



Young ones pay close attention during a STEP session last week.

Photos by Layla Farmer

Partners save program for public housing kids

STEP had faced funding hurdles

BY LAYLA FARMER
THE CHRONICLE

Community partnerships are a major driving force behind the success of a learning progra for children.

The Housing Authority of Winston-Salem (HAWS) Summer Teaching Enrichment Program (STEP), now in its fourth year, will end on Aug. 4. For the past eight weeks, students in grades K-12 received in-class instruction in subjects like math and reading. And at least once a week, they left the Goler Memorial AME Zion Church Family Enrichment Center, where the program is based, to take field trips to educational sites like SciWorks.

It all is made possible by through partnerships with public entities like the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County School System and the Winston-Salem Police Department, and businesses like HanesBrands, which has supported STEP for several years. Goler is also a program partner.

STEP Coordinator Bill McClain says the partner agencies' contributions are changing kids' lives.

"Many of them don't have academic weaknesses, per se, they're just under-motivated," explained McClain, who joined representatives from other partner agencies at Goler last week to tout the program's success. "By the end of the summer, we see some changes in attitudes."

The program saw a spike in enrollment this year. About 30 kids participated in STEP last year, McClain said, and organizers had hoped to attract about 50 this time around.

"When we got up to 85, we had to stop," McClain said. "If we could have afforded it, we could have served 250 - no question."

STEP faced some unexpected financial challenges early on. The state's shrink-

ing budget absorbed one of the program's chief funding sources this year, Schools Superintendent Don Martin said. Supplemental money had to be procured through Title I sources, which came from individual schools, not the school system itself, he explained.

Martin said summer programs like STEP are essential to keeping kids in a learning mode.



Bill McClain

"For kids and learning, that summer retention loss is huge," Martin related. "That happens with everybody, but it's exacerbated if you don't have an opportunity for more experiences in the summer."

The Police Department contributed funds to make up for the shortfall as well. Police Chief Scott Cunningham the program is worth every penny.

"We think there's no better use of this money than to turn around and help our children out," Cunningham declared. "We are talking about children, and that is our future."

Cunningham has made community involvement a hallmark of his leadership. "It's about giving them the opportunity, showing them that they have options. They

can do anything in this world that they want to do, but we've got to give them those opportunities."



Joy Heuke, Alesia Archie and Kah'rie Cherry take a break from afternoon activities to pose for the camera.

News Clips

Compiled from staff, wire and submitted reports

Propst earns honors at music camp

Miranda Propst recently represented Winston-Salem at Cannon Music Camp at Appalachian State University.

She received The Director's Award for the Chamber Singers Choir and also the Bill McCloud Music Educators of North Carolina Award. Propst will have a full scholarship to the Cannon Music Camp next year.

She is a senior at West Forsyth High School, where she is drum major in the marching band. Propst is a member of Galilee Missionary Baptist Church.

No Parent Left Behind Conference

The parents of all K-12 students in Winston-Salem/Forsyth County are invited to attend the No Parent Left Behind Conference on Thursday, Aug. 13 at Parkland High School, 1600 Brewer Road. It will start at 5:30 p.m.

The annual conference is free, and will include a series of workshops to inform and empower parents so that their children can be better equipped to perform successfully in school. Workshops will be conducted on many subjects such as: parental involvement, scholarships and financial aid, preparing for the SAT. Programs for LD/ADHD students, End of Grade testing and bullying.

Free pizza will be served at

5:30 p.m.; workshops begin at 6 p.m. The workshops conclude at 8:45. The conference is sponsored by the Forsyth Council for Youth, an affiliate of the Northwest Piedmont Workforce Development Board.

NBTF teen discussion

On Thursday Aug. 6, the Winston-Salem Urban League, in cooperation with the National Black Theatre Festival, is sponsoring "Keeping It Real," a candid and open discussion of the issues facing today's youth. The program will be held at the Winston-Salem Urban League, 201 West Fifth St., from 10 a.m.



Grandberry

noon. This event is sponsored by the Youth Celebrity Project of the National Black Theatre Festival and is open to teens 13 to 18 years of age.

Teens will have an opportunity to voice their concerns about the issues confronting today's youth and interact with famous television stars. Malcolm-Jamal Warner and T'Keyah Crystal Keymah are among the invited celebrities. Antonio "Tiny" Stevenson, a well known youth advocate, and Keith Grandberry, president and CEO of the Winston-Salem Urban League, will serve as program moderators.

Stores cited for selling tobacco to minors

From Jan. 1 through June 30, state Alcohol Law Enforcement (ALE) agents have conducted 2,366 tobacco compliance checks across the

state and cited 371 store clerks in 70 counties for selling tobacco or tobacco products to a minor.

Of those 575 establishments were checked in the Greensboro Area, which includes Guilford, Forsyth and seven other counties. Forty-four citations were issued in the Greensboro Area.

"Every month, ALE agents are making sure retail establishments are checking IDs and not selling tobacco to minors," said ALE Director Bill Chandler. "Store clerks who sell tobacco to a minor will find that the penalties can be stiff."

A district court judge may fine a violator up to \$1,000 or order community punishment of up to 30 days if the defendant has no prior convictions. If the store clerk does have prior convictions, the judge may also order jail time. Selling tobacco to an underage person is a Class II misdemeanor.

Each month, ALE agents make unannounced compliance checks as part of the state's Tobacco Education and Compliance Check Program.

Hagan earns 'Gavel' award

U.S. Senator Kay R. Hagan (D-NC) last week was presented with the U.S. Senate's "Golden Gavel" award in honor of completing 100 hours of presiding over the United States Senate in the 111th Congress. The award is presented to every senator that presides for 100 hours, and Senator Hagan is the second Senator this year to achieve this milestone.

"While presiding over the Senate, I have had the opportunity to hear debate on legislation that is critical to our country and North Carolina's families," Hagan said.

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