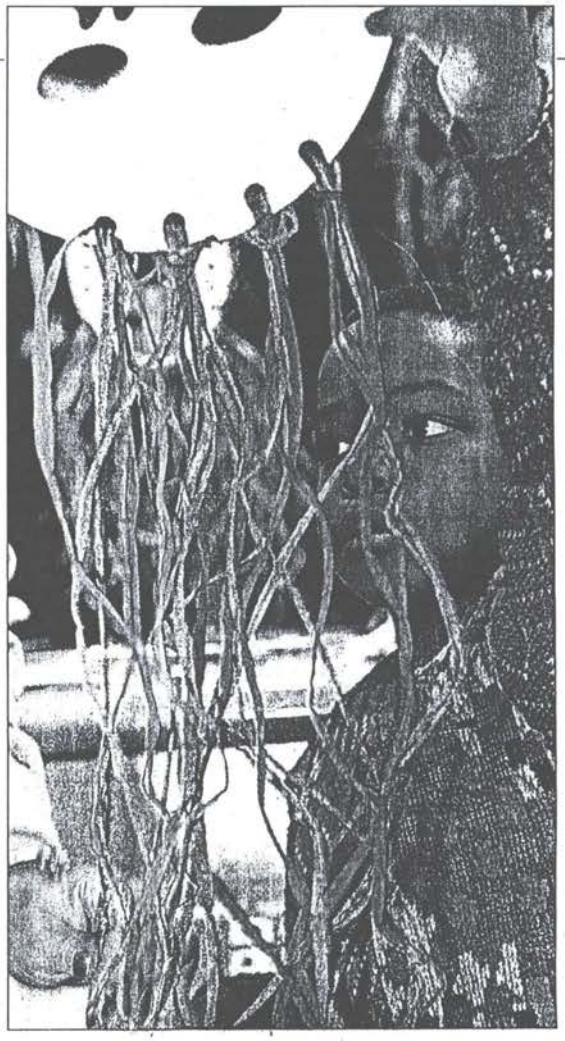
Kaye Henson, a guidance counselor in the D.C. public school system, seemed more excited about the canary-colored mask she was making than

See CARNIVAL, Page 3, Col. 4



PHOTOS BY DEBBI MORELLO FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

Gladys Snowden cuts a piece of material to adorn the carnival mask she is making.





Jared Gordon, 5, above, admires the mask that he just finished during a workshop at Anacostia Museum. Pearline Waldrop, at left, helps Mia Murrell, 8, try on a mask. The museum is exploring the traditions of carnival to generate interest for its first carnival masquerade ball on Feb. 28.

The Washington Post

METRO

FRIDAY, MAY 8, 1998

Playing Ball With History



"We don't turn away any kid who wants to play."

— Keith Jones, Homestead Grays coach





PHOTOS BY DUDLEY M. BROOKS—THE WASHINGTON POST

Coach Michael McManus, above, comforts and instructs Atlanta Black Crackers player Calvin Swinson, 11, after he made a mistake on a play. At left, members of the Homestead Grays in the dugout give a supportive welcome to a teammate who was thrown out on the basepath.

D.C. Little League Teaches the Game and Celebrates Black Heritage

By JOHN W. FOUNTAIN
Washington Post Staff Writer

The cool, lanky pitcher winds up. It's the bottom of the fourth. The Homestead Grays trail the Atlanta Black Crackers 1-0, and 12-year-old righty John Graves is still throwing heat from the sawdust-colored mound.

Thump! Dirt explodes as baseball meets mitt. Grays No. 26 swings his aluminum bat into the cloud.

"Steee-yike!" the umpire yells, stabbing his right arm in the wind.

The sounds of a new season echo across this Northwest Washington neighborhood. Parents and neighborhood boys with baseball dreams watch this season's first game of the Satchel Paige Little League.

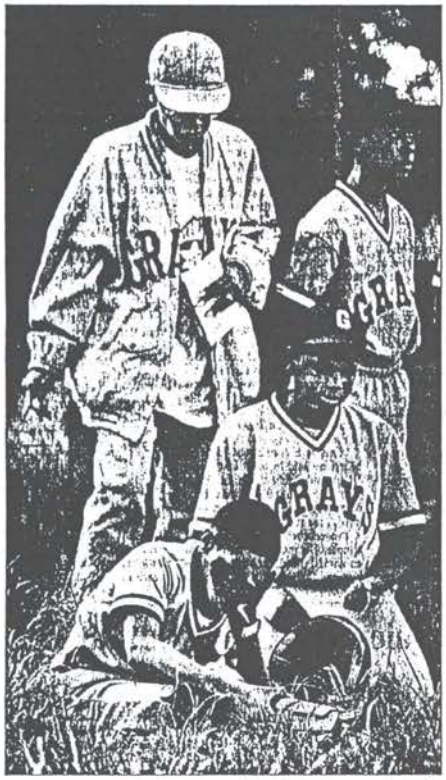
Grays and Black Crackers are perhaps unusual names for Little League teams, but not so unusual to baseball and black history. In fact, the league started in the District last year is taken from a page in African American history and is aimed at teaching boys not only the fundamentals of baseball but also about what was once the only professional baseball league in which blacks were allowed to play. Some coaches even assign homework about the Negro baseball greats.

Named after legendary pitcher Leroy "Satchel" Paige, the league is patterned after the historic Negro leagues and is the only one in the country licensed to bear the name of the hard-throwing, unhittable pitcher for the Kansas City Monarchs. Teams carry the original names, which are emblazoned across their uniforms. Coaches wear commemorative caps and jerseys. The league is predominantly black, like the original Negro leagues, but all races are allowed.

"We take all kids. It's just that we don the Negro league team names," said Keith Jones, the Grays coach and the league's vice president. "We don't turn away any kid who wants to play."

"Give me one, Jeremiah! Give me one!" a man's voice rings from the sidelines to the boy in the batter's box, while the boys in the dugout chew bubble gum. Coach Jones wipes batting signals across his broad chest, watching anxiously from the third-base line.

See SATCHEL, *B4, Col. 1*



Marcus Jones, 11, his hand over his face after striking out, gets a few encouraging words from a teammate and assistant coach Veronica Jones, who is also his mother.



PHOTOS BY DUDLEY M. BROOKS—THE WASHINGTON POST

Jorel Evans salutes and Newark Eagles tee-ball teammate Justin King joins in singing at opening ceremonies for Satchel Paige League.

"It's not just about playing baseball. It's not just about having fun."

— Keith Jones, Homestead Grays coach



Marcus Jones gives the umpire a questioning look after a called strike.

Black History Takes the Field With District Players

SATCHEL. *From B1*

"Whose house is it?" his wife and assistant, Veronica Jones, intones.

"Our house!" the boys respond.

"Whose house is it?"

"Our house!"

Thump, thump, thump, thump, thump!

"You're out!" the umpire yells as Graves retires the side, Satchel Paige-style.

The Grays take the field and the Black Crackers trot off.

Satchel Paige and players like Josh Gibson, James "Cool Papa" Bell and Mule Suttles were among the thousands of African Americans who played for the 75 teams in six Negro leagues in 30 cities and towns during the first half of the century, a time when the unwritten but clear rule in the majors was: no blacks allowed. Then came Jackie Robinson and the slow desegregation of baseball.

Satchel Paige League founders say they started the league not just for the sake of boys and baseball but also to help preserve the memory of Negro baseball and its players in the hearts of generations to come.

"We formed the league to pay honor to the professional Negro league teams," said Michael McManus, a coach and league spokesman. "We don't want them just to be out there playing. We teach the kids about the Negro league baseball."

Paige's family gave its blessing and legal consent to use the name. The famed pitcher's two sons, Robert and Warren Paige, attended this week's festive opening ceremony to start the league's second season at the Lamond/Riggs Recreation Center in Northeast Washington.

"It basically boils down to, if we had solicited applications from across the country, we couldn't have picked a better community," said Robert Paige, 45, of St. Louis. He said he hopes the Satchel Paige League, started in Washington, will spread to other cities.

There are four Little League baseball teams in the Satchel Paige League: the Homestead Grays, Kansas City Monarchs, Baltimore Black Sox and Atlanta Black Crackers. There also are tee-ball and girls softball teams.

The league has emerged at a time when analysts say baseball has lost much of its appeal to urban youngsters. If baseball is dying in the inner cities, coaches in the Satchel Paige League say their hope, at least in Washington, is to spawn a revival.



BY DUDLEY M. BROOKS—THE WASHINGTON POST



FILE PHOTO BY GEORGE BRACE—ASSOCIATED PRESS

The District league is named for Satchel Paige, above. At left, members of the Atlanta Black Crackers react to what turns out to be the winning run for their team.

"It's not just about playing baseball. It's not just about having fun," said Keith Jones, whose son Marcus, 11, plays catcher for the Grays. "My son is out here, and I'm out here working with him. All these other kids have somewhere to go, and it's organized. This is what it's all about."

Others agree.

"I got started last year as an assistant coach," said Ed Underwood, a tee-ball coach whose son Xavier, 8, plays for him. "By me living in this neighborhood, there really wasn't any team for him to participate on. Somebody has to step up to the plate and do it."

For these coaches and parents, that means running a league on a tight budget, sometimes running short on baseballs and coaching help, holding fund-raisers and sometimes having to shave their field of dreams with their own lawn mowers.

It's bottom of the last inning on opening day, two outs, and the Grays trail the Black Crackers 2-0.

"After the game, we line up [to shake hands]," Coach Keith Jones tells his players. "If I hear anything about anybody [doing] anything derogatory, like spitting on their hands, you're going to be going home in your underwear.

"You hear me?" Jones asks sternly.

"Yes, sir!" the boys yell in unison.

Lamar Troxler, 11, walks. Then Jones's son, Marcus, hits a double to right field. The last hope is Hamyon Johnson, 12. The Grays watch anxiously. With one strike, Hamyon swings at a high ball.

"What I just tell you, man?" Jones yells from third base. "We ain't chopping down trees!"

Hamyon stares at the next pitch. Thump!

"Steee-yike!"

The Black Crackers erupt. The boys and coaches shake hands. One of the Grays players is crying. A few hang their heads.

"You should be proud of yourselves. I'm proud of you," Jones says. "Sodas are on me."

The Grays huddle near the cooler of canned sodas for one last hooray.

"Whose house is it?" the coach yells.

"Our house!" the boys respond.

"On three. One, two, three . . . " Jones yells.

"Grays!"

As for the Black Crackers' lanky starting pitcher, John Graves, he struck out 14 before handing the ball to a reliever—three shy of the most recorded in a single game by the legendary, lanky Satchel Paige.

"Wow!" Graves said later, informed of his statistics. "That was great."

FOR MORE INFORMATION

To read more about Satchel Paige, click on the above symbol on the front page of The Post's Web site at www.washingtonpost.com

D.C. Statehood Becomes a Reality, at Least in Little League Baseball

By JOHN W. FOUNTAIN
Washington Post Staff Writer

Little League baseball players and coaches across the District are giving a thumbs up to a ruling by the league's international governing body that gives D.C. teams an unprecedented route to this year's World Series.

Thanks to a change in the playoff format that went into effect this year, the team that emerges this summer as the best in Washington automatically ago, that one of them will move directly from the city title game to the semifinal round of the annual international tournament in August.

In Bristol, the D.C. champion and teams from 11 states across the region, including Maryland, will play at a state-of-the-art facility before thousands of spectators.

The winner advances to the World Series, the famed youth baseball spectacle played annually in Williamsport, Pa.

"I'm very excited about the change," said Michael recognizes D.C. as its own entity and not as some sub-entity to the Maryland [baseball] district. It's something we've been trying to do for many years now."

Until this year, the District champion had to battle through the Maryland playoffs. That, D.C. coaches say, meant that the District winner, usually worn from battling teams in the city tournament, had to compete against the fresher Maryland teams, who were playing on their home turf.

In fact, in the last 12 years, only one team from Under the new guidelines, the top team in the city advances to Bristol under the District of Columbia's banner.

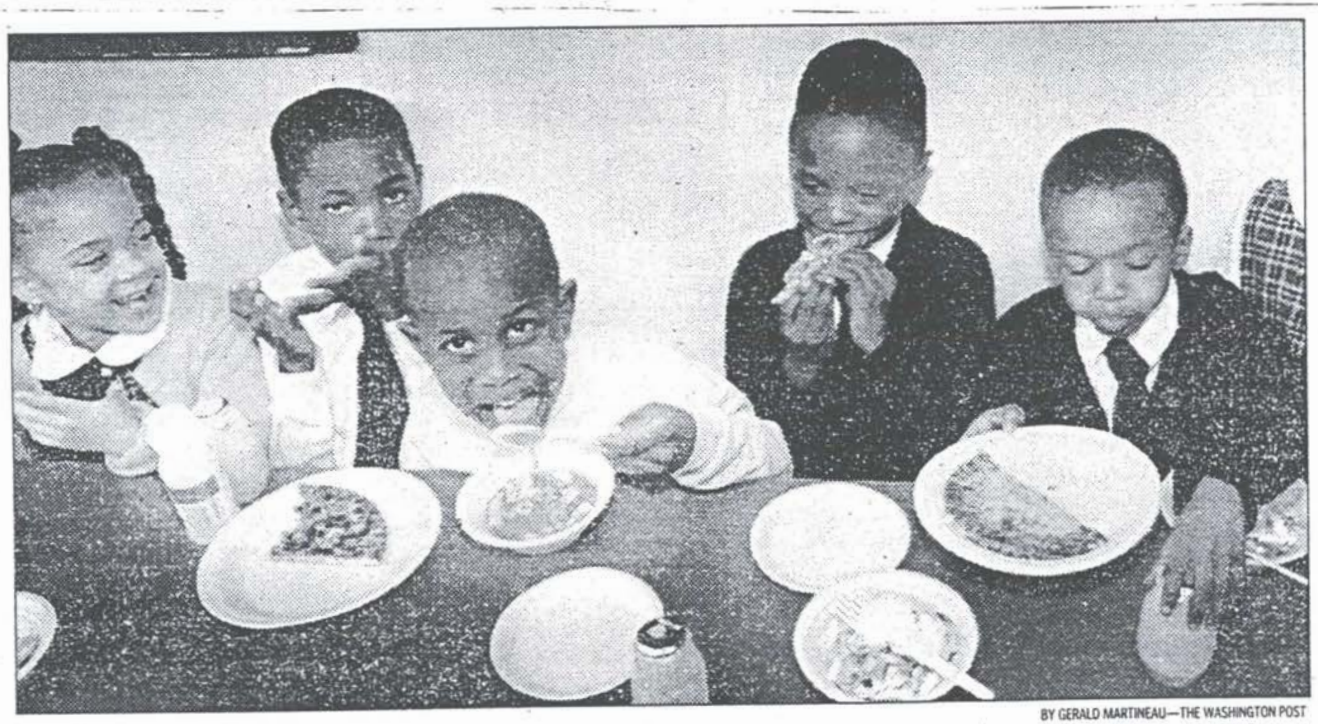
There are eight Little League baseball leagues in Washington for children 12 and younger. At the end of the season, each league assembles an all-star team that competes for the city title and, this year, for the trip to Bristol.

Washington's new status also means it will get its own clubhouse at the A. Bartlett Giamatti Little League Leadership Training Center in Bristol. The

The Washington Post

METRO

THURSDAY, MARCH 26, 1998



BY GERALD MARTINEAU—THE WASHINGTON POST

EATING WITH PURPOSE

First-graders at the Bridges Academy in Northwest Washington are helping eighth-graders with a fund-raising project. The older students have been selling lunches to pay for a class trip to Africa, but they may fall short of their goal. Story, Page D4.

Students Build Bridge One Pizza at a Time

Fund-Raising May Not Be Enough for Trip

By JOHN W. FOUNTAIN
Washington Post Staff Writer

In the basement-level kitchen at the Bridges Academy in Northwest Washington, busy eighth-graders don sneakers, green or white aprons and plastic gloves. They carefully layer the skimpy, personal-size frozen pizzas with extra mozzarella, then spice them up with Italian seasoning.

Two girls stand over a sink, rinsing shredded lettuce and carrots in a silver strainer. Another runs through the list of lunch orders. The school's principal and founder, Lillette Green-Campbell, gives the students-turned-entrepreneurs instructions.

"All right, you need 18 salads for the first lunch period," Green-Campbell shouts. "Don't try to put all the bowls out at once. Just count them as you go."

The students are at school, but at the same time at work—"hard" at work, according to Kareem Charles, 13, who helped serve food during a pizza sale at the school Friday. The sale was one of the fund-raisers Kareem and 13 classmates have held since sixth grade, in hopes of building a bridge to Africa.

Two years ago, the students decided they wanted to go to Africa for their eighth-grade graduation trip to "learn about our black ancestors and see where they came from," Kareem says. Soon after, they got busy trying to raise the $14,000—$1,000 for each of them—to help defray the $2,400 cost of the trip to West Africa. Their parents are picking up the rest of the bill.

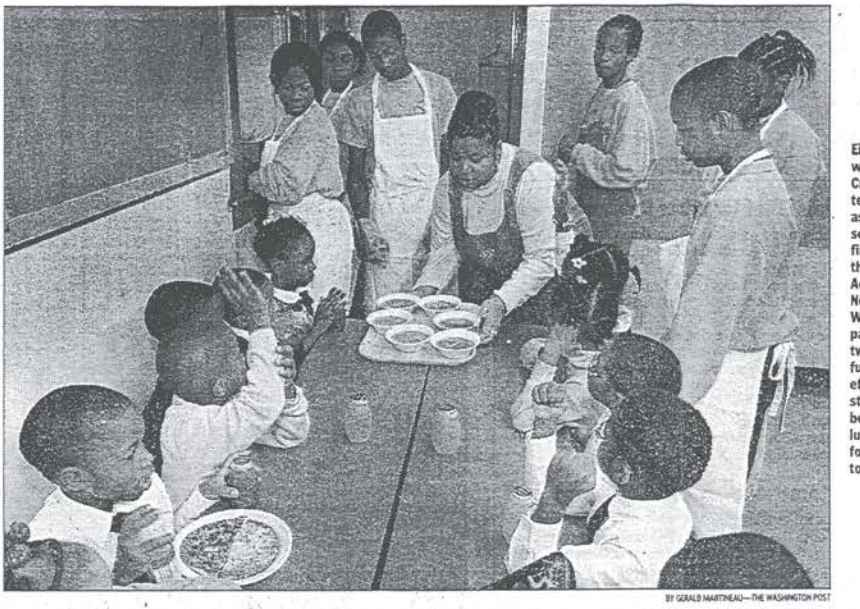
Over the last two years, through a variety of ventures, the students have raised $7,000. But with the trip less than two weeks away, time is running out. They fear that some of the students won't be able to go.

"We're in a holding pattern," Green-Campbell said. "Actually, the [due] date has passed, but they [tour organizers] know that we're still working, so they're giving us more time. I'm an incurable optimist. I feel like if 14 kids can raise $7,000 by themselves, the rest of it will come some way, somehow."

In the meantime, they continue working. Fifty cents here. A few dollars there. All of the nickels, dimes and pennies add up to a self-help subsidy and a trip to West Africa on April 4.

"I think it will be exciting," said Paula Campbell, 14, the principal's granddaughter. "There's a lot of stuff for me to learn."

But the students already have learned the value of hard work and persistence. Their fund-raisers have included: sales of handmade beaded rings for 25 cents; pizza and snack sales; a Super Bowl party at the school for which they charged adults $7.50 to watch the game on a big-screen television and eat snacks; a ski trip; sales of dinners at PTA meetings; and skating parties.



BY GERALD MARTINEAU—THE WASHINGTON POST

Eighth-graders watch Rokeya Crawford, a teaching assistant, serve soup to first-graders at the Bridges Academy in Northwest Washington. As part of a two-year fund-raising effort, the older students have been selling lunches to pay for a class trip to Africa.

The principal is especially proud of the class for its dedication.

"I think that's a very ambitious undertaking for children that young," Green-Campbell said. "They never took their eyes off the prize."

The Bridges Academy, at 6119 Georgia Ave. NW, known as the Academic Enrichment Center when Green-Campbell started it in 1977, is a mostly black private school for preschool to eighth-grade, with 150 students. Part of its emphasis is to expose children to the world beyond the invisible walls of the city.

"I think children learn by doing," Green-Campbell said. "We believe in taking them anywhere we can, in exposing them and having life be lessons and having what they've done in textbooks become real."

The eighth-graders' two-week "educational tour" to West Africa has been dubbed "Building Bridges." The students are to travel first to Dakar, Senegal, and tour Goree Island—a major embarkation point for slaves—and visit a slave house. On day four, they are scheduled to leave for Banjul, Gambia. Their tour includes visits to museums, schools, the homes of some African families and Alex Haley's Village, where the author's ancestors lived.

"I'm really excited, because I know this will be a once-in-a-lifetime experience," said Leslie Duff, 13. "Many people don't get the chance to go to Africa."

In preparation, Leslie and her classmates have been studying West Africa and looking at pictures of African people and places they expect to see. The students already have had their inoculations for yellow fever and hepatitis A and say they're looking forward to their trip to the Motherland.

"I think we're going to be able to raise enough," Kareem said, wearing an apron and getting ready to pass out salad and pizza. He grinned.

"It would be good," he said, "if we could have some help."

Private schools have space if vouchers pass

GOP plan could fill 2,000 seats in area

By Susan Ferrechio
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

At Bridges Academy, a private school on Georgia Avenue NW, students perform two years ahead of other children their age in reading and math.

Classes are small, with no more than 15 students per teacher, enrollment is open to anyone, and there's room to admit as many as 50 more children into the school.

Under a voucher plan being considered in Congress, those new students could transfer from the troubled D.C. public school system, where test scores and student performance are among the worst in the nation.

Education experts estimate that more than 4,000 seats are available in private school classrooms in the District and the Maryland and Virginia suburbs.

If Congress passes the D.C. Educational Opportunities Scholar-

see SCHOOLS, *page A18*

• *D.C. academics chief pushes students to make the grade. C3*



Photo by J.M. Eddins/The Washington Times

Hard at work: Amber Smith, a sixth-grade pupil at the private Naylor Road School in Southeast, tackles a math problem in class recently.

SCHOOLS

From page A1

ship Act, those seats could be filled with up to 2,000 public school students from the city's poorest families.

The voucher provision, included in the House version of the District's fiscal 1998 budget, was approved by that chamber two weeks ago. A House-Senate conference will have to reconcile the differences between the two bills: The Senate version does not include the voucher plan.

Under the proposal, parents whose incomes are at or near the poverty level would be eligible for $3,200 scholarships — or vouchers — to help pay for tuition, books and other costs of a private education for their children.

Yearly tuition is $4,100 at Bridges Academy, which serves 150 children from pre-kindergarten through eighth grade.

Principal Lillette Green-Campbell said she has received many calls from parents who would be eligible for the scholarships and want to send their children to Bridges, even though they would have to come up with $900 on their own to cover tuition in addition to the cost of books, uniforms and transportation.

"Parents who want an alternative for their children will find a way to make up the difference," she said. "You'd be surprised what an effort people will make when it comes to their children's education."

But in his regular Saturday radio address, President Clinton again signaled his intent to veto any voucher program enacted by Congress.

"Too many of our public schools are underfunded already and, besides, there are better ways to improve the public schools in a way that doesn't siphon off precious tax dollars to help a few students at the expense of the other 90 percent," Mr. Clinton said.

D.C. Delegate Eleanor Holmes Norton, the city's nonvoting representative in Congress, said during a public forum Monday night that vouchers have been rejected by voters in 26 states that considered the idea.

"This is legislative arrogance in the extreme," Mrs. Norton said of Republican proponents. "They have chosen this as the battlefield, and we've got to act like soldiers. So far, we are winning."

In the Washington area, 188 private schools charge less than $4,000 per year in tuition, according to figures compiled by the office of House Majority Leader Dick Armey, Texas Republican and sponsor of the voucher plan for the District.

Of those schools, 60 charge less than $3,200 a year and 48 charge less than $2,500, according to Mr. Armey's numbers.

Many schools that fall in the lower price range are affiliated with the Catholic Church and other denominations.

The majority of religious schools are Catholic. The rest include Presbyterian, Episcopal, Jewish and Quaker schools such as the elite Sidwell Friends, from which first daughter Chelsea Clinton graduated in June.

About 90 Catholic schools in the area serve students up to the eighth grade; there are more than 20 Catholic high schools.

Tuition ranges from $1,570 at St. Margaret's Elementary School in Seat Pleasant to $13,102 at Georgetown Preparatory School, a high school in North Bethesda.

The average tuition cost at a Catholic elementary school is $2,100, while high school tuition typically ranges from $5,000 to $7,000, said Vincent P. Clark, spokesman for the Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Washington, which includes the District and most of Maryland.

"We could accommodate 2,318 more students," Mr. Clark said. "In some cases, it would require some reconfiguration of space and hiring more teachers, but it could be done."

Fewer spaces are available in Northern Virginia, said Timothy McNiff, superintendent of Catholic schools for the Arlington Diocese.

"The waiting lists, particularly at elementary schools, are very long," Mr. McNiff said. "It's hit or miss."

Many high schools require applicants to pass entrance exams.

At St. Anselm's Abbey School for boys, for instance, an applicant must score at least in the 90th percentile to gain admission.

Tuition at the school, located on South Dakota Avenue in Northeast, is $10,000, with a few full scholarships available for needy students.

The entrance requirement is less rigid at Archbishop Carroll High. Students admitted as underachievers are given two semesters to catch up, including an intensive summer remediation program.

Tuition at the predominantly black school, on Harewood Road in Northeast near the Soldiers and Airmen's Home, is $4,400. Spokesman John Butler said there is room for 20 more students.

"We want to treat each student on the merits of their own case and situation," Mr. Butler said. "Instead of having expectations about what they don't have, we give them the opportunity to demonstrate what they do have."

Every senior graduates, Mr. Butler said, and 97 percent of those students enroll in college.

The Naylor School on Naylor Road SE wants to expand enrollment by about 30 students next year, Principal Stella Pla said.

The school, which is not church-affiliated, serves students in pre-kindergarten through seventh grade and charges about $4,500 a year in tuition.

Mrs. Pla said she has started fund-raising to help parents who would receive vouchers make up the $1,300 difference.

She said the school focuses on helping students catch up when they are behind academically, particularly children coming from the city's public school system.

"We generally work with what parents bring us, and we bring them up to speed," Mrs. Pla said. "That's something we pride ourselves on."

• *Gerald Mizejewski contributed to this report.*

Bridges Academy mom Shirley Suber Tyus continues to make Black History.



Photo by Maya Alleruzzo/The Washington Times

United Airlines pilot Shirley Tyus, inspired as a child by Bessie Coleman, first black aviatrix, licensed in 1921, talks with astronaut Col. Frederick Gregory at a luncheon honoring black women in science.

Mentor flies Coleman's path

Black female pilot urges girls to rise

Metropolitan LIFELINES

By Adrienne L. Washington

Shirley Tyus, the first black female pilot hired by United Airlines, tries to interest young girls in aviation.

From the cotton field to the airfield, Mrs. Tyus, 45, followed Bessie Coleman's flight path to becoming a "first." Now Mrs. Tyus encourages young women to take to the sky through a foundation established in Coleman's honor.

"God gave me radar vectors to get from the cotton fields of Carolina to the cockpit of a 727," says Mrs. Tyus, vice president of the Bessie Coleman Foundation.

In 1921, Elizabeth "Bessie" Coleman became the first black aviatrix to receive a pilot's license from the International Aeronautical Federaton. She was killed during an exhibition practice in April 1926 when the plane flipped and threw her from the cockpit.

Representing the Coleman Foundation, Mrs. Tyus served as the keynote speaker for a Black History Month program at the Washington Navy Yard on Friday. About 300 Junior ROTC students from the District, Fairfax County and Prince George's County attended.

After telling the students about Coleman, Mrs. Tyus explained to them the significance of the aviatrix's accomplishments during segregation.

"Shirley did a good job of explaining what a big deal it was for a black woman during that era to decide she wanted to become a pilot from reading a book," says Air Force Capt. Beverly Armstrong, president of the Coleman foundation.

Capt. Armstrong says she's come to understand how "this role-model thing is really important." She first learned of Coleman when her parents bought a set of black-history flash cards during a Black History Week in the 1970s.

The foundation, headquartered in the District, is a nonprofit organization of black women in the aviation industry who aim to educate the country about the pioneering pilot and encourage young people to seek careers in the field.

Along with its outreach programs, the group has a speakers bureau and hosts a fundraiser to finance scholarships.

Of the 70,000 active commercial pilots in the country, Mrs. Tyus says about 14 are black women.

"We decided we had to do something about the dearth of black female pilots," says Mrs. Tyus. "Even when I tell people I'm a pilot, they still hear flight attendant." In fact, Mrs. Tyus, a former model, became intrigued with aviation when she became one of the first black women hired as a flight attendant for United Airlines in 1972.

The Spartansburg, S.C., native says she spent a lot of time in the cockpit and eventually enrolled in Embery-Riddle Aeronautical University after reading a Federal Aviation Administration article about the first female commercial pilot. When she received her license in 1987, Mrs. Tyus flew air cargo before receiving her final jetliner training from United.

She was pregnant with her youngest child and notes that her daughter Ava, 8, has already decided she wants to be a pilot. Her daughter Otemea, 13, exhibits a talent for the sciences, judging from the numerous science projects scattered throughout the Tyuses' home in the Michigan Park neighborhood of Northeast Washington. Her husband, Kofi, is an artist. The couple have three elder children.

"I believe there's a little bit of Bessie in all of us — we just have to channel it in the right direction," says Mrs. Tyus.

A U.S. postage stamp now commemorates the life of Coleman. One of 13 children born and raised in Atlanta, Texas, Coleman picked cotton as a child and read to her family from books her mother managed to obtain from a traveling library wagon twice a year. From the wages she earned as a laundress, she was able to attend one semester at Langston University in Oklahoma — named after poet Langston Hughes' great-uncle.

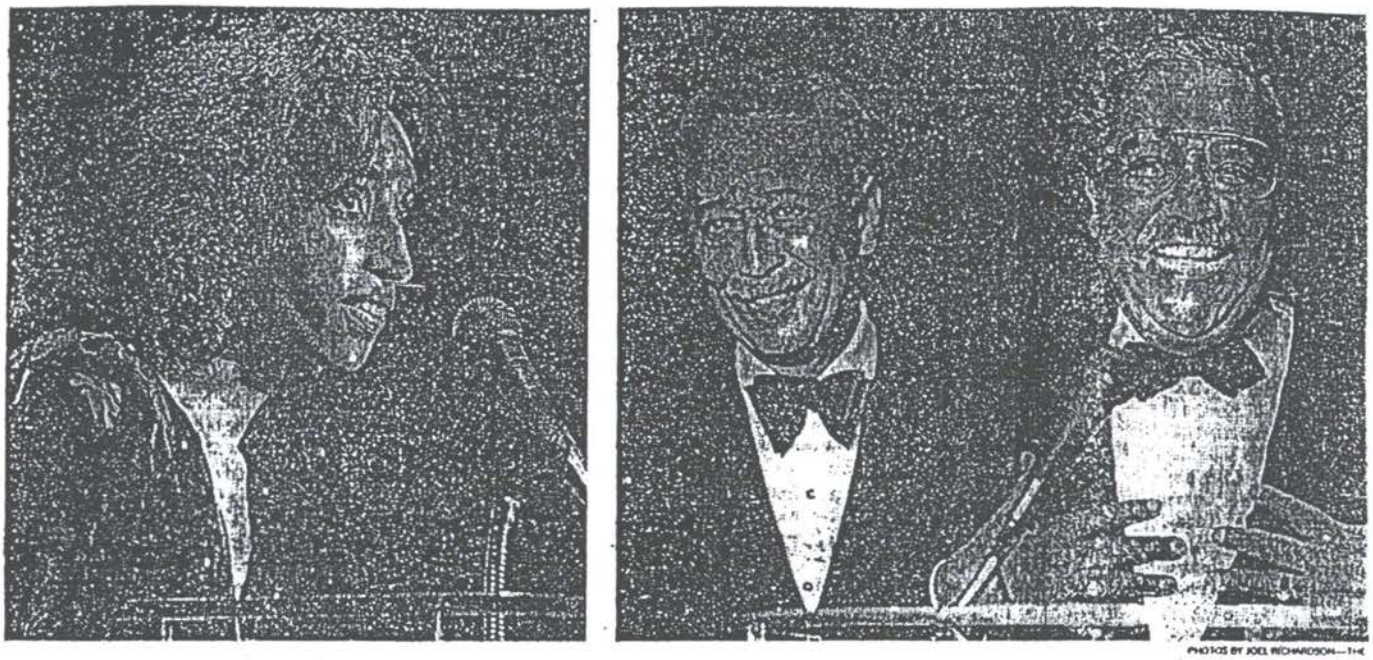
Her funds depleted, she moved to Chicago to work as a manicurist. She developed an interest in World War I pilot stories but couldn't find anyone in the country willing to train her because of her sex and race. Robert S. Abbott, the founder and editor of the Chicago Defender, who became her mentor and sponsor, suggested she learn French. He also helped send her to Paris to study aviation.

Coleman's ambition to open a flight school for young blacks led her to speaking engagements and stunt flying to raise money.

In 1921, Coleman said: "I knew we had no aviators, neither men nor women, and knew the race needed to be represented along this important line, so I thought it my duty to risk my life to learn aviation and to encourage flying among men and women of our race who are so far behind the white race in this modern study."

Mrs. Tyus says the Coleman foundation's members hope to establish a permanent exhibit at the College Park Air Park later this year. For information, call 202/529-5682. To discover more about Bessie Coleman, read "Queen Bess: Daredevil Aviator," by Doris L. Rich, also available through the foundation.

Sept 1984



PHOTOS BY JOEL RICHARDSON—THE

Alison Leland, David Dinkins (left) and Rep. Charles Rangel at the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation dinner. Story on Page B9.

Bright Hopes For the Future

The Students at the Congressional Black Caucus Weekend

By Donna Britt
Washington Post Staff Writer

Donald Parnell was confident, quick, resplendent in gray pinstripes. He was also worried.

"At our all-black college, there's a trial going on, testing whether our institution should stand," said Parnell, a 19-year-old sophomore at Alabama A&M, who sat in an all-but-deserted conference room last week with two other young men and a woman.

The four were among the 250 teens and young adults attending the Congressional Black Caucus's Youth Summit at the Washington Hilton, held in conjunction with the Caucus's 19th annual Legislative Weekend, which ended Saturday night. Parnell said the federal government, charging that the predominantly black institution violates anti-segregation laws, seeks to merge Alabama A&M with the University of Alabama in Huntsville.

He paused. "The same thing happened at Tennessee State—now it's 61 percent white. . . . They're trying to take away an institution that gives everybody a chance, even people who make only 12 or 9 on the ACT [American College Test-

See CAUCUS, B9, Col 1



BY SHARON FARMER FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

Dominic Smith, left, and Darrell Shields, from the Academic Enrichment Center.



Seated, Janette Harris, left, Julianne Malveaux, Donald Parnell; stand Woodley, left, Damon Freeman, Frederick Toca.

Black Youth

CAUCUS, From B1

ing Program] exams. White colleges wouldn't let them in the door. . . . We're *at risk* there."

Not only there.

"What about the black male shortage?" adds Frederick Toca, 20, of Xavier University in New Orleans. "At Xavier the ratio of women students to men is 14 to 1. . . . Someone showed me a statistic that said there were more black males in Angola [State Prison, in Louisiana] than are in all the universities across the nation."

Black men are "like dinosaurs or bald eagles, a disappearing species," he continued. "And we're doing it to ourselves."

That's serious talk for young people who are part of an event whose near-legendary status in the black community is based almost as much on its being a glittering social occasion as a catalyst for serious social change.

Each year, critics who say the Legislative Weekend is more about style than substance feel they have evidence to support their claims. So do supporters who point out that the conference addresses issues vital to the black community, such as Rep. Louis Stokes's (D-Ohio) $400 million Minority Health Care Act, which gained considerable momentum at last year's conference.

Certainly, the weekend offers black lawmakers an immense opportunity to deal with compelling problems. This year, more than 20,000 elected officials, corporate executives, educators, professionals, community activists and government appointees attended. The theme: "A Global Crisis: Our Children at Risk."

Among the topics for serious discussion: Rep. Major R. Owens's (D-N.Y.) seminar on "Black Male Survival: Roadblocks and Obstacles on the Way Up"; Rep. John Conyers's (D-Mich.) on "The Resurgence of Racism and the Far Right" and "The Supreme Court's Assault on Civil Rights" (with Rep. Donald Payne, D-N.J.). Among the opportunities for serious fun: a panoply of parties, receptions and Friday night's high-gloss fashion bash, "Heroes."

But at the conference, as in real life, the focus always returned to the young folks. Most were college students and student government leaders whose trips were sponsored by the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation, African Concord, a London-based magazine, and Kodak Corp.

They came to the summit to produce a "Youth Manifesto for the '90s," in which they held themselves accountable for "the welfare and prosperity of America in general and the African-American community in particular."

"They came to hear about the substantive issues that are talked about here," said Kevin Parker of the CBC Foundation. "They came to discuss what's important to their lives."

Not that many of them needed the boost. Despite their "Philly Fade" haircuts, Chanel-look necklaces and red power ties, members of the Youth Forum posse didn't look half as good as they *sounded*—if you were at all weary of hearing that today's young folks have nothing on their minds.

Chats overheard between sessions were as likely to concern the importance of American blacks recognizing a link to their embattled South African brothers and sisters and the growing on-campus drug problem as whether Magic Johnson would really show up for the "Black Student Athlete" seminar (he didn't). When one speaker alluded to racism in the media, a baby-faced girl whispered to a pal, "I heard a 'joke' on a morning talk show on a radio station back home about [jailed soul singer] James Brown—these two white guys talked about him eating collard greens and hambone. I didn't think it was funny."

Donald Parnell, Frederick Toca and several others had just finished a scallops-and-pasta lunch when a reporter asked if they'd move their lively discussion to a nearby conference room.

Ideas flowed. One student suggested that American blacks—many of whom lack health care benefits—should arrange for prescription drugs to be manufactured in labor-cheap Nigeria for import to inner-city distributors, "providing black jobs on both continents." Another expressed misgivings about the Supreme Court's whittling away at the civil rights gains of the past two decades.

Janette Harris, of the University of Southwestern Louisiana, was distressed that in her hometown of Washington, La., the predominately black local high school that once graduated 60 kids a year now averages 23. And this year's valedictorian, she said, shaking her head in wonderment, isn't even going to college.

"Our community is becoming a two-class society, rich and poor," said Toca, "and some wealthier black kids don't care. I don't care how many times you see 'Eyes on the Prize,' the sixties aren't real for them, they don't understand how things were."

"But look at Virginia Beach," argued Arto Woodley, a 24-year-old graduate student at Bowling Green State University in Ohio. "Most of those kids were middle-class."

Progress, Parnell ruminated, is relative. "That's what worries me about David Dinkins winning the New York Democratic mayoral primary. What's going to happen is he'll be the person to blame when he can't fix what white people already messed up."

Hovering on the sidelines was Morgan State student government president Damon Freeman, who'd wandered into the room to listen from the sidelines. Now he couldn't resist jumping in.

We have a right to go to any beach. But we do not have a right to be anywhere destroying other people's property in the name of blackness"), it seemed Rev. Jesse was preaching to the converted.

Because unlike many of their brothers and sisters, these young people are pursuing educations that will provide them with "the ability to have vicarious experiences," as Rep. Julian Dixon (D-Calif.) put it. "The more limited an education you have, the less you can experience life. I have learned that if I put my finger in a socket, I will get shocked. Someone who doesn't grasp that will have to act it out."

Few Summit participants, he suspected, would stick their fingers in anybody's socket, or trip into the trap of drugs and ignorance that threatens so many others.

"That's a problem with conferences like this," he continued. "Are these young people able to reach those in the community who most need the message?"

"It depends on who you owe," said Freeman. "In Baltimore, Kurt Schmoke largely owed his election to Jewish businessmen —and he can't even criticize his own police department. But in P.G., Alex Williams, a state attorney elected with the help of black businessmen and politicians, can criticize the P.G. police, who for 30 years have had a national reputation for brutality against blacks."

Some would call Freeman, Harris and the others the best and the brightest—the clearest hope for a community teeming with unrealized potential. But as appropriate as it was for them to be here, as heartfelt as their "Preach, brother" s were when speaker Jesse Jackson exhorted them ("We are the descendents of a royal people who were enslaved and survived . . .

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Julian Dixon and other African-American leaders acknowledge that *all* African-American children are at risk. Being middle-class doesn't necessarily offer protection, as University of California/Berkeley economist Julianne Malveaux will attest.

"I have a young relative who's 6, he's very inquisitive, very bright, he asks questions all of the time," said Malveaux, a contributing editor at Essence magazine, who spoke Thursday.

"His mother was told he had a learning disability because he wouldn't settle down in class. I came to the school and said, 'Test him,' and they backed down . . . A white child who asks questions is perceived as creative, bright. A black child is disruptive."

Nicole Harry, 15, of Columbia, Md., a 10th grader who came to the conference with Maryland's Black Student Achievement Program, is the daughter of a physician and a real estate agent. Her faith in God and her own sense of self seem unshakable. But she's concerned about her younger brother, Elliot, 13.

"Sometimes I wonder about the music he listens to," she said. "Some of it is too sexual; some doesn't fit into my idea of God. You become the things you associate with constantly."

Said Rep. Kweisi Mfume, (D-Md.), the father of five sons, ages 18 through 22: "When you raise five boys in the black community, dealing with what they must deal with, when you consider that a black man in the U.S. is more likely to die a violent death than a soldier in Vietnam, that represents an immense risk to them. Every day of their lives, from the time they were in the cradle to now, I have prayed—thankful that they weren't on drugs, thankful they have not been injured. Prayed that they all will one day make a positive contribution."

Best friends Darrell Shields and Dominic Smith, both 9, were brought to the Summit by Logan Johnson, their teacher at the Academic Enrichment Center in the District. The boys seemed almost glowing in their innocence—until they spoke.

"The neighborhood bully pulled a pocketful of [crack] out and said, 'Come here, kid,' and showed it to me," said Darrell. "I said, 'No!' and walked away."

"Drugs destroy your brain system; your lungs have to be clean to work right," added Dominic. "I'll never do drugs. I'm healthy and smart and I don't do bad things. Most of all I want to live to be old. At least to get out of college."

Despite the enormity of the task at hand, Summit participants seemed so buoyant with hope that Rep. Ronald Dellum's emotional welcome—"It makes my heart soar like an eagle to see you"—was fitting, not florid. As various speakers addressed the group Thursday and Saturday, the meeting often took on an evangelical flavor. Rep. Cleo Fields of Louisiana, at 24 the youngest state senator, actually earned a standing ovation from the crowd for urging them to pray several times a day.

"After that second prayer," urged Fields in his ringing baritone, "look in the mirror and say, 'I am the most magnificent human being on the face of the earth. *Nothing* can keep me from doing what I want to do.' "

Whipping the group into a near-frenzy Thursday was Federal Communications Commission senior managing attorney Patricia Russell McCloud. Kids shouted their approval as McCloud, wearing a purple suit that paled next to her passion, called out, *"BRRUUNNNNNG!* Young people, this is your wake-up call! . . . Nat Turner rose so that Rosa Parks could sit. Rosa Parks sat so Martin Luther King could march. Martin Luther King marched so that Jesse Louis Jackson could run. And Jesse Jackson ran so that you can *fly.*"

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At Saturday's closing convocation, Martin Luther King III, son of the slain civil rights activist, stirred participants when he suggested that "the main problem African-Americans face is loving ourselves . . . accepting ourselves." King and several "children of the movement," including Susan Robeson, daughter of the late actor/activist Paul Robeson, Atallah Shabazz, daughter of Malcolm X, and Jesse Jackson Jr., addressed the challenges and responsibilities of their heritage in a discussion that was taped for a television special slated for February.

"There's a sense of 'we've made it' among too many African-American teens," suggested Mpho Tutu, daughter of Anglican bishop and anti-apartheid activist Desmond Tutu. "You haven't. Not yet. Not to take away from your achievement; not to say you haven't come a long, long, long way." She paused.

"But the fact is, you have a long, long, long way to go."

Still, listening to some of the young people, the goal seemed a bit less distant.

"[The Summit] has given me hope," said Toca on Saturday. "As a young black man, I want to see things change. If all of us here put our ideas in action, we can make a change . . . But at Xavier and in the world we've got a body of people glad to be part of the middle class."

Toca, who fairly radiated his middle-class success, stopped and considered this.

"I'm going to make it; I *know* that," he said. "But we haven't gone further because too many people who make it forget . . . that somewhere down the line, somebody's mother was on her knees, scrubbing in order to get a higher education for her child. We all come from that background.

"And if you're black, you owe it to not just to your people, but to yourself, to give something back."

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METRO

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War Stories From Angola

Maimed Children Tell of Land Mine Horrors

By Patrice Gaines-Carter
Washington Post Staff Writer

Five Angolan children whose lives are steeped in the grief and horror of war met yesterday with District private school children who have known only the comfort and peace of middle-class life.

"Can you go outside to play when you're at home?" asked Keisha Cole, 9, a District youth.

"Yes, but sometimes my friends get killed," said Bernarda N'Guvulo, 12, whose bullet wound to the spine left her in a wheelchair.

"We walked to school in groups," she said in a soft voice in Portuguese. "It's a five-kilometer walk and we all stayed close together for protection."

The Angolan children, all missing limbs or suffering from other severe injuries from land mines, were introduced at a news conference yesterday in the Longworth House Office Building.

They were brought to the United States by the United Church of Christ's Commission for Racial Justice to receive medical treatment at a Newark hospital.

The Rev. Benjamin F. Chavis Jr., executive director of the commission, accompanied the children to Capitol Hill and blamed Unita, the rebel group fighting to overthrow the Angolan government, for the attacks that injured the children.

President Bush, shortly before his inauguration, wrote a message to Jonas Savimbi, leader of the rebels, pledging the United States' continued support.

At the news conference, Gabriela Nambongo, a 12-year-old in a white lace dress and bright-colored barrettes, said she had been walking to school with two classmates when she stepped on a land mine. An adult accompanying her lifted part of Gabriela's lace dress to show that her left leg is missing and her right leg is badly scarred.

"I don't have any more mother and father," said the child. Her parents were killed in an attack on her village. As she spoke, Clementina Cassova, 16, whose right leg was amputated, leaned over the table and wept. Two young Angolan boys, also amputees, stared ahead, teary-eyed.

When the District children paraded in with helium-filled balloons, the Angolan children applauded.

Until that moment, the students from the Academic Enrichment Preparatory Center, a private school on upper Georgia Avenue in Northwest, had only read about Angolan children, having studied the country and its war. They had written to President and Mrs. Bush asking for aid for Angolan children and a change in U.S. policy toward the country.

"Dear President and Mrs. Bush, I am Keenan Keeling," one letter said. "The U.S. should build an organization to help children who lost their legs and arms and to remove the hidden mines and to stop the war going on in Angola."

Now most of the Americans sat quietly, staring at the Africans, children they had worried about, but had never seen.

"I wrote a poem about Angola, but it was silly so I tore it up," said Darrell Shields, 9. "I was trying to say how I felt about the children and mothers being killed in Angola. I feel terrible—frustrated and sorry."

Paul Igson, 10, read from a speech he wrote with help from his teacher, Hasinatou Camara: "We wish to welcome the brothers and sisters from Angola . . . . We know that things have been very difficult for them. We hope that we can share a future together free from war."



BY BILL SHEAD—THE WASHINGTON POST

Gabriela Nambongo describ[illegible]

Mission - Philosophy - Vision

With and through the cooperative efforts of parent and teacher - home and school, our **MISSION** is to raise up and support the child. Bridges Academy students are educated with a duality of purpose connecting the pillars of each bridge of knowledge. Through this collaboration, we seek to mold the total student, academically, physically, socially and morally.

It is our **PHILOSOPHY** that all children learn, and given adequate opportunities for exposure and first hand encounters, most can excel. To this end, The Bridges Academy maintains a stimulating learning environment, provides quality education and encourages a sense of community through a broad range of experiences both within and outside the classroom. We perceive our educational mission as an integral component in the development of world citizens for the international community of the next century. Thus, we commit ourselves to accepting children where they are and showing them the heights to which they can soar.

The **VISION** of the Bridges Academy is to be a school of choice for parents seeking academic, physical, social and moral excellence in the development of their children. To fulfill this vision, we are sensitive to the needs of the population we serve. We strive to exceed all expectations by making excellence the standard by which we are measured as well as the standard by which we measure as we develop the leaders of the twenty-first century.

Why Choose The Bridges Academy?

With and through the cooperative efforts of parent and teacher - home and school to raise up and support the child, Bridges Academy students are educated with a duality of purpose connecting the pillars of each bridge of knowledge.

To Bridge Scholarship and Wisdom - Students are **Taught** the traditional lessons of history and science, upon which they will be tested and judged in this society. And, they are **Enlightened** with yet unaccepted contradictions in history and with still unacknowledged contributions of many cultures. Then, they are **Empowered** with the wisdom of the elders to know when and how to use each.

To Bridge Language and Communication - Students are **Encouraged** to maintain their family language, whether it be Black English of African Americans, Patois of the Caribbean, Hispanic or Native American Dialects of North, Central and South America, Tribal or Regional Tongues of Africa and Asia, or Americanizations of European Languages. However, all are **Required** to master and use Standard English in formal communication, as well as **Acquire** skill in a third language.

To Bridge Politics and Citizenship - Students are able to **Embrace** the different philosophical and political ideologies of any National group. But, they must **Learn** and **Conform** to the responsibilities of citizens and residents of the United States of America.

To Bridge Rites and Rights - Students are **Permitted** to practice and **Urged** to share any non-infringing rites and traditions of their religious and native cultures, with their fellow students and the school family. However, they **Must Respect** the rights of others to do likewise.

As a final requisite for graduation, students should demonstrate their Bridge Building skills on an international journey.

Where Do They Come From and Where Do They Go from Here?

Over the years, the students, parents and staff of The Bridges Academy (formerly Academic Enrichment Center Prep) have made up geographical ingredients of a "Heritage Stew" as we hailed from many countries the world over. From tiny island nations to major world powers, we have stirred together the makings of our international family. Our roots are planted in the countries listed below:

Angola	Ecuador	Ireland	Panama
Anguilla	Egypt	Jamaica	Peru
Bahama	El Salvador	Haiti	Somalia
Barbados	England	Japan	South Africa
Burkina Faso	Gambia	Korea	Spain
Cameroon	Germany	Liberia	St. Thomas
Cape Verde	Ghana	Mali	Thailand
China	Guatemala	Nevis	Trinidad & Tobago
Costa Rica	Guinea	Nigeria	United States
Dominican Republic	Guyana		Viet Nam

Bridges students have continued their academic success in other private and selected programs in local public high schools and later in the institutions as listed below:

High Schools

Private - Burke-Carroll-DeMatha-G'town Day-Gonzaga-Heights- Piney Woods-Queen Anne-Sankofa-Seton-Sidwell-Stone Ridge-Ujamaa

DCPS - Banneker-Cardozo-Coolidge-Dunbar-Ellington-Roosevelt-Sch. W/out Walls-Wilson-Woodson

PG County - DuVal-Roosevelt-Northwestern-Crossland

Montgomery County - Kennedy, Paint Branch, Blair, Blake

Fairfax County - Potomac

Colleges and Universities - Howard, Morehouse, Xavier, UDC, Florida A & M, Salisbury State, Pitt, Bowie, Maryland, Hampton, Norfolk State, Cheyney, Rensselaer, Delaware, Frostburg, UNC

Activities and Special Events

Devotions

The Bridges Academy family has parents, students and staff from many different countries, cultures and religions. Each week, a class leads the school in the sharing of related morning devotions.

SCOW – Student Citizens of the World

From time to time a class makes a presentation to the rest of the student body sharing information and activities they have learned in the study of a different country, culture or religion.

Programs

Opportunities for the students to "show-off" are provided in these annual activities and presentations:

- Harvest Dinner
- Winter Pageant
- Heritages
- Spring Arts Festival
- Parades
- Kindergarten and Eighth Grade Graduations

Trips

Monthly, cultural and educational trips and activities in and around the metropolitan area are planned by class or as a school. Most are listed on the monthly calendar. However, there are also unscheduled or spontaneous trips related to class work. End of the year class trips take us great distances to adventure far and near.

Birthdays

The Bridges Academy recognizes the birthdays of students during the final week of each month. Individual birthdays may be celebrated with the class on Fridays of each week.

Auxiliary Programs

Meals

The Bridges Academy provides breakfast and an afternoon snack to all students, and lunch to preschool students only, at no additional cost. There is no reduction or remission of tuition for meals not taken. Lunch is available to students in grades one through eight at a cost of $20 per month September through May. Students, who do not commit to meals for the entire month, must purchase a **weekly** meal ticket for $5.00 on Mondays. A one-day meal ticket is $1.50.

Students with special medical, religious and/or philosophical dietary restrictions are required to provide their own meals on days when the daily menu is in conflict with those restrictions. It is the **responsibility of the parent, not the school**, to determine such dietary conflicts, and make the necessary provisions. **There are no meal alternatives provided by the school.**

After School Study and Adventure (ABAASSA)

Because of legal ramifications, any student remaining in the school after 4:30 pm (and not involved in a scheduled activity) must attend the supervised After School study and Adventure Group. This program provides skilled high school and college students and sometimes teachers who assist students with homework and supervise organized activities.

The annual cost of the after school program is $200for individual students and $300 for families. Payment is to be made in three installments on September, December and March 15th of the school year. ABAASSA is also available as needed on a monthly basis, the fee for which is due on the first day of the month in which the service is required.

After school care for preschoolers is provided at no cost. However, they must be picked up by 6:00 PM, otherwise there is a **$35.00 late fee due upon arrival.**

Uniforms, Books, Materials and Necessities

Uniforms

Uniforms are required of all students Kindergarten through 8th Grade. They are supplied primarily by Campus Outfitters, College Park, MD, and School Uniform Warehouse, Washington, DC.

Textbooks

Textbook fees for students in Nursery (3 years old) through 8th Grade are due upon initial enrollment acceptance and thereafter by June 30, with registration for the coming school year.

Materials and Supplies

Initial supplies for each school year are purchased in bulk from the registration fee, in order that each student might have the precise equipment, supplies and materials required by each specific teacher. However, parents are provided an itemized list of supplies. Parents must provide similar supplies for use at home and replenish supplies for school, as needed by the student. ALL students must bring an old long sleeve shirt that is large enough to protect clothing from the shoulder to the knee for arts and/or crafts projects.

Pre-School Necessities

Each preschooler is to provide for naptime, a flat, single bed sheet that is any color EXCEPT white. Kindergartners are to bring a thick hand towel for resting their heads on a table. A COMPLETE change of clothing, including socks MUST be provided for accidents and mishaps of pre-schoolers and kindergartners.

Financial Matters

Registration

Registration for new students is accepted between April 1 and June 1 following completion of the application and acceptance procedure. It may continue if there are vacancies in a class' enrollment. For returning students, registration for the following year occurs during April. The registration fee is $100. If this is not paid by July 1, it will be assumed that your child will not be returning to The Bridges Academy for the following academic year.

Tuition Payment Plans

The Bridges Academy offers its families four tuition payment plans:

1. One Payment: Full tuition for the academic year is paid by August 1.
2. Two Payments: The total tuition is paid in two equal installments due August 1 and January 1.
3. Four Payments: The total tuition is paid in four equal installments due August, November, February and May 1.
4. Nine Payments: The total tuition is paid in nine equal payments, due the 1st of the months August through May.

Multiple Children

Tuition for a second child from the same family in the same academic year will be reduced by 20%. Tuition for a third child from the same family in the same academic year will be reduced by 35%.

Fund Raising Commitment

Because The Bridges Academy's modest tuition covers the basics only; there are two major fundraisers each year to purchase those things that make Bridges unique and special. Fund raising must be a whole school effort in order to be effective. Each family MUST PARTICIPATE FULLY by meeting each project minimum or making a $100 donation to each. Non-participating families will have fund raising commitments added to students' tuition accounts.

Application Procedures

While the outline below lists the usual application process sequence, you may apply before visiting.

Parent Visit

Application

Child's Visit

Confidential Recommendation Forms

Request for School Records

Placement Testing

Notification