

Students to be part of dyslexia study

By CHERYL WILLIAMS
Chronicle Staff Writer

More than 1,500 city/county students will be part of a \$3 million study on dyslexia that will be conducted by the Bowman Gray School of Medicine.

The Bowman Gray School of Medicine has received a five-year grant from the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development to do the study.

Bowman Gray will work in collaboration with the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, which has received a \$750,000 five-year grant from the National Institute of Neurological and Communicative Disorders.

"I'm very pleased that this research project will take place in our community," Superintendent Zane E. Eargle said at Monday night's school board meeting, which some of the researchers attended to discuss the project.

"The potential of this research is almost unlimited in terms of the benefits not only to our school system but to others as well," he said. "The program is the only one of its kind funded. The exciting thing for us in education is what we hope to learn about learning disabilities."

Bowman Gray competed with clinical and research centers nationwide for the grant.

Dyslexia is a problem that affects a person's ability to read but is not due to an emotional disorder or an impairment of intelligence, said Dr. Frank Wood, neuropsychologist at Bowman

Gray and director of the research project.

The purpose of the project is to gain a better understanding of dyslexia through working with students and adults who have the problem.

According to information about the project, three of the things the researchers hope to achieve are: to come up with an effective definition of dyslexia which distinguishes it from other learning disabilities such as attention deficit disorder, to find out the impact of different teaching

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methods on different learning disabilities, and to study the role of dyslexia in an adult's life.

C. Douglas Carter, assistant superintendent for support services, said Tuesday that although he didn't have specific figures on the number of students with dyslexia, the total number of students in the school system with learning disabilities is 1,200 students. Approximately 351 of these students are black.

But dyslexia, Wood said Tuesday, affects blacks as equally as whites. "There are no race differences or economic differences," Wood said.

Wood said, however, that there is a sex difference with dyslexia, which is estimated to af-

fect about 5 percent of the population, 80 percent of whom are males.

The research project will use a total of 1,650 students. Participation in the project will be voluntary, and parental consent must be given.

Three groups of students will be used for the identification and follow-up of children with reading disabilities. The groups are 600 kindergarten children, 600 first-graders and 450 third-graders.

Each group of students will be tested and also retested in follow-up studies.

Testing will begin this year, Wood said.

Another component of the research project will use adults who were diagnosed 20 years ago as having dyslexia.

Board member Thomas C. Voss told other board members Monday that he sees the project as having a great impact. He suggested that the board's curriculum committee should meet to discuss the mechanics of the project.

Board member Gerald N. Hewitt asked the researchers present at the meeting what they intend to do with what they find. "What's the next step?" he asked.

Wood said he could not predict the outcome of the research but that the research could mean a payoff in earlier identification of learning disabilities and improved teaching methods.

Update

From Page A1

crowding into its parking lot each night, is finding some relief with a city ordinance and the weather.

Wilbert T. Jenkins, the shopping center's manager, said that the Board of Aldermen passed an ordinance in July that will allow him to post signs prohibiting parking in the center's lot after business hours.

He said he has not posted any signs yet but that he intends to. "The signs are being made up now," he said.

The signs will prohibit parking in the center's lot from 10 p.m. until 7 a.m., Jenkins said.

The ordinance gives the police more enforcement power, he added.

"It (the ordinance) is having the effect of being able to at least get a working situation with the police," Jenkins said. "All we have to do now is call the police department, and they are coming out and clearing the lot."

The problem of young people gathering in the lot hasn't been eliminated altogether by the ordinance, Jenkins said. "But at least there has been some relief."

Jenkins said that the weather is also lessening the problem. As the weather gets cooler, he said, it becomes less desirable to the young people to come to the parking lot.

Upshaw's successor

No successor has been found yet to replace a city employee who resigned from his job after he was arrested and charged with taking money from the purse of his secretary.

Pat W. Swann, assistant city manager for public works, said that applicants are now being interviewed for the position which was held by Larry V. Upshaw.

Swann said it may be about three weeks before an offer is made.

Upshaw, 34, pleaded guilty in District Court in July to misdemeanor larceny in the theft of \$9 from the purse of Mary Ruth Vogt.

He received a 30-day suspended sentence and was placed on probation for two years.

Alderman Larry W. Womble has said he would prefer a black person to replace Upshaw, who is black.

Lawsuit's still on

The local NAACP still plans to file a lawsuit against Forsyth County challenging its at-large method of electing county commissioners, NAACP President Walter Marshall said Monday. "At-large elections

discriminate against blacks," Marshall told the *Chronicle* in July.

The NAACP's decision to file the lawsuit came after the defeat of Mazie S. Woodruff, the only black county commissioner, in the May 6 Democratic primary.

Marshall said that everything should be ready in order to file the suit; it's just a matter of filing it.

"We had all the information as far back as two weeks ago," Marshall said. "It's just a matter of him (attorney) getting to file it."

Lumberton attorney Angus Thompson is handling the case for the NAACP.

Marshall said that there is no real push to file the suit immediately since the NAACP won't be trying to block the November elections.

The *Chronicle* welcomes suggestions and update ideas from the readers. If you ever wonder what happened after a story was printed, give us a call and we'll find out. The telephone number is 723-8428.

'Roots' creator

From Page A3

find," he said. "I can't wait to write that lady's story. It is a fantastic women's story. She was sheer inspiration. It seems incredible that no one has ever written it, and I'm about to do it."

Later, in his lecture to the sold-out SECCA audience, Haley related the events that led to his own success story.

The oldest of three sons, Haley admits that he was "not a good student and did not do well in school."

"My father decided I needed to 'mature,' so he searched the military services, and there was one called the Coast Guard which had a three-year enlistment. He thought that was all the time I needed to mature," Haley said, laughing at the thought. "While I was at sea, I wrote letters to all the people I had known in school and extolled how much I liked the service, not so much because I enjoyed writing but so they would tell my father. On the ship it had the result of earning me the reputation of being the most prolific writer on the ship."

Haley eventually earned a dollar a letter writing love notes, which his shipmates sent to their girlfriends, a venture he said "gave me the idea that there might be something for me in writing after all."

From those humble beginnings, Haley launched a successful career writing books and pieces for magazines. But he resents any comparisons to the man who is his mentor and close friend.

"Anytime someone comes up to me and asks me how it feels to be bigger than (James) Baldwin, I want to hit them," Haley said, recalling his first meeting with the author at Haley's Greenwich Village apartment. "I'll always remember the way that man put a psychic arm around me. *Nobody* gets bigger than Baldwin."

During his lecture, Haley recounted the history of his now-famous family roots and discussed the dreams his slave ancestors had that "there's gone be a better day."

"The composition of this audience here tonight would not have been possible in North Carolina only 40 years ago," Haley said, pointing around the racially mixed audience. "I cannot imagine a greater manifestation of their dream of a better day. We are realizing what they never dreamed could happen. It is symbolic for me because I find myself looking at the manifestation of these prayers and knowing that the call now is to set about, with an even greater will than ever before, the business of making things better for our children."

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