

26-97

## Teen scholar shines like a rare jewel

*Thirteen-year-old enrolled as special student at NCCU*

By Kifimbo Holloway  
Staff Reporter

When thinking of rarities, many things come to mind. In the case of Cynthia Bizell, her son Vincent, was her first encounter with extreme rarity; he is a young genius.

Vincent Gibson is not to be confused with Steve Urkel. He is shy and soft-spoken with knowing eyes.

As for fashion, his pants are never tight and always reaching below his ankles. And he seems to fit in perfectly at North Carolina Central University at age 13.

Vincent has yet to take his SAT or to be tested out of high school.

As a result, he is enrolled as a special student, with a special status at NCCU.

When describing those early years of dealing with a boy genius in the family Cynthia Bizell said, "It was hard."

While a student at the James E. Shepard Magnet School, Vincent began to stand out at an early age.

His mother and teachers began to notice his rare qualities when he was in the second grade.

"In the beginning, I could not tell that he was different," Bizell said. "I thought that it was normal that he learned multiplication tables in 30

minutes."

Bizell did notice that Vincent was a child who needed to be stimulated at all times.

His teachers got the same impression. School officials suggested that Vincent be prescribed Prozac in the second grade.

Much to their surprise, Vincent was a genius whose I.Q. level was tested at 141.

To help herself understand more about her son's intellectual ability, Bizell decided to do some research on the characteristics of geniuses.

She found that unlike most young children, who zone out into imaginary worlds and talk to their invisible playmates, geniuses are generally thought to be quite realistic and learn at an alarming rate.

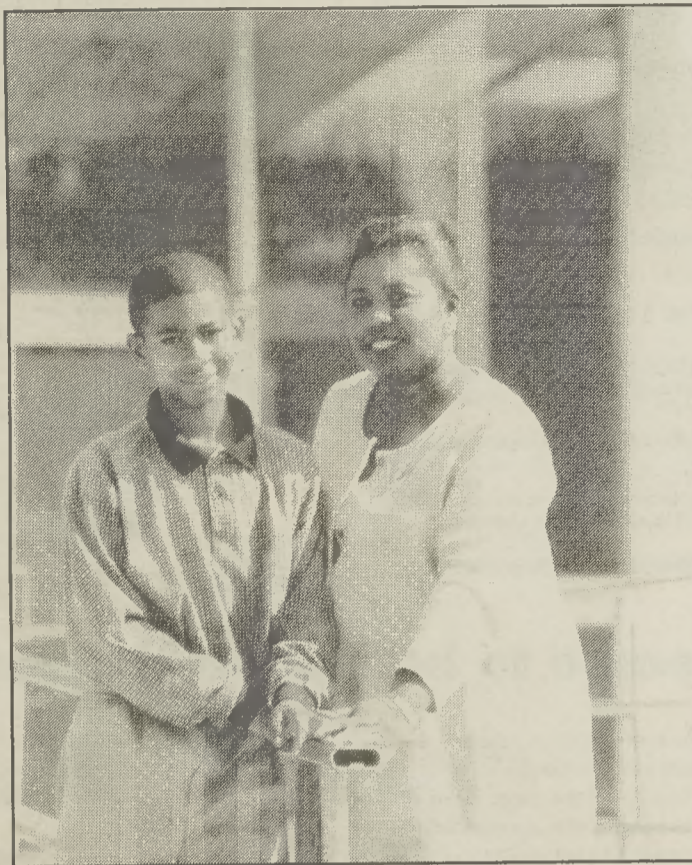
Vincent fit the mold, down to his obsessiveness with neatness.

Even for Vincent, who currently holds a 2.8 G.P.A., studying is not a prime demand. With a double major in Math and Biology and minor in Geography, he often finds himself reviewing notes just before class.

Despite his love for Shakespearean literature, and his fondness for Nathan McCall's autobiography, Makes Me Wanna Holler, his worst subject is English.

Vincent was quite popular with colleges such as UNC-Chapel Hill and Duke University, but his mother chose NCCU to give him a sense of self.

"The moment they heard that he was 11, that was it," Bizell said. "I



Cynthia Bizell saw NCCU as a safe haven for her son Vincent.

photo by Carey Johnson

chose NCCU because I thought it was a safe haven. I don't feel as though my son is being exploited here."

Unlike his mother, who is also an NCCU student, he is not receiving any scholarships. However, an anonymous benefactor has agreed to contribute \$2000 to help pay for Vincent's education next year.

Although Vincent has many genius attributes, his mom said that he is just a regular kid.

His age has stopped students from inviting him to parties and joining fraternities, but he enjoys playing Nintendo, riding bikes with his friends and going to the mall.

At times he has to be disciplined, and like most 13-year-old males, he has peaking interest in the young ladies.

His current sweetheart lives in his former hometown of Goldsboro, NC.

"She's really special," Gibson said.

Vincent has goals of either being a surgeon or a veterinarian. He believes that what he has is a gift from God.

According to Vincent, a genius is a someone who is smart, interacts well with others, and has a nice personality.

With Vincent's definition, we are all geniuses in our our rite.

## Conference to revisit Plessy v. Ferguson

Echo Reports

North Carolina Central University's Institute for the Study of Minority Issues will bring scholars to Durham October 25 for a re-examination of the concept of "separate but equal," services and institutions.

The one-day conference, beginning at 8:30 a.m. at the Miller-Morgan Building, will also feature a reprise of the U.S. Supreme Court argument which resulted in the decision that North Carolina's 12th Congressional District is constitutionally unacceptable.

NCCU Chancellor Julius Chambers, who argued in favor of the NC General Assembly's 12th District boundaries, will debate with Durham attorney and Duke law professor Robinson Everett.

Everett was one of the parties to the original suit challenging the district's shape and took a major role in the Supreme Court pleadings.

The conference will revisit the 100-year-old Plessy v. Ferguson Supreme Court decision.

The keynote speaker for the October 25 conference will be Christopher Edley, Jr., professor of law at Harvard University.

Edley will discuss the history, social impact, and relevance to contemporary issues of the Plessy decision.

## Contestants pool brain power for HBCU quiz show

By Shelvia Dancy  
Staff Reporter

Name the Catholic tradition held every 25th year that is marked by pilgrimages to Rome.

Okay, give up?

Try this one: she was the first African-American to appear in opera on television.

These questions may be a little tough for you (answers: Jubilee and Mary Leontyne Price), but for contestants in the Honda All-Star Challenge, questions like these are nothing but the usual.

Honda Campus All-Star Challenge is a quiz game (think Jeopardy!) for Historically Black Colleges and Universities nationwide.

It is sponsored by American Honda Motor Company Inc. North Carolina Central University is one of 87 HBCU's eligible to compete.

Participants field questions on everything from literature and chemistry to religion and current events—even pop culture.

The first 64 institutions to complete the qualification process, which includes selecting a campus All-Star team by January 15, will head to Orlando, Fla., to compete in the National Honda All-Star Competition.

At the National Competition, \$50,000 will be given to the college or university of the the first place team. Second-place winners will take home \$25,000 for their school.

"In the past five years we've placed in the top 16," said Dr. Shirley Harper, NCCU's All-Star campus team coach. "In 1994 we placed fourth."

Last year 50 students divided into five teams, competed for five slots and one alternate position on the university's All-Star team.

The 1996-97 NCCU campus All-

Star team tournament began Oct. 7. Harper hopes to have the team chosen by the end of the month.

Dr. Harper plans to choose students for a "junior varsity" All-Star team as well.

"My goal this year is to establish a 'JV' team with eight to 10 members," Dr. Harper said.

"It's mainly to prepare them for future participation. It would really help them to have that experience and expertise."

Three members of last year's All-Star team; Christopher Graves, Tony Frazier and Clayton Mack, will compete again this year.

Dr. Harper said their experience will help send NCCU's All-Star team to the top.

"We want to win the national championship," Harper said. "And I think this year's team will be able to do it."



Echo archives

## A million brothers strong

The date was Oct. 16, 1995 and a million Black men stormed into Washington, D. C. for the Million Man March.

Their goal was to challenge one another to improve their relationships with black women, apathy, violence, and community troubles.

Now, one year later, many people wonder whether the event really caused permanent changes in attitude or created any solutions to these problems.

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