



INSIDE VIEW

THE SIUE EAST SAINT LOUIS CHARTER SCHOOL MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

APRIL ♦ MAY ♦ JUNE 2003

SIUE East St. Louis Center Takes The Lead In Closing the Achievement Gap

From the Charter School Director's Desk

Much has been written about the phenomenon called "The Achievement Gap." Research shows a narrowing of the gap in the 1980's only to be followed by the widening of the gap in the late



1990's. Many of the greatest minds in education endeavor to understand the causes of the widely documented disparity in academic performance between black and white students. This phenomenon has become a household conversation for classrooms, school administration offices, district offices, state offices, and is even the dinner conversation for many families.

Where did we go wrong? How do we close the gap? Perhaps, we should stop and listen to our most precious jewels, the students. Many have gotten caught up in the blame game. Parents blame the teachers, teachers blame the students and parents and administrators point to the state. It is rare that we stop to listen to the students and ask the questions, "What do you need?" and "How can we help you?" The achievement gap is real and one that we have the responsibility to close for **ALL** children. "We" meaning, parents, teachers, administrators, colleges and universities, clergy, businesses, politicians, and all those companies, agencies, and organizations not named. Yes, that often over used term rings clear, "It Takes An Entire

Village to Raise A Child," and I may add, "To Close the Achievement Gap."

There are serious questions that we must address head on without pointing a finger, causing alienation among the diverse parties, and getting our feelings hurt. One such question is, "How do we close this gap?" The SIUE East St. Louis Center has stepped up to the plate to begin this most courageous and critical conversation. A group of concerned and caring individuals has been formed under the name of Metro East Advocates for Urban Learners. Our purpose is to invite to the table representatives from all sectors of the community for the purposes of addressing the achievement gap. SIUE East St. Louis Center, Assistant Director, Sandra Fields, is heading the initiative that will result in a summit of two to three hundred people coming together sometime in early June to address the issue and to make recommendations for eliminating the achievement gap.

The time to address this issue is now and we must do so with a sense of urgency. We must come together to examine our educational system; we must consider what we need to stop doing, what we need to start doing, and what we need to continue doing.

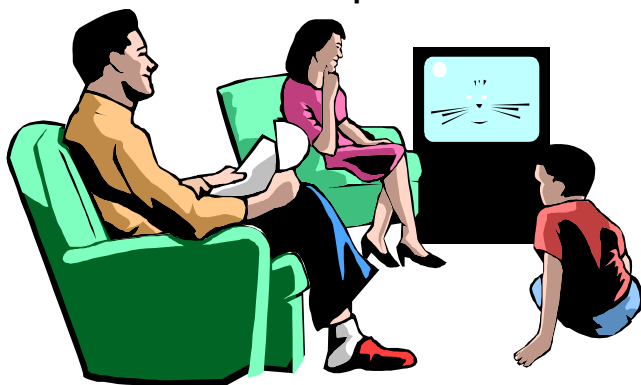
Thank You...Thank You... Thank You

The SIUE East St. Louis Charter School administration wishes to express its deepest appreciation to the Charter School faculty and staff. There are no words that could ever describe the love, care, and support you show the students each and everyday. As faculty appreciation week (May 5 – 9) approaches, please know that we recognize your dedication to the Charter School and to the students.

Mr. Neal, Director
Mr. Young, Assistant Director

Talking With Children About War— Pointers for Parents

By Stacy Clay, Vice President
Black Child Development Institute



War is a difficult and complex subject for adults. It can be overwhelming for children who may lack the ability to fully comprehend what is happening around them. As our country continues to struggle with issues of national security we must make sure that our smallest citizens feel safe and protected. But how we can make them feel safe and still be honest about our current situation? Dr. Alvin Poussant and The National Association of School Psychologists and Lifecare.com offer these tips for making our children certain of their security in an uncertain world. The following outlines some stages of uneasiness children in your care may experience.

Fear. A child may be afraid for his or her safety as well as those in the military. Some children may create fantasies about war and, for example, fear a bomb will be dropped on his or her home.

Loss of control. Children may experience a strong sense of helplessness. They may be confused over why military strikes are happening and feel they cannot do anything to stop it. A child may attempt to regain some control by refusing to cooperate, go to school, part with a toy or leave his or her parents.

Anger. A child who is experiencing anger toward the people or country(ies) with which we are at war may redirect those feelings of anger at a classmate, parent or neighbor because he or she is unable to express them in other ways.

Loss of stability. War interrupts everyone's routine and changes how we respond to daily life. Children may feel a sense of increased stress and need more reassurance since their usual activities may be disrupted.

Isolation. If a child has a family member called to active military duty, he or she may feel alone if he or she does not know other children who have a parent in that situation. These children may also feel anger or jealousy toward friends whose family has remained somewhat intact and normal.

Confusion. Children may be confused about the violence and when it will stop. They may also confuse reality with entertainment since many children are exposed to violent movies and television program.

Here are some general tips for dealing with some of the stages of uneasiness mentioned above.

Try to keep daily life as normal as possible and stick to regular routines. Children find routines comforting.

Keep bedtime routines consistent. If your child is having trouble sleeping, allow him or her to share a room with a sibling, use a nightlight, sleep with a special toy or stay with you until he or she falls asleep.

Look for nonverbal indicators that your child may be having difficulty coping, such as facial expressions or posture and play behavior, as well as your child.

Spend extra time with your child, if possible. When you don't know what to say, many times simply hugging your child will help.

Ask your child about his or her feelings. Explain that it is normal to feel confused, sad or scared. Acknowledge that you don't like war either and that you hope the military can address the situation.

Assure your child that he or she is safe and that you are nearby to protect him or her.

Do not pressure your child to discuss how he or she feels about the news or war. Each child will react differently and some will want to talk, while others will want to be distracted and return to a normal pattern.

In addition to these tips try to limit your child's exposure to news and other programs that sensationalize war and violence. Also depending on the age of the child you can bring out maps and speak more frankly, but reassuringly, about what is taking place. But most importantly, let the children you encounter know that you care for them and you will do everything you can to keep them safe.

Try to find out what your children already know about the bombing in Iraq and how they found out about it.

Let them know that you understand that what is happening in Iraq is confusing and complicated.

Let them know you're glad to be talking with them about it. Share your opinions and feelings about the bombing, whatever they are. Allow your children to express their own opinions.

Ask your children if they are worried and/or frightened about the bombing. Even if they say, "No," you are giving them permission to have those feelings and to talk about them if they choose. In the United States, we can reassure our children that they are safe and not likely to be bombed.

Explain to children that what's happening in Iraq is real. Unlike violent movies, television programs, cartoons or video games, real people are dying and being horribly hurt. Expressing our own feelings of grief and horror about what happens in a war is a good way to help children learn compassion and empathy.

However we feel about Saddam Hussein, our children should know that their Iraqi or Muslim classmates are not bad people. This is a good opportunity to debunk stereotyping.

If children want to help Iraqi children, encourage their concern and compassion. We can let them know about the International Red Cross, which can help victims of any country, even during a war.



Ed Brown 4/28

D. Marcheta McCoy 4/30

Catherine Enochs 7/1

Steve's Auto Body Shop in O'Fallon Gives Back the Love

Recently, Steve's Auto Body Shop of O'Fallon, Illinois sponsored the SIUE East St. Louis Charter School by donating 25 subscriptions of the St. Louis Post Dispatch to the SIUE East St. Louis Charter School. The subscription is for one full year. The newspapers will be used for class assignments and for current event purposes. A very special thanks goes out to Steve's Auto Body for "Giving Back the Love." We appreciate your generosity.

Seniors...Down to the Last Stretch!



In just two months, 22 seniors will grace the stage in our new facility and will receive their high school diploma. Staff is working hard with all seniors to make sure work is turned in a timely manner. Parents, please help by making sure your son/daughter doesn't catch that disease of "SENIORITIS" and start to slack off. It is very important that seniors work hard up until the very last day. Following is a list of seniors scheduled for May graduation.

Charles Bell
Ermeshia Eastling
Brittney Griffin
Lawanda Jones
Chenelle McCall
Lamone Nelson
Larry Parker, Jr.
Arielle Pope
DeAndre Richardson
LaDonna Sanders
Eboni Taylor

Eboni Clements
Octavia Eiland
Vanity Hall
Jimmy Ledell
Charles Miller
Murphy Outlaw
Dymini Pointer
Ramon Richard
Kenyatta Ross
Shannon Smith
Rhamu Wilson

Class of 2003 theme:

To Give Up on Your Goals
is to Give Up on Yourself...Never
Give Up!

Student Chasity Love Speaks Out on AIDS

Congratulations Chasity! Chasity recently graduated from the Black Journalists Institute. Students met for six Saturdays from 8:00 am – noon to learn about all aspects of journalism. Following is an essay that Chasity submitted while attending the institute.

Is St. Louis the Gateway to AIDS?



Known as the Gateway to the West, St. Louis could now be considered as the gateway to AIDS.

Over a three-year period St. Louis has been hit hard with HIV/AIDS. According to the federal Centers for

Disease Control, the St. Louis area has the highest rate of AIDS and HIV related illness per capita in the nation.

According to CDC, there are nearly 5,000 reported cases in St. Louis. The percentage of white males with HIV/AIDS has increased 70 percent since last year following years of decline (the rate had dropped by 41 percent from 1999-2000 and 21 percent the year before).

Although the number of St. Louis area white men testing HIV-positive increased for the first time in three years, the number still falls short in comparison with the number of African-American men who continue to make up the bulk of new HIV cases in St. Louis.

According to the St. Louis Health Department there have been reports that there were 195 new cases of HIV among black men in 2001, compared with 129 among white men. There are 116 HIV cases per 100,000 black men, compared with 28 HIV cases per 100,000 white men. African American men also contract the HIV virus four times the rate among white men.

Dr. Hugh Stallworth, director of the St. Louis Health Department, said, "The church could spread the word about AIDS by extending educational messages." He said, "Black churches (have) been the instrument of change towards learning more about AIDS."

AIDS is the leading cause of death among blacks ages 25 to 44, and African-American women are becoming infected at a faster rate than any other group. In St. Louis African-American gay men, a group traditionally closeted and unrelated by prevention and education, were the fastest growing group in new HIV-positive infection in the St. Louis area last year.

Lawrence Lewis 23, is gay, and is HIV-positive. When asked if people have been negative towards him because he is gay, Lewis said he hasn't had any circumstances at his former church or his current church.

"If you choose to have sex, you need to be responsible and learn more about what it means to have sex," he said.

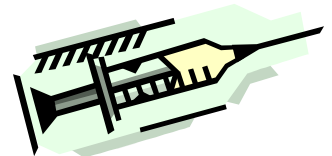
According to the CDC, the increasing number of AIDS cases among African Americans in the St. Louis region has spurred concern and discussion. While blacks make up about 20 percent of the region's population, they accumulate 65 percent of



diagnosed AIDS cases nationwide. Blacks comprise more than half of the AIDS cases that were heterosexual partners of intravenous drug abusers and 53 percent of pediatric AIDS cases.

HIV/AIDS is a St. Louis emergency with far-reaching effects. Decreasing the impact of HIV/AIDS depends on effective prevention. Social exclusion is at the roots of HIV vulnerability. Due to economical, social and political problems, minority communities have been unable to mount an effective response to HIV/AIDS.

St. Louis Efforts for AIDS is the city's oldest AIDS service organization. It was founded in 1985 by a concerned group of volunteers. These individuals wanted to make a difference in the lives of St. Louisans who were dying from complications of AIDS. In time, EFA evolved to address the enormous change in the medical treatment of the disease as well as the needs of those



living with HIV. When asked did she have advice for African-American youth growing up in the new millennium, regarding AIDS prevention? Joan Ferguson, an AIDS community outreach

specialist said, "Educate yourself, women carry your own condoms, and ask yourself why are you having sex in the first place."

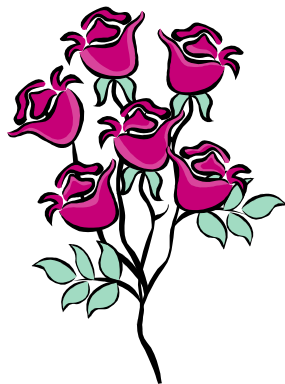
Injection drug use is a major factor in the spread of HIV in St. Louis. St. Louis Health Department statistics show that African-American women in St. Louis attribute a rise in cases to sexual contact with bisexual men, sex in exchange for money or substance use. Among African-American men reported with AIDS in St. Louis, men who have sex with men represent the largest proportion of reported cases since the epidemic began.

The Charter School Extends Its Condolences

Mrs. Marceline Hopson, mother of The Late Melissa Hopson, passed after a long illness. She is remembered as a devoted mother and supporter of the Charter School. Our thoughts and prayers go out to her husband, Mr. Willie Hopson, their children and other family members.

Mr. Eddie Jackson, father of Ms. Alsandrya Essien, Faculty Associate, passed. He is remembered for his many years in the field of education and his volunteerism.

Contributions in his memory are being sent to Catholic Urban Affairs, 771 Vogel Place, East St. Louis, IL, 62205.



International Distinguished Citizens Society Holds Essay Contest

The International Distinguished Citizens Society of Greater Chicago recently sponsored its sixth statewide essay contest for high school students. The topic was "My Most Inspirational Teacher." Senior, Arielle Pope, entered the contest as a way of giving back the love and showing her respect for Mr. Young, Assistant Director. Results from this entry will be released in late April. Arielle, thanks for "Giving Back the Love."

Students Place in Science Fair

The SIUE East St. Louis Center Science Fair was held February 11-12, 2003 and the results are in. Thank you to Mr. Ealy and Mr. Shaw for working with the Charter School students. Following is a list of the results:

1st Place

Chasity Love and Ardia Trammel
"Terraqua Column"
Mr. Robert Ealy, Sponsor

2nd Place

James King, Chon Wiley and Kapri Dallas
"Ecocolumn"
Mr. Robert Ealy, Sponsor

April Jenkins and Lori Farmer
"Ecocolumn System"
Mr. Robert Ealy, Sponsor

3rd Place

Dymini Pointer
"Fun with Inks and Dyes"
Mr. Robert Shaw, Sponsor

Congratulations to all students who participated.

OPEN ENROLLMENT

The Charter School is currently accepting applications for enrollment for the upcoming 2003-2004 school year. All students who will be returning in the fall must complete an Intent To Return Form in order to apply for enrollment. You may use the form included in this newsletter. New applicants must meet eligibility requirements which are: be a resident of East St. Louis School District 189; be age 14 – 19; be in grade 9 – 12; and submit a complete application which includes the student's transcripts and physical. Applications may be picked in the Charter School office any school day between the hours of 8 am and 4 pm.



From The Director's Desk,

The SIUE East St. Louis Charter School juniors will take the PSAE (Prairie State Achievement Exam) on April 23 and 24. The PSAE is the predominant tool used by the Illinois Department of Education to measure how well our school is doing in preparing our students academically.

This past year, the Charter School students did not fare well on the PSAE. Although, I am confident that students at the Charter School receive an excellent education, this has not been reflected in the PSAE results of our students. The Charter School staff is doing everything possible from their part to ensure that significantly higher test scores are achieved this year. However, a big problem still exists. Many students don't feel any need to try to do well on the test since their final score is not reflected in any way on their report cards, have no effect at all on their grade progress and are in no way averaged into their grade point averages.



We are asking parents to help. In order to encourage all students to give their full effort on the PSAE, a raffle will be held. Students who do a good job completing their daily testing will earn a raffle ticket. At the conclusion of the testing process, a raffle will be held so that the students have a chance to win a wide variety of prizes. Please help us by donating large or small raffle items that would appeal to teenagers. Here are some items you may consider.

- Movie or fast food gift certificates
- Event tickets
- Portable CD player
- T-shirts
- Book bags *and*
- Food items such as candy bars

If you wish to make a donation, please bring it to the Charter School office by Monday, April 14, 2003. All items should be given to Mrs. McCoy, the Charter School secretary.

Thank you in advance for your support of the SIUE East St. Louis Charter School.

Sincerely

Anthony Neal
Willis Young



12 Ways to Improve Your Test Scores

1. Wear comfortable clothes.
2. Get a good night's sleep.
3. Eat a good breakfast.
4. Pace yourself. Don't spend too much time on questions you don't know.
5. Use block erasers instead of pencil mounted erasers.
6. Read all directions before you begin the test.
7. Write within the margins (don't write outside the lines).
8. Write legibly.
9. Answer all questions.
10. Remember to use correct punctuation, capitalization, and Standard English.
11. Scan questions before reading excerpts so you understand what you need to know. Then, fully read excerpts before answering questions.
12. Check answers at the end as time permits.



Mrs. Thompson Made a Difference



Her name was Mrs. Thompson and his was "Teddy".

As she stood in front of her 5th grade class on the very first day of school, she told the children

a lie. Like most teachers, she looked at her students and said that she loved them all the same.

But that was impossible, because there in the front row, slumped in his seat, was a little boy named Teddy Stoddard.

Mrs. Thompson had watched Teddy the year before and noticed that he didn't play well with the other children, that his clothes were messy and that he constantly needed a bath. And Teddy could be unpleasant.

It got to the point where Mrs. Thompson would actually take delight in marking his papers with a broad red pen, making bold X's and then putting a big "F" at the top of his papers.

At the school where Mrs. Thompson taught, she was required to review each child's past records and she put Teddy's off until last. However, when she reviewed his file, she was in for a surprise.



Teddy's first grade teacher wrote, "Teddy is a bright child with a ready laugh. He does his work neatly and has good manners...he is a joy to be around."

His second grade teacher wrote, "Teddy is an excellent student, well liked by his classmates, but he is troubled because his mother has a terminal illness and life at home must be a struggle."

His third grade teacher wrote, "His mother's death had been hard on him. He tries to do his best, but his father doesn't show much interest and his home life will soon affect him if some steps aren't taken."

Teddy's fourth grade teacher wrote, "Teddy is withdrawn and doesn't show much interest in school. He doesn't have many friends and he sometimes sleeps in class."

By now, Mrs. Thompson realized the problem and she was ashamed of herself. She felt even worse when her students brought her Christmas presents, wrapped in beautiful ribbons and bright paper, except for Teddy's. His present was clumsily wrapped in the heavy, brown paper that he got from a grocery bag. Mrs. Thompson took pains to open it in the middle of the other presents.

Some of the children started to laugh when she found a rhinestone bracelet with some of the stones missing, and a bottle that was one quarter full of perfume. But she stifled the children's laughter when she exclaimed how pretty the bracelet was, putting it on, and dabbing some of the perfume on her wrist.

Teddy Stoddard stayed after school that day just long enough to say, "Mrs. Thompson, today you smelled just like my Mom used to." After the children left she cried for at least an hour.

On that very day, she quit teaching reading, and writing, and arithmetic. Instead, she began to teach children.

Mrs. Thompson paid particular attention to Teddy. As she worked with him, his mind

seemed to come alive. The more she encouraged him, the faster he responded. By the end of the year, Teddy had become one of the smartest children in the class and, despite her lie that she would love all the children the same, Teddy became one of her "teacher's pets."

A year later, she found a note under her door, from Teddy, telling her that she was still the best teacher he ever had in his whole life. Six years went by before she got another note from Teddy. He then wrote that he had finished high school, third in his class, and she was still the best teacher he ever had in his whole life.

Four years after that, she got another letter, saying that while things had been tough at times, he'd stayed in school, had stuck with it, and would soon graduate from college with the highest of honors. He assured Mrs. Thompson that she was still the best and favorite teacher he ever had in his whole life.

Then four more years passed and yet another letter came. This time he explained that after he got his bachelor's degree, he decided to go a little further. The letter explained that she was still the best and favourite teacher he ever had. But now his name was a little longer—the letter was signed, Theodore F. Stoddard, MD.

The story doesn't end there. You see, there was yet another letter that spring. Teddy said he'd met this girl and was going to be married. He explained that his father had died a couple of years ago and he was wondering if Mrs. Thompson might agree to sit in the place at the wedding that was usually reserved for the mother of the groom. Of course, Mrs. Thompson did.

And guess what? She wore that bracelet, the one with several rhinestones missing. And she made sure she was wearing the perfume that Teddy



remembered his mother wearing on their last Christmas together. They hugged each other, and Dr. Stoddard whispered in Mrs. Thompson's ear, "Thank you, Mrs. Thompson, for believing in me. Thank you so much for making me feel important and showing me that I could make a difference."

Mrs. Thompson, with tears in her eyes, whispered back. She said, "Teddy, you have it all wrong. You were the one who taught me that I could make a difference. I didn't know how to teach until I met you."

Student Shares Inspiration

By Temeka V. Rucker



Today's student input is about inspiration. Inspiration is the infusion of a positive idea, an emotion, or mental influence. I chose to write about this for

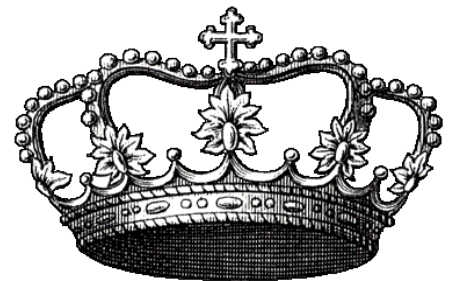
numerous reasons. The main reason is to give Charter School pupils a brighter look for the 2003 school year. My story took place at work. I was just about to get off when my manager asked me to stay for her. A couple of people called off and they were short. Saying "yes"—but I didn't know what I was getting into. It was a Saturday night and we were getting swamped. I had dreaded getting a busload. Just then East Side's baseball team was coming in. They came to celebrate their victorious game. By then my attitude was not too bright. It was very dismal; on the edge of rage. I was trying to keep that smile and good customer service I excel at. After serving East Side, all the problems and refills were making my fellow employees and I resent having a job. East Side was cleared out and we still were packed. Just then I served a woman and her smile stood out to me. Maybe she had a bright face. But something was special about her. She was waited on and then she left. Taking more orders, I looked up and it was she again. She smiled and I smiled. I went back to taking orders. When she came up to my register she said, "Someone wants you to have this", and she handed me a small piece of folded paper. I was kind of disgruntled. I managed to say thank you. As she turned to walk away, I had to finish taking orders. So I stuffed the note into my pocket. Close to closing we were cleaning up; when I got a moment I took a look at the note and it read:

I know this may seem weird. I don't know if you believe in God—or not. He knows your every single dream and hope. He knows your every single fear and doubt and he has great plans for your life!

I I didn't know how to react—I kind of felt like crying. I was going through a lot and that note gave me hope of some sort. That's why I wanted to share this with you. Maybe someone would get something out of it maybe you are in an abusive relationship or you're having a problem at school. Whatever it is hold on. You can make it. Change is coming.

Charter School Students Attend Assembly With Miss America

On Wednesday, March 12, Charles Bell, Rhamu Wilson, Jimmy Ledell and Ramon Richard attended an assembly at East St. Louis Senior High School featuring Erika Harold, the reigning Miss America. Miss Erika Harold's message was clear. The three areas she focused on were:



- There is no place for youth violence and bullying in the school or community.
- Respect yourself and protect yourself.
- Sexual Abstinence.

IMPORTANT DATES

April 16 – 21	Spring Break School Closed
April 22	Classes Resume Parents as Partners Meeting – 6 pm
April 25	School Improvement Day Early dismissal at 11:15 am
May 19	Malcolm X's Birthday No School
May 20	School Improvement Day Early Dismissal at 11:15 am
May 26	Memorial Day No School
May 29	4 th grading period ends
June 2	Last Day of School (If no other emergency days are used)

New Fee Assessment Put in Place for Fall 2003

Due to drastic cutbacks in funding this past year, the Charter School was forced to assess seniors fees of \$100.00. This fee includes, senior cap and gown, senior dinner, ribbon day, a yearbook, senior activities, and two copies of transcripts. It is necessary that we continue this assessment for the next school year. In addition, freshmen, sophomores, and juniors will be assessed a nonrefundable \$30.00 activity fee before they can be readmitted for Fall 2003 semester. This fee includes labs fees for the science and computer labs, locker rental, a student identification. Fees may be paid now through the start of the next school year. Fee should be paid to the Charter School secretary, Mrs. McCoy. Senior fees may be paid in two \$50.00 payments. Other fees must be made in one payment.

Student Arielle Pope Speaks About Her Most Inspirational Teacher... MR. WILLIS YOUNG

“To the world, you may just be one person, but to one person, you may be the world.”

These words are indeed supported by Charter School student Arielle Pope who recently entered the International Distinguished Citizens

Society of Greater Chicago, Inc., essay contest. The purpose of the contest is to encourage students to write about their “most inspirational teacher.” In the story that follows Arielle Pope describes her relationship with the Charter School Assistant Director and Computer Faculty, Mr. Willis Young. She contributes her success to Mr. Young’s “Agape (unconditional)” support of her.

My Most Inspirational Teacher By Arielle Pope

My most inspirational teacher is Mr. Young. Well actually he’s teaches a few classes and is an administrator. Mr. Young has been a mentor to me for the last three years that I have attended SIUE East St. Louis Charter School. He takes the time to talk to me personally when I need help. He was there for me when I was pregnant, helped me improve my attitude, and talked to me about college and my future. If it weren’t for him, I wouldn’t have made it this far in this school.

In addition, he was the reason my brother graduated within four years. He saw that my brother had talent but he felt like he wasn’t using it. Mr. Young told him he wasn’t going to let him throw his talent out the window. So when I came to the Charter School, he saw that I was a brilliant person and he didn’t mind working with me.

The reason I picked Mr. Young was because of what he meant to my brother and what he has meant to me. In elementary school, I never had some of the problems I have had in high school. Don’t get me wrong; I did have those teachers that stayed on me. However, the problems were so small in comparison to high school. In grade school I had to worry about being late for school or remembering to do my homework.

In high school, everything seemed so big and out of control. The Charter School only has a little over one hundred students but a lot of them seem made or upset. It is easy to have problems with other students. I have a tendency to stand my ground and that can get me into trouble.

Sometimes I think about how things can get out of control. Things that you never think of can happen suddenly do before you know it. For example, last month I had a classmate killed by her boyfriend, who then committed suicide. I don’t want to get involved with people who are

out of control. Mr. Young made me understand that I had to take control of my own life.

Another reason to grown up is my son. He is going to be enrolled in school before I graduate from college. He is moving so fast that I'm not sure that I will be able to provide adequately for him. Having a child makes you grow up faster, whether you are ready or not.

Mr. Young has worked with kids my age and can relate to me. He seems to understand that there is some serious stuff that we have to face. Most of all, he takes the time to listen. It didn't take long after I met him before I put him to the test.

My first year attending Charter School, I got pregnant. All the teachers were trying to figure out why was I sleeping in every class and when I say every class, I mean each one. After a while, Mr. Young became curious. I tried to hide my pregnancy because I was embarrassed. When he finally found out, he told me if there's anything I needed. I should feel free to ask him and he would try to help. He and the staff slacked up on me about my sleeping because they knew that it was a stressful situation.

Attitude was and has always been my number one problem. I can remember times when I snapped on a teacher and Mr. Young would not kick me out of school even though I probably deserved it. I think that all of the staff and students felt like he was showing favoritism. He constantly stayed on me about my attitude. When I got into arguments with other students he sat down and talked to me. I was book smart and nice when I wanted to be but the other teachers didn't want to have anything to do with me because of my terrible attitude. I understand why they felt that way.

Now that I am a senior, Mr. Young has been staying on my case about my future plans, including college. He has emphasized that I must continue my education. He believes that I will turn out to be a very successful young lady. He has even called several colleges, sent off for applications to several schools, and set-up tours so that I can see what college is really like. He has always told me that college is different from high school.

I know that when I go to college, I probably won't have anyone like Mr. Young to watch over me. I will have to accept the responsibility for my schooling and my son. Although I think it is going to be hard making that big a step into adulthood,

I know that Mr. Young will still make himself available for chats if I need it.

Even though it is hard to believe that I am a parent, I appreciate that Mr. Young has taken the time to talk to me about my son's future. I don't want my son to have the same problems that I have had. In order to protect him from those problems, I have to finish my college education and provide a better life for him than I have had. I have a better understanding of my priorities and I know that as my son gets older, I do not have time to waste or make mistakes.



In conclusion, no matter what time of the day or week, Mr. Young is someone I can turn to for any type of assistance. I know that there have been times when Mr. Young had important things to do but he would stop to speak with me. He has become a surrogate father. If it weren't for him, I would have had a harder time getting prepared for the real world.

Because of him, I can envision myself graduating from college and finding a responsible position for decent pay. Then my son and myself will have a brighter future. The main person I have to thank for that future is Mr. Young.



Fifty years from now, it will not matter what type of car you drove, what time of house you lived in, or even how much money you had in your bank account. What would have mattered most is your presence in the life of a child.

Mr. Young, the Charter School congratulates you for this well deserved honor.

Mr. Young will be recognized on Saturday, May 24, 2003, at the Holiday Inn-North Shore, 500 W. Touhy Ave, Skokie, IL.

60077 at 11:00 a.m. Tickets are \$30.00. If you are interested in attending the ceremony, please contact Mrs. McCoy at 482-8370.

Book In Every Home Reaches Charter School Students

Thanks to Kay Werner and the "Book In Every Home Campaign" ten Charter School students who are parents, will receive two children's books each. The purpose of the campaign is to encourage parents to read to their children. Research reveals that when children are read to they develop an enriched vocabulary and an expanded view of the world. After all, reading is fundamental.



Notice to Parents and Guardians

Parent(s) or legal guardian(s) who must provide transportation to and from school **because free transportation is not available for their children** may be eligible to receive money from the state to help offset some of the cost, for example, bus fares, or mileage reimbursement for private automobiles at 36.5 cents per mile.

If you can answer **yes** to the following questions for the 2002-2003 school year, you may be eligible to receive reimbursement for providing such transportation.

1. Was the pupil under the age of 21 at the close of the school year?
2. Was the pupil a full-time student in grades kindergarten through 12?
3. Did the pupil either live 1½ miles **or** more from school or live less than 1½ miles from school but must be transported due to a serious safety hazard approved by the Illinois Department of Transportation? (See following paragraphs.)

4. Did the pupil attend a school within Illinois which meets Illinois compulsory attendance laws?
5. Did the parent/guardian incur transportation expenses resulting from transporting the pupil to and from school?

If you answered yes to the above questions, lived in Illinois, and wish to file a claim, you must go to the school where each of your children are enrolled by June 30, 2003 to complete a claim application. Claim forms should be available from February 2003 through June 30, 2003.

In addition, parent(s)/guardian(s) who had pupils living **less than 1½ miles** from the school attended must have **already verified** that a safety hazard exists by completing an Application for Determination of Serious Safety Hazard at the Regional Superintendent of Schools office for the county in which they live.

Parents/Guardians residing within the **City of Chicago** must have received and submitted applications from the Illinois State Board of

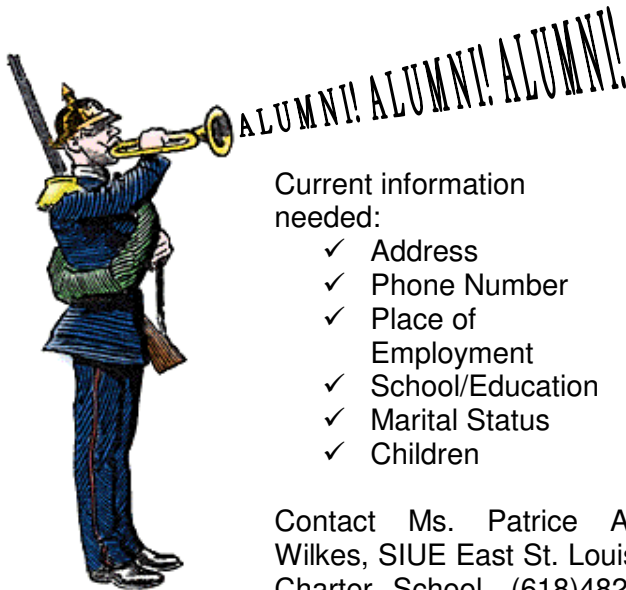


of Education, 100 North First Street, Springfield, Illinois 62777-0001 by **February 1, 2003**. The Regional Superintendent of Schools is required to send the Application to the Illinois Department of Transportation within 15 days. The Illinois Department of Transportation reviews and approves or denies the Application and returns it to the Regional Superintendent of Schools within 30 days. Upon receipt of the reviewed Application, the Regional Superintendent of Schools will mail it to the parent/guardian who requested the safety hazard be approved. **If the safety hazard is approved, the parent/guardian must go to the school the pupil attends and complete the claim form.** Parents who have received approval of a safety hazard on or after October 1, 1999, and whose children attend the same school and live at the same address, do not have to reapply for safety hazard verification.

Once all claims are completed at the school, the claim forms will be sent to the Illinois state Board of Education. If your claim is approved, you should receive a check directly from the state for the lesser of the cost of transporting your child/children or the average per pupil

reimbursement paid to public schools for transporting regular education pupils. If insufficient funds are appropriated by the General Assembly, all claims will be pro-rated.

If you have any questions, please call or come to the school as soon as possible.



Current information needed:

- ✓ Address
- ✓ Phone Number
- ✓ Place of Employment
- ✓ School/Education
- ✓ Marital Status
- ✓ Children

Contact Ms. Patrice A. Wilkes, SIUE East St. Louis Charter School, (618)482-

8377 or send information to 411 East Broadway, East St. Louis, IL 62201.

PLEASE PLEASE PLEASE

The Rose Within

A certain man planted a rose and watered it faithfully, and before it blossomed, he examined it. He saw the bud that would soon blossom—but also the thorns. And he thought, “How can any beautiful flower come from a plant burdened with so many sharp thorns?”

Saddened by this thought, he neglected to water the rose, and before it was ready to bloom, it died. So it is with many people. Within every soul there is a rose. The God-like qualities planted in us at birth grow amid the thorns of our faults. Many



of us look at ourselves and see only the thorns, the defects. We despair, thinking that nothing good can possibly come from us. We neglect to water the good within us, and eventually it dies. We never realize our potential. Some people do not see the rose within themselves; someone else must show it to them. One of the greatest gifts a person can possess is to be able to reach past the thorns and find the rose within others. This is the characteristic of love: to look at a person and, knowing his faults, recognize the nobility in his soul and help him realize that he can overcome his faults. If we show him the rose, he will conquer the thorns. Then will he blossom, blooming forth thirty, sixty, a hundred-fold as it is given to him.

Our duty in this world is to help others by showing them their roses and not their thorns. Only then can we achieve the love we should feel for each other; only then can we bloom in our own garden.

~Author Unknown~

Through the Eyes of a Child: Growing Up Black in St. Louis March 16, 2003 – February 2004!

For four years, the Missouri Historical Society conducted a comprehensive study of four metropolitan St. Louis African American neighborhoods: the Ville and Carr Square in St. Louis, Kinloch in St. Louis County and the southern portion of East St. Louis. Focusing on the 1940s through the 1980s, *Through the Eyes of a Child* utilizes oral histories and documentary research to highlight the changing ways in which families and community institutions—both formal and informal—affected the experience of children growing up in these socially and economically diverse neighborhoods.

Through photographs, audio-visual displays, oral history recordings, artifacts, personal stories and historical background, you will be invited to explore the four original communities, their changes over time, and the attitudes and experiences of the larger community that helped forge them. **Admission is free; audio tours and self-guides are available.**

Please call 314-361-9017 for reservation and program information.

Congratulations to All Honor Students for Both Second and Third Quarters

2nd Quarter

Principal's Scholars

*Chasity Love
Dymini Pointer*

Honors

*Eboni Clements
Kapri Dallas
Octavia Eiland
Vanity Hall
Joshua Johnson
Chenelle McCall
Ashley Moore
Angelina Nunn
Antoinette Robinson
Camille Rodgers
Tameka Rucker
Doneitra Stennis*

3rd Quarter

Principal's Scholars

*Donna Johnson
Chasity Love*

Honors

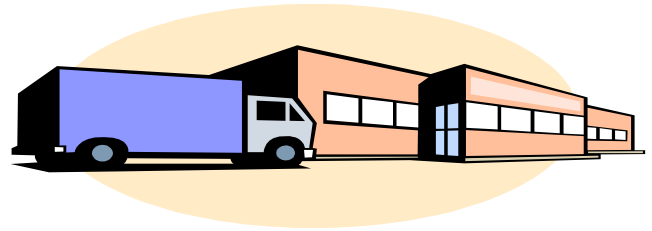
*Nigel Bailey
Danelle Betts
Cherrelle Bounds
Eboni Clements
Karen Cobb
Kapri Dallas
Octavia Eiland
Joshua Johnson
Jesse Martinez
Lloyd Millender
Dymini Pointer
Antoinette Robinson
Tameka Rucker
Angela Smothers
Doneitra Stennis
Ashley Washington*

Charter School Students Enter Chicago White Sox Essay Contest

Nine Charter School students recently entered the Chicago White Sox essay contest. The topic, "My father or Father(like) Figure." This is the second year that students entered the competition. Last year, James King, a [junior] received first place on the essay he wrote about his father. Results of the competition should be determined by the first of May. Congratulations to the following students who entered the essay contest.

Ninotchka Van
Cherrelle Bounds
DeMario Brown
Chasity Love
Arielle Pope

Karen Cobb
Ardia Trammel
Ashley Moore
Shawn Morrison



Charter School On the Move...Again

The SIUE East St. Louis Charter School is literally preparing to move again! This time back to our original location at 601 James R. Thompson Blvd. We will move the first week of June to a newly renovated facility. Look for a letter regarding open house sometime over the summer.



**The next Parents as Partners meeting
will be held**

**April 22, 2003
6:00 p.m.**

**at the
SIUE East St. Louis Charter School**

Don't Forget!



**If a student is sick or will
be late, it is necessary that
you call the school before
8:00 a.m. You may reach
the Charter School by
calling (618)482-8370.**

Charter School Receives Formal Notification of "Stepping Into the Future Grant"

Dear Stepping Into the Future
Seed Grant Recipient,

We are pleased to send you formal recognition of your Stepping Into the Future grant award. As you know, Stepping Into the Future is part of the Salute to Educators initiative. The goal of Salute to Educators is to recognize outstanding educators who are helping families and children cope with crisis, trauma and tragedy. The grants are designed to help educators like you extend the reach of educational programs and provide effective tools and strategies to help students and families move forward in the post 9-11 world.

Families and Work Institute, The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, MetLife Foundation, and Avaya, Incorporated salute your efforts in helping children cope and contribute in the changing world. A key component of the Salute to Educators initiative is the continued collection of educator stories and experiences. As such, we encourage you to keep us informed of your efforts and help us maintain the Salute to Educators database as a dynamic resource for educators around the country.

Again, congratulations on your Stepping into the Future seed grant. We wish you the best of luck and look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Ellen Galinsky
President of Families and Work Institute
Lois Backon
Salute to Educators Project Director
Kimberlee Salmond
Salute to Educators Project Team
Kelly Sakai
Salute to Educators Project Team

SIUE SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY EDWARDSVILLE
EAST ST. LOUIS CHARTER SCHOOL
601 JAMES R. THOMPSON BOULEVARD
EAST ST. LOUIS, IL 62201-1129
PHONE (618)482-8370
FAX (618)482-8372



SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY EDWARDSVILLE

EAST SAINT LOUIS CHARTER SCHOOL
601 JAMES R. THOMPSON BOULEVARD
EAST ST. LOUIS, IL 62201-1129

PHONE 618/482-8370
FAX 618/482-8372

Intent to Return Form

Date _____

Student Name _____
Last First M.I. Social Security Number

Address _____
Street City State Zip Code

Phone _____ Emergency Phone Number _____

Father's Name _____ Work # and ext. _____

Mother's Name _____ Work # and ext. _____

Name of relative or contact in case of emergency:

Name Relation Phone Number

Please list any health problems. _____

List any prescription medications student is currently taking. _____

Name of Insurance Company _____

Policy or Case Number _____ Phone _____

I, _____, wish to have _____
Parent/Guardian Name of Student

remain in the Southern Illinois University Edwardsville East St. Louis Charter School for the 2001/2002 school year. I further understand that the CODE OF CONDUCT, USE OF TECHNOLOGY, and CLASSROOM RULES remain the same.

Parent/Guardian Signature Today's Date

Student Signature Today's Date

DON'T LOSE YOUR SPOT!

Intent to Return forms are due **now** for all students who will attend the SIUE ESL Charter School this fall. If you have not already returned your form you may cut out the one attached to this newsletter. Mail it or drop it off at the school **as soon as possible**.



Cut out and mail to:

SIUE East St. Louis Charter School
411 East Broadway — Room 1005
East St. Louis, IL 62201-2904