



# INSIDE VIEW

THE SIUE EAST SAINT LOUIS CHARTER SCHOOL QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

WINTER 2005



Students Jessica Lewis and Kristen Evans try to repair their robot between rounds.

## Students Place Third at Robotics Competition

By Brian Riley, Science Teacher

On November 19<sup>th</sup> students competed in the annual Lego Robotics Competition hosted by the SIUE School of engineering. This year's competition was titled Firebot Challenge. Teams of students had to design a robot to maneuver a course and put out a "fire" or rescue victims. The Charter School sent four teams to compete against other area high schools. Disaster struck and one team had to forfeit after their robot fell apart. The other three teams competed well in the first scoring round. The robot built by students **Antonio Agnew** and **Kevin Bland** suffered a minor setback when it broke. They scored enough points in the first round to earn a bye in the single elimination round which gave them enough time to repair their robot. In the single elimination round the robot built by students **Nikita Anderson**, **Brandon Edmond**, **Jamya Dallas**, and **Daryus Wilkes** placed in the top ten as did the robot from Agnew and Bland. A robot built by students **Martell Ball**, **Patrick Ezell**, and **Rashawn Rowe** was defeated in the match for second place. They regrouped to win

the third place match which earned each of the three students scholarship money (\$250) to SIUE. By placing in the top ten, the three teams were invited back to compete against college freshman engineering students on December 6. Students **Harvey Binford**, **Christopher Pearson**, **Floyd Wilson**, **Norman Cotton III**, and **George Goodwin** helped work on the robots but did not go to the competition. Special thanks go out to **Neeshell Braggs**, mother of **Kevin Bland**, for helping out and cheering us on at the competition.

## NEW GUITAR CLASS ADDED TO CURRICULUM

By E. L. Wilkes, Instructor



The Charter School is now offering a class in guitar. This class is designed not only to teach students to play the guitar but also to train students' "ears" to hear the basic elements of music.

The main focus will be on learning to play chord accompaniments to a variety of songs in a variety of styles. Students will learn the basic chords in first position and explore movable chord theory (chords up the neck). Students will hone their skills by playing specific chord exercises and songs. Also, through critical listening "ear training," students will learn how to train their "ear" to hear music in a new way, as a musician.

## SIUE EAST ST. LOUIS CHARTER SCHOOL FINE ARTS NEWS



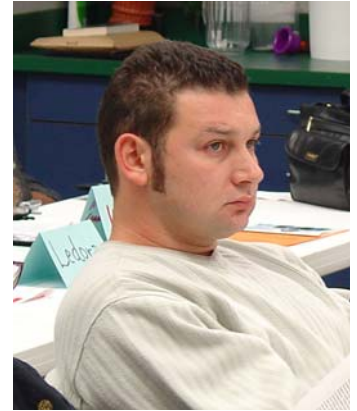
The SIUE East St. Louis Charter School and the ASTAP (After School Theatre Arts Program) will combine forces for the *Kwanzaa Holiday Celebration* on Friday, December 9, 2005 at the Stites Community Center, located at 500 Washington, Brooklyn, Illinois. The program will feature the talents of both Charter School students and ASTAP students by celebrating the Holiday Season through drama, dance, music and visual art. The Kwanzaa Celebration will be divided into two acts. Act One will feature a Kwanzaa skit called *Doin' It*. The skit features all of the Seven Principles of Kwanzaa or Nguzo Saba in an entertaining fashion by the Basic Theatre I Class. The Combined Dance Class and the ASTAP Dancers will be featured in a Western African Village scene, along with a featured Special Guest from the East St. Louis Arts Community. Musical Theatre students will provide an African folktale in the midst of the dancing celebration. Finally, Act Two will feature an adaptation of Walter Wangerin's *Probity Jones and the Fear Not Angel*. This short story adapted into a play by Gregory S. Carr will feature the talents of the Piano Class, Basic Theatre II, and the newly formed East St. Louis Community Choir, directed by Anita Brandon. Start your holiday off right by coming out and supporting this great celebration!



## HATS OFF TO MR. RILEY, SCIENCE FACULTY

Mr. Brian Riley was awarded one of Ameren's Power Up Fuel Cell Kits—part of a \$900,000 grant program sponsored by Ameren Corporation.

Through the Ameren Power Up Fuel Cell Kit Program, Ameren is providing self-contained solar hydrogen fuel cell energy systems—kits that a science



teacher can use to build awareness of renewable energy sources through hands-on experiments.

The Fuel Cell kit will be arriving at the Charter School after the first of the year. The box will contain: a fuel cell kit; operating instructions; instructional materials, including a teacher's guide, experiments; and work sheets; a pair of safety glasses; and a funnel for placing the water in the kit.

## CHARTER SCHOOL UNDERGOES AUDIT

The SIUE East St. Louis Charter School recently went through an audit. The audit was done by the District # 189 internal audit department. Results of the audit will not be known for another several weeks; however, Mr. Neal, Director, feels that the school is compliant in all areas. Mr. Neal says that frequent audits help to maintain overall quality and order of the school.

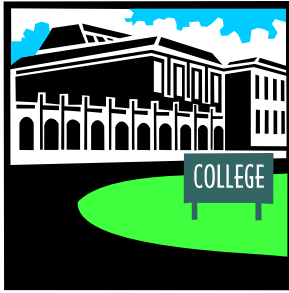
## METROLINK PATH NOW OPEN

The path leading from campus to the MetroLink station is now open. After a long awaited period of time, many meetings, and a parent petition, the path finally opened about a month ago. This provides students with a more direct and safe route to get back and forth from campus and the MetroLink station. Thanks to all who helped make the opening possible.



## COLLEGE RESOURCES ONLINE

- CollegeSource Online—A virtual library with 28,702 college catalogs in full cover-to-cover, original page format representing 2-year, 4-year, graduate, professional and international school. [www.collegesource.org/home.asp](http://www.collegesource.org/home.asp)
- College Admissions: U.S.—Find information about college essays, interviews, admissions tests, financial aid and scholarships as well as college rankings and study-abroad options. Try the “Who Wants to Be...A Millionaire Student?” quizzes to learn more about admissions and financial aid. [www.collegeapps.about.com](http://www.collegeapps.about.com)
- CollegeNET—Over 1500 customized Internet admissions applications. <http://collegenet.com>
- Microsoft Scholarship Program [www.microsoft.com/college/scholarships/minority.asp](http://www.microsoft.com/college/scholarships/minority.asp)
- Gates Millennium Scholarships [www.gmsp.org](http://www.gmsp.org)
- Ayn Rand Essay Scholarships [www.aynrand.org/contests](http://www.aynrand.org/contests)
- Easley National Scholarship Program—From the National Academy of American Scholars [www.naas.org/senior.htm](http://www.naas.org/senior.htm)
- Burger King Scholarship Program—Visit this site October 15 – December 15. [www.bkscholars.csfa.org](http://www.bkscholars.csfa.org)
- Siemens Westinghouse Competition—High School seniors submit an original science and/or math research project. [www.siemens-foundation.org](http://www.siemens-foundation.org)
- Union Sponsored Scholarships and Aid [www.afcio.org/familyfunresources/collegecos/scholar.cfm](http://www.afcio.org/familyfunresources/collegecos/scholar.cfm)
- 2004 Colleges, College Scholarships, & Financial Aid Page—Offers college-bound students, parents, and counselors easy access to information on colleges and universities throughout the U.S., free college scholarship and financial aid searches, SAT and ACT test preparation tips, and more! [www.college-scholarships.com](http://www.college-scholarships.com)
- Scholarships.com—Free college scholarship search and financial aid research. [www.scholarships.com](http://www.scholarships.com)



- Cash for College—From the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators. [www.nasfaa.org/SubHomes/Cash4college/index2.html](http://www.nasfaa.org/SubHomes/Cash4college/index2.html)
- College Express—College, Scholarship, and Loan search. [www.collegexpress.com/index.do](http://www.collegexpress.com/index.do)
- FastWeb!—Free scholarship and college search. [www.fastweb.monster.com](http://www.fastweb.monster.com)
- Scholarship America—Dollars for scholars, scholarship management services, and Scholar Shop. [www.scholarshipamerica.org/students/resources.php](http://www.scholarshipamerica.org/students/resources.php)
- Guaranteed Scholarships [www.guaranteed-scholarships.com](http://www.guaranteed-scholarships.com)
- Historically Black College & University Scholarships [www.iesabroad.org/info/hbcu.htm](http://www.iesabroad.org/info/hbcu.htm)

## ALWAYS GIVE BACK

All Charter School students are required to complete 10 hours of community service before graduation. Service hours may be only from one of the sites that have been identified and approved. Students may obtain a list of approved sites and a form for the completion of hours from Mrs. Williams, Counselor.



## Inclement Weather



In case of inclement weather, notification will be made on local radio stations. SIUE East St. Louis Charter School will close in accordance with East St. Louis School District #189.

## CHARTER SCHOOL DIRECTOR SPEAKS AT INTERNATIONAL PRINCIPALS' CONFERENCE



SIUE East St. Louis Charter School director, **Anthony Neal**, recently addressed an audience of about 70 educators from around the United States. Many arrived with stereotyped concepts of East St. Louis, Illinois and the

caliber of students that exist in the schools in the area. Some even shared their picture of East St. Louis that had been painted by Jonathon Kozol in his book, "Savage Inequalities." Mr. Neal's presentation entitled, "Creating Hope in the Unseen: A Critical Look at Promise and Potential of Difficult Schools," engaged participants in a courageous conversation regarding narratives that are often embedded in the fabric of schools that are counterproductive to building positive relationships with students, maintaining high expectations, and creating a productive learning environment. Participants explored "counter-narratives" that are essential to change climate, culture, and classroom discourse. Mr. Neal shared many of the initiatives that had been put in place at the Charter School. **Bryan Cannon**, Principal at Miles Davis Elementary School and **Anetrise C. Jones** Principal at Harris Accelerated School, both from the Metro East area, also shared some of work they are doing in their schools to contradict the stereotypes that exist. Mr. Neal has already been asked to present at next year's conference. The conference was held in Denver, Colorado.

*Anthony Neal • 12/20*  
*E. L. Wilkes • 12/20*  
*Andrea Smythe • 12/22*  
*Gregory S. Carr • 1/31*



## SENIORS...ARE YOU PREPARED FOR THAT BIG DAY?

Seniors don't forget! Part of preparing for that **BIG** graduation day, each of you will be expected to present a portfolio to an exit committee. The committee will consist of several faculty, parents, and community leaders. This is a great opportunity for each of you to showcase your skills, talents, and knowledge of your educational journey while here in the Charter School. In other words, it is a way to let your light shine bright. The following items should be included in your portfolio:

- A writing sample from each year enrolled in the Charter School,
- An education and/or career plan,
- Evidence of 10 hours of community service,
- Evidence of 3 letters of application to postsecondary institutions or,
- Evidence of 2 letters of application to vocational schools or,
- Evidence of employment,
- Transcript,
- Results of State achievement examinations
- Pre and Post test scores of the CAT given each year,
- Evidence of any honors or recognitions received,
- Completion of a research paper in a performing arts area, and
- Evidence of level of participation in School productions.



**CORRECTION:** The last newsletter (Fall 2005) announced the winners of the Essay/Poetry Contest for the Partners Reception and included a picture of Floyd Wilson instead of his brother Robert Wilson. Pictured above is the actual winner, **Robert Wilson**. Robert won 1<sup>st</sup> Place in the Freshman/Sophomore Poetry Division.

## STUDENT WRITINGS

Thanks to the students who submitted the following writings.

### Conflict in Eighth Grade

By Janya Dallas

When I was in the eighth grade, I had the most fun in my entire life, but all that lasted for only the first semester. During that semester I thought I could beat up anyone, do what I wanted, and say what I wanted to say. It was like no one could touch me, but I was a fraud. I had two best friends, and we did everything together. We did all kinds of things like go to teen clubs, skating rinks, bowling alleys, and each other's houses to have sleepovers. All that changed when second semester came. I got into a conflict with one of my best friends, Jazmon. I helped my other friend, ShaQuida, fight, but she said I didn't. After all that I ended up by myself with no one to hang out with and fighting my best friends. I learned my lesson which was treat people with respect, know the people I am hanging around, and most importantly be honest and happy with myself.



### My Program and Me

By Nikita Anderson

I believe the best school that can prepare me for a brighter future is the SIUE East St. Louis Charter School for these basic reasons: smaller classes, a college environment, and a variety of performing arts classes. My program works for me.

First of all, I can easily interact with my classmates because of the class size. Reducing class size is one of the most effective ways to increase learning. It can help lower the number of disciplinary problems. Each of my six classes has a maximum of twenty students. My teachers and I have more one-on-one time, and I produce better grades. For example, teachers actually get through a class without interruptions, and I learn something new almost everyday. Since

my teachers can get through a class without class management issues, I will excel in school.

Next, the charter school will mold me into a college bound student. This program is located in East St. Louis, and it is a part of SIUE. As a result, I am surrounded by college students. Sometimes I observe their personalities and the different career choices they have available on campus; consequently, I will be able to experience a smoother transition from high school to college life. Through conversations with my teachers and being a member of MTEA (Minority Teacher Education Association), I have learned that college is about responsibilities. During college I will be on my own away from my parents and friends, which can be a dispiriting experience. I will not be able to depend on or blame anyone other than myself if I fail. Being at this school has been a true blessing, and I intend to take full advantage of this opportunity.

Finally, an education involving the performing arts can have many benefits, such as success in society and school. The arts aid in developing intelligence. Music is influential in my life. The U. S. Department of Education lists the arts as a subject that college bound students should take. They state: "Many colleges view participation in the arts and music as a valuable experience that broadens students' understanding and appreciation of the world around them." Success in society is related to success in school. I am presently learning to play the piano and clarinet. This has taught me patience.

In summary, I know the school that could help my future the best is the SIUE East St. Louis Charter School. It is the best because of these three reasons: smaller classes, college surroundings, and the availability of performing arts classes. This is definitely the program for me.

## 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.**

## My Program and Me

By Daryus Wilkes

There are many different programs that help children with their education. However, the one that stands out the most is the SIUE East St. Louis Charter School. The Charter helps me with my academics, my personal life, and my social skills.



The Charter School is not a big school, and the classes are very small. The teacher can help everyone personally with his/her work. I like the way this is handled because if I need help with an assignment, my teacher can assist me. Since starting here I have seen an increase in my grades. When I was in the eighth grade, I had poor grades. However, now my grades have increased, and I am excited. While at Charter I have had the opportunity to work with loads of programs like Upward Bound which is getting me ready for college, MTEA (Minority Teacher Education Association) which has informed me about black teachers. The Charter School and the other programs have helped me with present and future education plans.

My Charter experience has made me more independent. I have been chosen to go on so many trips with the school that I had to become independent. I had to learn how to budget my money. When I had gone to the University of Illinois, I was on my own for three weeks, so I had to budget my money, and I had to manage my time because I was taking some classes. I also know what it means to be homesick and too far from my mom and granny.

Since I started high school, I have gone from a loner to a more social person. I have a nice group of friends that I hang out with during school and after school. Last school year I had the opportunity to work with a professional actor/director in his play A Colored Funeral. Now after school I take some classes with the SIUE Performing Arts.

All in all, SIUE East St. Louis Charter School is helping me with my academics, my personal life, and my social life. My school has and will continue to help me in life.

## Poem

By Angelica Pinedo

We walk together  
And talk together  
So let's talk about you

You are so fly

I never knew a guy like you  
Could ever be around

Now that I have you  
I don't want to let you go  
So please show me  
How far your love will go



## Not caring will make you care

By Brandon Richards

Father, I tell you the truth  
I never ever lie

I'm going to the party  
I won't drink and drive

Now I'm at the party  
And now I feel the pain

Cause I know my lovely father  
Would be too ashamed

I'll be ok  
(I never ever drink)  
I didn't have a lot, or too much I think

I got into the car and I felt dumb  
Because I just noticed that I hit someone

I didn't even worry  
Oh well, I didn't bother  
But then I really cared  
Because I killed my father

## Being a Smart Consumer Tips on Buying a Car

By Sanchez Love



One of the first major purchases a young adult will make is a car. Most adults purchase a car as a necessity. When buying a car, no matter what age, you should be in the driver's seat and not just a passenger "going along for the ride." You take control instead of the dealer by following these important points:

- Decide if you want a new car or a used car. Transportation means different things to different people.
- Decide what model car would satisfy you. Check the April issue of Consumer Reports at a public library for important vehicle information.
- Know the manufacturers suggested retail price (MSRP).
- Research a used car's history report on carfax.com and Edmonds.com.
- Know your own credit score. A high credit score gives you a lower interest rate. Find financing with the best interest rate for your loan if you are not paying cash.

Researching carefully before you buy a car makes you a smart consumer.

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## IMPORTANT DATES

December 16 .....	Early Dismissal at 11am
December 19 – 30 .....	School Closed
January 3, 2006 .....	Classes Resume
January 10 .....	2 <sup>nd</sup> Grading Period Ends
January 16 .....	Dr. M. L. King's Birthday School Closed
January 20 .....	Parent/Teacher Conferences
January 23 .....	Staff Meeting Early Dismissal 2:10pm
February 7 .....	Parents as Partners Meeting 5:30pm
February 20 .....	Presidents' Day School Closed
February 27 .....	Faculty Meeting Early Dismissal 2:10pm

## SAME OLD MERRY CHRISTMAS?

By Peter Marshall (1902–1949)

In a world that seems not only to be changing, but even to be dissolving, there are some tens of millions of us who want Christmas to be the same . . .

with the same old greeting "Merry Christmas" and no other.

We long for the abiding love among men of good will which the season brings . . .

Believing in this ancient miracle of Christmas with its softening, sweetening influence to tug at our heart strings once again.

We want to hold on to the old customs and traditions because they strengthen our family ties,

bind us to our friends,  
make us one with all mankind  
for whom the Child was born,  
and bring us back again to the God Who gave His only begotten Son, that "whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

So we will not "spend" Christmas . . .  
nor "observe" Christmas.

We will "keep" Christmas—keep it as it is . . .  
In all the loveliness of its ancient traditions.

May we keep it in our hearts,  
That we may be kept in its hope.

## THE JOY OF GIVING

Attributed to John Greenleaf Whittier



Somehow not only for Christmas  
But all the long year through,  
The joy that you give to others  
Is the joy that comes back to you.  
And the more you spend in blessing  
The poor and lonely and sad,  
The more of your heart's possessing  
Returns to make you glad.



*And  
Wishing you Joy in the coming year!*

FROM THE FACULTY & STAFF OF  
SIUE EAST ST. LOUIS CHARTER SCHOOL

ANTHONY NEAL, DIRECTOR  
DORIS ADAMS  
JAMILA AJANAKU  
ELENA BADJIE  
GREGORY CARR  
ALSANDYRA ESSIEN  
CHRISTINE HENSKE  
SHARON JOINER  
D. MARCHETA MCCOY  
ROBERT SHAW  
JEAN SMITH  
ANDREA SMYTHE  
DENNIS TAYLOR  
E. L. WILKES  
LEDORA WILLIAMS  
JACK WILLIAMS  
WILLIS YOUNG

## READ! READ! READ!

By Elena Badjie, Language Arts Teacher

Two of the best strategies to improve reading is to **READ** and to **Read for background knowledge**. Read for enjoyment; read to relax; read for information; read out loud; read quietly; listen others read—all done consistently—will improve reading skills.

Read at home, in a quiet place, on the MetroLink, in a car, read at school, or even at a library or a bookstore. Reading links you with current events, takes you all over the world, and can transcend any time frame.

Newspapers, books, magazines, Internet are all exciting and interesting tools used to read.

The other powerful outcome of reading is to build academic background knowledge. Background knowledge positively impacts academic achievement of students and is connected with the ability to earn a higher wage in the workforce. Thus, reading extensively is important to acquire background knowledge and to improve academic skills.

## Parents As Partners Meetings

Mark your calendars. All meetings are held at 5:30 p.m. in Room 2029 in Building A. Please park in the Visitor's Parking Lot.


Tuesday – February 7, 2006

Tuesday, March 7, 2006

Tuesday, April 4, 2006

Tuesday, May 2, 2006

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 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  
[www.siu.edu/ESL/charter/charter\\_index.htm](http://www.siu.edu/ESL/charter/charter_index.htm)