

LIFT '93 Class Small, But Hopes Are Big

▲ Wood, Watt speak to school graduates

By SABRINA JONES
Chronicle Staff Writer

The 1993 graduating class at the LIFT Academy is small, but that shouldn't be the barometer used to measure what the four graduates can accomplish in their lives, graduates were told during commencement exercises this week.

"Look ahead," said Earline W. Parmon, LIFT's director, "your future's in front of you. God bless each and every one of you."

Representing the Class of 1993 are: J. Shelby Owens, N. Matt Parrish, Anthony Ricucci and Erika Watkins.

Mayor Martha S. Wood acknowledged the graduates' success in her remarks, given in place of her husband, Dr. James Wood.

"I feel that there are many children in our school system who are getting lost in the system, lost in the cracks," said Wood as she recounted her own son's brief enrollment at LIFT after being suspended from his regular high school.

Rep. Melvin L. Watt of the 12th Congressional District deliv-

ered the commencement address.

"This is what we're about. This is what the 12th Congressional District is about—the accomplishments of people who have had obstacles in their path and have overcome

them," he said.

The congressman related his 8th-grade suspension for eight days for carrying a knife to school to the experiences of the graduates.

"A person who makes a mistake outside the system is just as important as those who are lucky enough to return to the system," he said. He complimented LIFT (Learning is Fun Too) for attempting to "retrieve, revive and educate

every child."

Thomas Allen, the education coordinator for LIFT, presented the four graduates with awards in specific categories. Ricucci received the award for academic achievement (3.2 GPA). Ricucci, Watkins and Owens were recognized for student leadership. Owens, Ricucci, and Parrish were each rewarded for athletic achievements.



LIFT graduates (left to right): Erika Watkins, Anthony Ricucci, N. Matt Parrish, J. Shelby Owens.

Easton 5th-Graders Hold Annual Commencement

By SABRINA JONES
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Usually this time of the year is highlighted by the excitement of high school and college graduations.

This was not the case at Easton Elementary School, however.

Last Wednesday, the graduating 5th-grade class of 1993 held its third annual commencement exercises in the school's auditorium.

The speaker for the occasion

was Daisy Chambers, director of Elementary Division II Schools for the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County School System. Chambers encouraged the students to excel in life and to heed the advice of their teachers and parents. The graduates, dressed in the traditional caps and gowns, were presented awards by their teachers in areas such as writing, social studies, chorus and citizenship. In his closing remarks, Assistant Principal Steve Flora praised the 5th-graders for being "our lead-

ers, makers of dreams, and producers of hope. God bless you, we will miss you."

The graduating class ended the program with a moving rendition of "It's So Hard to Say Goodbye."

Norman S. King, principal said the commencement exercises program has grown in participation each year. Approximately 50 to 75 parents were in attendance for last week's event. According to King, the program improves the self-

esteem of the children, many of whom have been labeled "at-risk" students.

"Labels are for cans," said King, "the schools are at-risk, not the children."

The commencement exercises are also part of King's attempt to include parents in the education of their children. Michelle Price, a guidance counselor at Easton, coordinated the event.

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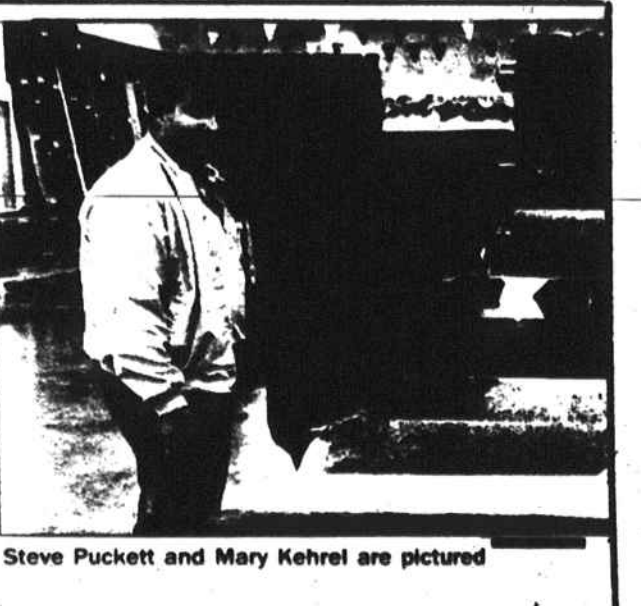
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— Anne Walsh



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