

Play

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Danyiel Jeffries wrote a love song called "Forever and a Day" for the production. "I was just writing at home. I was just writing about somebody I care about," she said.

Some of the dances that Thym Kennedy helped to choreograph were the Harlem Shake, the Heel-toe, the Pop, the Harlem Fake, The Roll, the Butterfly, and the Worm. Leander Sales and Freeman Music helped with musical consultation.

Freeman had a goal when he took on this project. "We wanted to educate the community through the voices of our youth in particular. We wanted to develop a vehicle for cultural education and awareness from the hidden voices and the wealth of minds that

smolder in our disenfranchised communities," Freeman said. Lynn Rhoades of the Center for Community Safety, who served as the executive producer of the production, wants to take the program to other communities as well.

"It has to be across the community. We need to bring in kids from all across the city. We need to hear from whites and Hispanics, from all of the children," Rhoades said.

Filmmaker Charles McClennahan noted that the best part of the production was the video footage.

"It was most powerful the way the images were shot. On video the youth articulated their words without fear," said McClennahan. "I applaud Nathan for having the courage to attempt this effort....He was very successful with getting the stories out."

However, McClennahan takes issue with the term "at-risk" when it comes to describing minority young people.

"All kids are at risk. White kids and African-American youth are being abducted and abused. Every kid is at risk....Each child has a mind, and they should not be encouraged to continue to think of themselves as at risk. All of us are at risk."

Several community agencies collaborated in this effort to uplift youths in their struggle against violence. The Center for Community Safety has worked to address violence in the communities, and the primary focus has been on youth violence prevention. Other partners included The mayor of Winston-Salem, Winston-Salem State University, Housing Authority of Winston-Salem, Weed and Seed of Winston-Salem, Winston-Salem Recreation and Parks, Southside Community Development Corp., Diggs Gallery, Montage Showcase Ensemble, PS211, SECCA and Wake Forest Baptist Church.

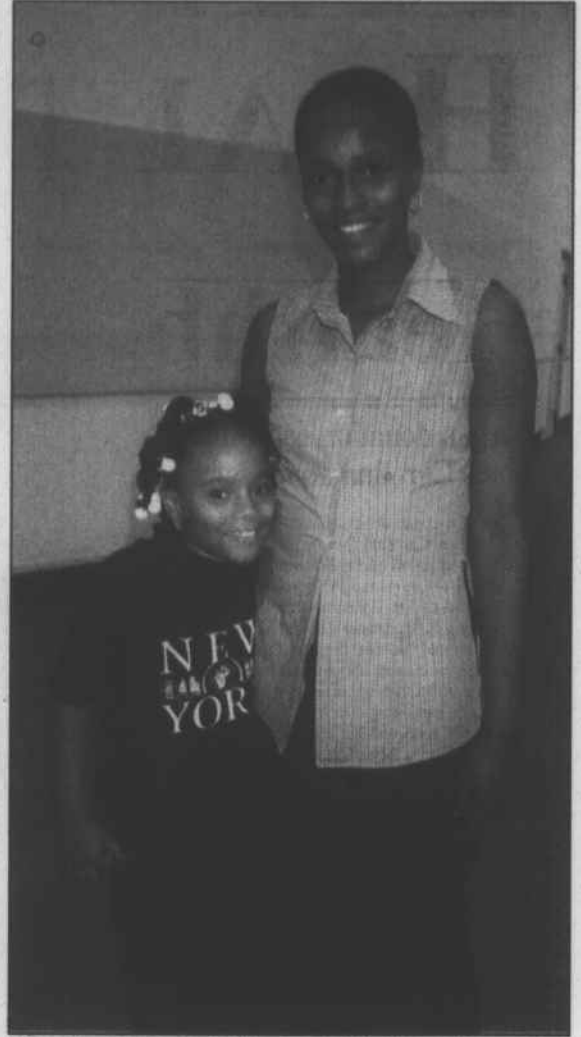
Rhoades said the show gives adults an opportunity "to meet youth where they are and to support them in their articulation of their world. It gives them a form of expression, creates jobs, encourages their self-esteem, encourages better communication, and supports their academics."



Members of DJ Lemon's family came out to see his performance in the production.



Faculty of Summer Theatre Institute were Frank Eaton, Tonya Sheffield, Lynn Rhoades, and Nathan Ross Freeman.



Sidney Jordan, 8 years old, appeared in the opening scene of the production video, and her mother, Bridget Hines, was proud of Sidney's involvement in the project.

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Some startling African-American health statistics

- Nearly 12 million African Americans suffer from high blood pressure, which prematurely ages the arteries.
- Heart disease continues to be a huge threat to African Americans due to obesity and high blood-pressure rates.
- A disproportionate number of African American seniors suffer from high blood pressure, diabetes and arthritis.
- The prevalence of diabetes is 70 percent more likely in African Americans as compared with Caucasians.
- African Americans require more frequent medical attention than other ethnic groups. Studies show that minorities often do not have adequate access to information about preventive health care, because health-care professionals often do not make the additional effort to target their messages to people within these communities.