

Fund raiser proceeds to restore historic prep school

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Adair (Class of '39) of Chester.

Brainerd's impact on Chester was far-reaching, said Gina White, director of archives and special collections at Winthrop University in Rock Hill, S.C. The school provided African Americans the necessary tools to become educators, a sought-after profession during America's apartheid era.

"It had a profound effect on education of African Americans in South Carolina," she said. "It gave a source of education for peo-

ple who wanted to go on and be teachers."

The advent of public education convinced the Presbyterian Church to close Brainerd in 1939, ushering in the decline of private black prep schools. Today, only four are in existence nationally, including Laurinburg Institute 93 miles east of Charlotte. Only one original Brainerd building remains: Kumler Hall, which is in need of immediate repair. Proceeds from next week's fund raiser will go to that goal.

"It's going to require some

money and all the money can't come from this fund raiser alone," Rashad said. "The work needs to begin soon. The good part is it's a pretty sound building."

The benefit is a family affair. Ayers Allen will be in Charlotte, as will Rashad's sister, dancer-choreographer Debbie Allen, who will bring dance students from the AACC and Eva Dancers Ltd of Baltimore will also participate.

"My mother decided when she wanted to do this," Rashad said by telephone from New York, where she is starring in a production at Public Theatre. "Deborah has a window when she had time to help out."

The Freedmen's Bureau opened Brainerd in 1866 to educate newly-freed slaves. The Presbyterian Church supplied teachers and money on the 14-acre site, and an average of 145 students were enrolled yearly in grades 1-10. Many Brainerd students went on to Johnson C. Smith University in Charlotte, and a JCSU professor, J.D. Martin, was headmaster from 1928-35. Although students often showed up on campus with little more than the clothes on their backs, Brainerd students learned the classics, arts and sciences.

"It was a very well-rounded education," Rashad said. "While they didn't have a lot of material possessions, they had a real sense of purpose

about themselves. The people who went to Brainerd had a sense of service to humanity."

The Brainerd Heritage Fund, which raises money for the site, will ultimately decide what happens to Kumler as well as the overall site. It may decide to convert the building into a community center or historic site.

"Brainerd Institute is interwoven with the history of a

lot of people in that area," Rashad said.

"...What I'd like to see is something that serves all of Chester. The first thing is I'd like to see that building restored."

For information on "The Ivy of Education" benefit, call (704) 376-9476.

On the Net
Brainerd Heritage Fund:
www.brainerdheritagefund.org

Black voters play key role in 2004 election

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election time, but it ought to be continuous," says Rev. Arnold W. Howard of Baltimore, chairman of the African American Ministers Leadership Council, a non-partisan arm of People for the American Way.

His group, approximately 100 ministers from around the country, has launched a voter registration drive in seven states. The program, called "Sanctified Seven," is aimed at making a strong impact in states where statewide races are normally tightly contested.

The group is also paying special attention to states where the black voting-age population is high enough to mean the difference between victory and defeat. The ministers are encouraging individual parishioners to register at least seven people every few days and equally important, get them to show up at the polls.

The states, with their 2000 black turnout rates in parenthesis, are: Florida, with a black voting age population (BVAP) of 76.2 percent (43.2 percent); Illinois with a BVAP of 66.8 percent (67 percent); Michigan, with a BVAP of 67.6 percent (60.9 percent); Missouri with a BVAP of 67.9 percent, (68.2 percent); Ohio, with a BVAP of 67.4, (53.7 percent); Pennsylvania, with a BVAP of 68.1 percent (61.3 percent); and Wisconsin, with a BVAP of 70.8 percent (62 percent).

In just one month, the group has already registered more than 2,000 new voters in Cleveland, according to Rev. Romal J. Tune of Washington, the national field organizer for the ministers program.

"People are very energized. People are interested in the issues," Tune says. "Ministers groups and congregations have been doing registration at malls, shopping centers, grocery stores. They do what we call walks around the community in a seven-block radius of the church. We call them Jericho walks, knocking on doors," Tune says. "And then we have people in the pews who have influence in their workplace. They start with registering the entire congregation. And then the congregation goes out into other places. One lady said, 'I went to my bowling league and I registered 20 people.'"

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Please join the Northwest Corridor Community Development Corporation for a year-end update on redevelopment in the Historic WestEnd.



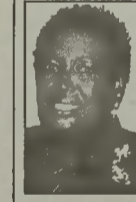
Thursday December 18, 2003
6:00 pm - 8:00 pm
Grimes Lounge
at
Johnson C. Smith University

RSVP to
Gwen Jackson 704/378-3542



Charlotte Chapter of National Women of Achievement, Inc. Celebrated Its 10th Annual Profiles of Prominence Banquet

Charlotte's Oasis Shriners Temple was the venue chosen for this auspicious occasion featuring a multi-task presentation honoring prestigious community leaders and awarding scholarships to deserving recipients.



Dr. Daisy Walker

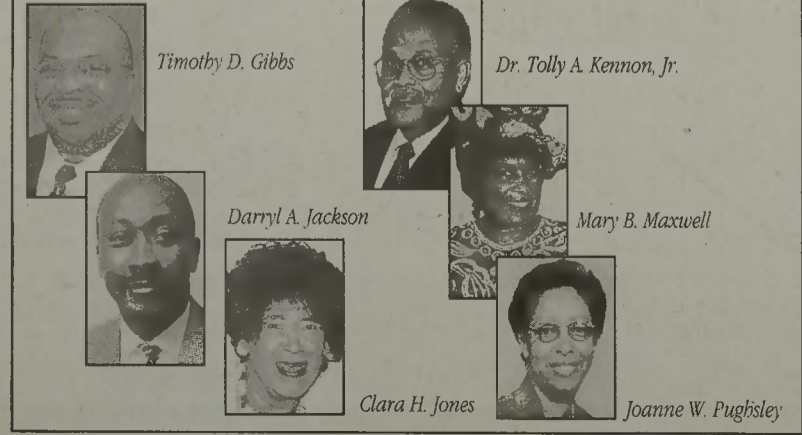
The affable Dr. Daisy R. Walker served as mistress of ceremony. Keynote speaker Dr. Wilhelmenia Rembert, engaged the audience with thought-provoking insight as she expounded on the chapter's theme: Weaving Pathways Toward the Vision "No Child Left Behind," as she made crystal clear the need for parental involvement, and the role the community must take as advocates for the future leaders of the 21st century.



Dr. Wilhelmenia Rembert

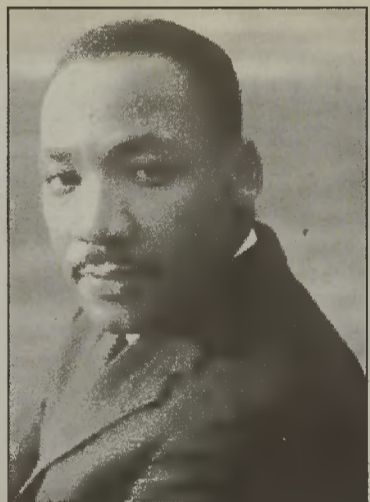
In keeping with the goals of promoting excellence in youth, the Charlotte Chapter of National Women of Achievement, Inc. presented the NWOA Scholarship to Youth Achiever Justin Blakeney, the first high school graduate from the Charlotte Chapter's Youth Achievers. Justin is a freshman at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte and maintains a 3.6 grade point average. In memory of Achiever E. Denise Randolph Little, the Charlotte Chapter established a scholarship fund to commensurate the service and commitment she gave as a superb member. Matthew K. Little received the first E. Denise Randolph Little Scholarship in memory of his mother. The One Thousand Dollar scholarship was placed in a trust account until he enters college.

The 7 prestigious honorees recognized for commendable and meritorious service in their chosen professions in the Charlotte community were: Timothy D. Gibbs, Transit Planning Manager for C.A.T.S., and West Charlotte High School Alumni historian and documentarian; Darryl A. Jackson, president Automotive Management Service Inc., and community service youth mentor and advisor; Clara H. Jones, owner Jones Piano Studio and founder of the Clara H. Jones Scholarship; Dr. Tolly A. Kennon Jr., oral surgeon, first black Chief Dept. of Dentistry for Carolina Medical Center and the first black dental specialist in North Carolina, Washington, D.C. and Atlanta, Ga; Mrs. Mary B. Maxwell, retired CMS/Communication Dept., and the epitome of the ultimate volunteer; Mrs. Joanne W. Pughsley, an award winning administrator and advocate for children; and Dr. Daisy R. Walker, assistant director Extended Year Programs/Service, CMS, and author of her first book.



Timothy D. Gibbs
Dr. Tolly A. Kennon, Jr.
Darryl A. Jackson
Mary B. Maxwell
Clara H. Jones
Joanne W. Pughsley

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Proceeds are directed toward our Community Outreach Campaign so that the dreams of Children and teens may be realized.

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