

NO BARRIERS

Housing Authority scholarship program applauds residents working hard to better themselves

BY TODD LUCK
THE CHRONICLE

Public housing residents who are striving to elevate themselves through higher education were honored last Thursday.

Housing Authority of Winston-Salem (HAWS) officials feted men and women in the agency's LEAD (Learn, Educate, Advance, Degree.) program during a meeting at HAWS' downtown headquarters.

Started by HAWS last year, LEAD is a tuition assistance program designed to help remove financial obstacles that public housing residents have to attaining higher education.

At least 75 residents have enrolled in LEAD, 35 of whom are currently enrolled in schools, said Candace Edwards, who created the program using a grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Before LEAD, Edwards said, many public housing residents were dropping out of college because they couldn't afford to continue.

"What we found ... was that people were already in school, they just needed a way to help pay for what they were already doing," she said.

LEAD helped Clarissa Brydie complete a certified nurse's aide course at Guilford Technical Community College. Brydie was honored at the ceremony. She also accepted an award on behalf of her daughter, Jasmin Keesley, a LEAD student attending Clemson University. Keesley was honored for earning a GPA of 3.0 or higher. Both Brydie and her daughter are residents of Piedmont Park.

"I think it's awesome ... I was able to get help for myself and my daughter, coming out of a situation, moving to another state with basically no means at all," said Brydie, who is now gainfully employed as a nurse's aide.

Jahid Ross, also a Piedmont Park resident, was also honored for having a GPA above 3.0. He's studying to become a nurse at Winston-Salem State University. Ross said that LEAD is making his



Tanya Mason accepts her award from HAWS' Candace Edwards.



LEAD Coordinator Tineta Brown speaks.

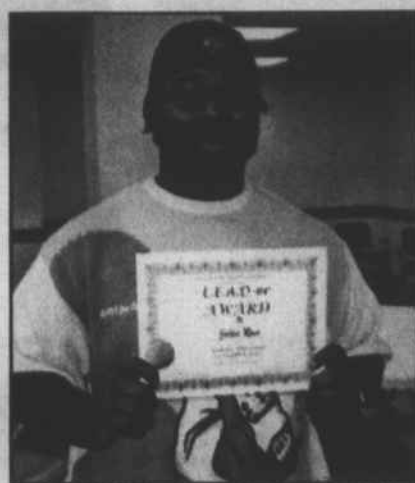
education possible. He was not able to qualify for loans or scholarships and was dealt another blow when he lost his job. His housing manager told him about LEAD.

Other awardees included Rexx Jenkins, who completed certified nurse's aide courses and Tanya Mason, who completed the Triad Community Kitchen's Culinary Arts Skills program. Tyeesha Mosby received an award for having a 3.0 GPA or higher. Elsie Edwards, Yoko Odom, Ryan Evans and Norman Williams all were honored for having a GPA of 3.5 or higher.

LEAD participants can receive up to \$10,000 a year for school. The program has already doled out \$75,000. LEAD Coordinator Tineta Brown said HAWS is "actively, diligently" seeking more funding so that the program can continue indefinitely. She said with LEAD participants achieving an average GPA of 3.2, the program is getting a good return on its investment in students.

Brown, a single mother who got her bachelor's degree while living in public housing, takes great pride in the success of LEAD students.

"It means the world to me, it



Nursing student Jahid Ross.



Clarissa Brydie hold her award and one for her daughter.

really does ... I can attest first-hand to what struggles and some of the economic and financial barriers that these people encounter everyday," she said.

During the meeting, LEAD participants also heard from representatives from the College Foundation of North Carolina and The Winston-Salem Foundation, both of whom shared information about college scholarships and other education funding sources. They also heard a motivational speech from local media personality Manard "Buster" Brown, who told LEAD participants that what they were doing to better themselves is truly inspiring.

"You've dreamed yourself beyond your circumstances," said Brown.



Lasana Hotep

Hotep to give MLK address at NC A&T

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

Author/educator Lasana Hotep will be the keynote speaker for North Carolina A&T State University's annual Martin Luther King Jr. Commemorative Celebration.

The event will be held Thursday, January 19 at 7 p.m., in Harrison Auditorium. It is free and open to the public.

Hotep is the founder, principal owner and lead consultant of Hotep Consultants. He currently serves as a speaker and consultant for the Harbor Institute, an education company based out of Washington, D.C. The phenomenal speaker has contributed to numerous publications such as "African-American Men in College," "The State of Black Arizona," "Be a Father to Your Child: Real Talk from Black Men of the Hip Hop Generation" and the "Black Male Health Handbook: A Blueprint for Physical, Mental, and Spiritual Health and Wellness."

He started and coordinated the African American Men Student Success (AAMSS) program at Arizona State University in Tempe, Ari. Graduate students from across the country sample and study the program to complete their doctoral research on recruitment, retention and graduation of African-American males.

A world traveler, Hotep's diverse array of experiences gives him a broad perspective of the challenges and issues that people of color face throughout the world.

Hotep is completing his doctorate in U.S. History at Arizona State University. He is also working with world renowned filmmaker Spike Lee and examining the effects of the motion picture industry on African American males and their portrayal in the entertainment industry.

City to present MLK Dreamer Awards Tuesday

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

The City Council and the Human Relations Commission will honor two city residents as the 2012 recipients of the Martin Luther King Jr. Young Dreamers Award at the City Council meeting on Tuesday, Jan. 17 at 7 p.m. at City Hall, 101 N. Main St.



Rev. May

residents between the ages of 18 and 40 who have made a tangible difference in the lives of those who otherwise might have been overlooked, ignored, or disadvantaged.

This year's honors go to Rev. Russell May, 32, a co-founder of Anthony's Plot, a community ministry in the Sunnyside area;

and Kenyetta Richmond, 40, a Victim Advocate/Outreach Specialist in the Safe Relationships Division at

Family Services Inc.

May began exploring the needs of the community during his pastorate at Hopewell Moravian Church. Leaving his salary and benefits behind, May stepped out with a number of young adults to start Anthony's Plot as an "intentional Christian community," where they could live out their faith and work with members of an underserved Winston-Salem neighborhood.

Richmond is responsible



Richmond

for Family Services' Teens-4-Change program, a social change volunteer group which provides education and outreach for teen girls ages 14 to 18 in Forsyth County. At a time when one in five teens has been a victim of teen dating violence or knows someone who

has been, Richmond presents workshops and activities on the topics of teen pregnancy, teen dating violence, healthy relationships,

sexual assault prevention, healthy bodies, and leadership.

The Human Relations Commission established the Young Dreamers Award in 2009 to encourage young adults to participate in philanthropic, altruistic community involvement that is in the spirit of how Martin Luther King Jr. lived and encouraged others to live.

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