

# Youth jobs program helping 110 this summer

BY TODD LUCK  
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Local teens and their counterparts around the country are going to work this summer.

According to the outplacement firm Challenger, Gray & Christmas, nearly 160,000 teens around the nation landed jobs in May, giving summer employment for 16 to 19 year-olds the strongest start it has had in six years. This is in contrast to May 2011, when only 71,000 teens found employment and 2010, which was the worst summer for youth employment since 1949, with only 6,000 teens landing summer work.

Despite the economic ups and downs of the times, the Summer Youth Employment Program — which is funded in part by the City of Winston-Salem and run by the Piedmont Triad Regional Council of Governments — has been there to help local teens seeking work. The program will put 110 teens between the ages of 15-19 to work starting June 25.

"It keeps them out of trouble; gives them something constructive to do in the summer; and puts a little bit of money in their pocket," said Deon Carter, who oversees the program. "It gives them a new set of skills. It helps them build their resume."

The teens in the program will work 20 hours a week through August 18, earning minimum wage (\$7.25) at places like Lowes Foods, local recreation centers and apartment complexes. Work duties include everything from maintenance to clerical work. The youth pick the type of job and hours that best suit them. Their wages are paid by the program.

Every year the program is in demand. Between 250-300 teens

apply for a limited number of positions. Participants are chosen based on the income of their families and an interview.

Carter said the program continues to be a good use of public money, giving the teens work experience vital in the job market and sometimes, the temporary summer job can turn into a permanent one if the teen impresses his or her employer.

This week, program participants went through a three-day pre-employment workshop at the Employment Security Commission office on Hanes Mill Road, where they were schooled about how to dress and act in the workplace.

Shakara Williams, 18, a Carter G. Woodson graduate, applied to the program through Goodwill. She is ready to work and believes the program will keep a lot of her peers from going wayward this summer.

"I think it's a good way to keep children doing something during the summer without doing negative things," said Williams, who will soon take Certified Nursing Assistant classes at Goodwill.

Jeremiah Rice, 17, learned about the program at Glenn High School, where he's a rising senior. He said he applied because he needed money and liked how easy the program made it for him to land his very first summer job.

Though Rice didn't apply for jobs at local individual companies, he says his friends have been successful by taking that route.

"A lot of my friends are actually getting jobs," said Rice, who said one of his friends had even landed a second job.

For more information, Carter can be reached via email at [dcarter@ptrc.org](mailto:dcarter@ptrc.org).



Carter



Rice



Photos by Layla Garm

Members of Dominique McDaniel's all female class listen to the keynote address.

## Kimberley

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tured in the book. With tears in her eyes, Baker told the audience the positive publicity was long overdue.

"You guys know how much I love this school," she declared. "I fight for it because nobody believes that we can do anything great, and this was just validation of it."

In her keynote address, District Court Judge Denise Hartsfield told the students to nurture their futures just as they nurtured their school garden.

"You're going to grow and you're going to bloom and you're going to be productive," she said. "...continue to grow in your mind and see the things that the world has to offer."

The book was one of several firsts Kimberley students experienced this year. The fifth graders made school history by taking their first-ever field trip to Washington, DC. Students giggled and pointed as photo after photo appeared on screen, documenting their journey to the nation's capital.

"For the first time I got to experience the city that I love so much through the eyes of children that I love so much," Baker, an alumna of D.C.-based Howard University, said.

Kimberley Park's Singing Eagles Girls Chorus also reached a milestone this year, by accept-



Dr. Amber Baker leads the graduation procession.

ing its first-ever invitation to the Carowinds Festival of Music, where the group earned high marks for their performance.

Hartsfield congratulated the youngsters on their achievements, which she said she expects to be the first of many.

"I know today that I stand amidst greatness," Hartsfield said. "Right here, there are politicians and senators and congressmen and yes, even somebody who is going to take this black robe from me."

Fifth grade teachers Jonathan Mack and Dominique McDaniel urged the students to draw on what they learned at Kimberley Park and continue to strive for excellence, in middle school and beyond.

"Mighty men, you have officially earned your stripes," Mack told his class of 16 boys. "...I

wish all of you the best in your future endeavors and encourage you to follow your dreams, aiming for the moon so if you miss, you will be amongst the stars."

McDaniel led a class of all young women.

Members of the Stratford Rotary Club also took measures to help the students succeed next year. The group has provided a wealth of support to the school this year, from providing tutors and annual holiday parties for each classroom, to purchasing a new public announcement system for the school. Club members furthered their reach last week, by providing fully stocked backpacks to every fifth grade graduate.

"We are so proud of this milestone," Club member Patty Mead, director of Annual Fund and Special Events at Senior Services Inc., told the students during the Club's presentation. "...Going forth, we want you to have every chance to be the best that you can be, and so each child is going to get a bookbag filled with all the supplies that are necessary for sixth grade success. So nobody is going to hold you back except yourself."



Mead

**African American Clergy Stand in Support of Access to Quality Educational Options for ALL Families**

**Throughout history, the Black church has remained the conscience of the African-American community. When educational doors were closed, the Black church created schools. But the fight for equal opportunity in education continues today as many Black families find themselves unable to access a quality education for their children.**

**More than 336,000 low-income and minority children across North Carolina failed end-of-grade tests last year.**

**Black churches were there then, and we need them here now.**

**A measure recently introduced in the General Assembly, House Bill 1104 N.C. Opportunity Scholarship Tax Credit Program, will help lower income families better afford private education. House Bill 1104 allows disadvantaged children to receive scholarships up to \$4,000 to attend nonpublic schools of their choosing.**

**Below are the names of more than 50 African-American clergy across North Carolina who support House Bill 1104. Join them in calling on our state legislators to pass this measure and give our children an equal opportunity for success.**

**Visit [www.pefnc.org](http://www.pefnc.org) to learn more about House Bill 1104**

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