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An Important Element

History is an important element for any human being who wants to understand more about himself or others.

It's fitting that in this first issue of the African American Times of the school year that we feature a school in the Forsyth County that has a rich and proud history which is now looking to a bright future. Even the man the school is named after was a very respected and influential African American who did much for this school system and his community -- Jefferson Davis Diggs.

When thinking about Jefferson Davis Diggs Elementary School and its past we know that originally it was part of a segregated school system which educated black and white students in separate facilities.

However within that segregated system, Diggs bore the reputation of one of the finest institutions in the African American community. Right in the Happy Hill Garden neighborhood, it was designated for the gifted and talented students.

When integration came, the walls of the segregated school system were broken down bringing different ethnic groups and cultures together to study and learn about and from one another. But it also meant the closing for some very fine community institutions, including Diggs.

Now Jefferson Davis Diggs has opened its doors again and promises to be one of the finest schools in this school system and beyond.

The history behind Diggs Elementary School can teach us a lot. And this year through the African American Times as students you should plan not only to learn about important historical elements and people in African American history but share our culture and ideas with one another.

In the Times we welcome materials not only from students but teachers and faculty. This is an African American publication but it's important to all of us. For all of us to get along better we must understand that we have differences. By sharing those differences with one another we can appreciate them and learn from them.

I invite you to dig into the African American Times this year and share in all the excitement that African American culture has to offer historically and in the present.

A Hero In Our Midst

▲ First black named as Chairman of Joint Chiefs of Staff

African Americans have numerous heroes and history makers that have put positive examples of their culture into the main fabric of society.

Colin Powell is high in the ranks.

Born to Luther and Maud Ariel Powell on April 15, 1937, Colin through the guidance and encouragement of his parents was destined to be a success.

Having come to the United States from Jamaica 20 years before Colin was born, his parents taught him to believe in himself.

Although a hard worker in school, performing to the best of his ability, Powell was put in a class for slow students.

This did not slow down his determination for success.

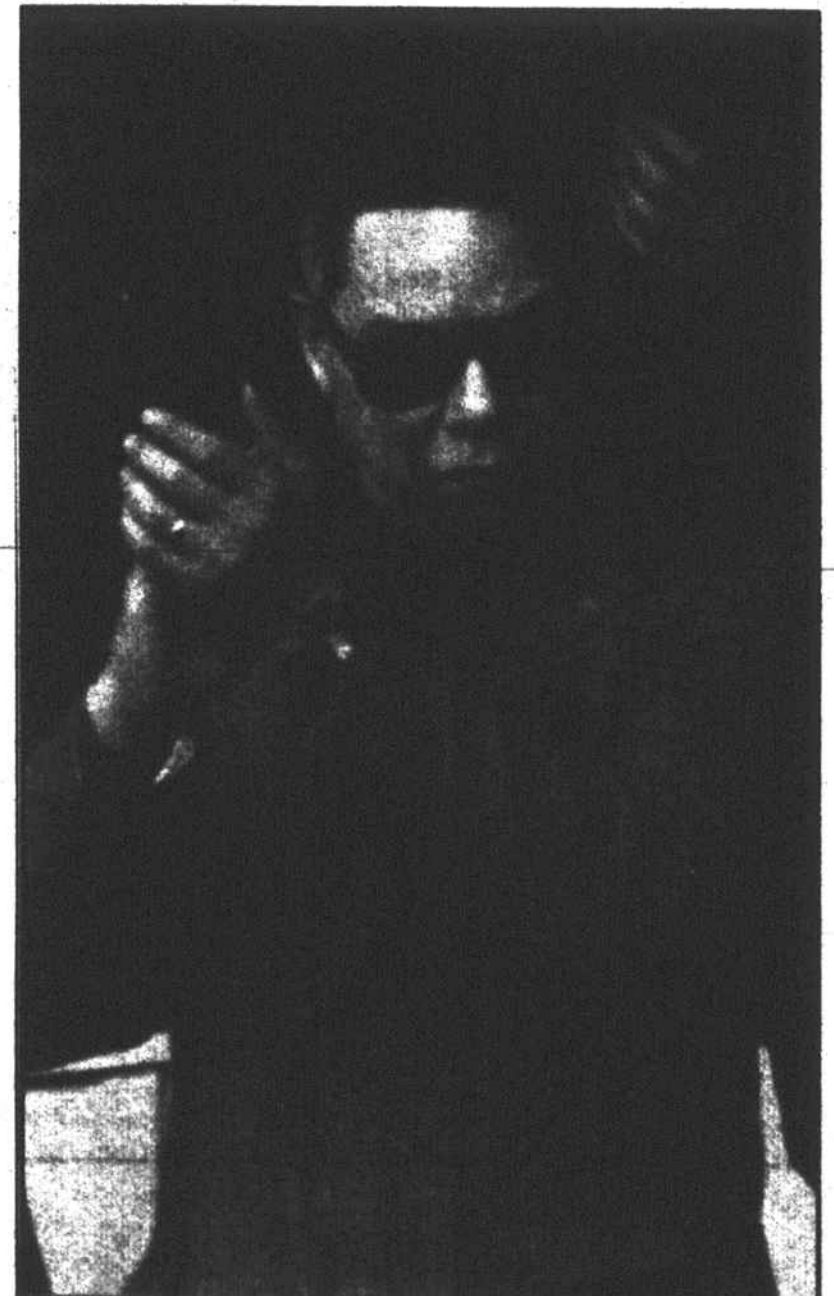
After high school he entered the city college of New York and enrolled in Reserve Officers Training (ROTC).

Powell gave serious consideration to an army career despite the prejudices and limited opportunities he would face. But in 1948 President Harry Truman integrated the army and by the 1950's the army was known to actively recruit and advance minorities.

In 1958 Powell graduated from college at the top of his ROTC class and had been promoted to cadet colonel, the corps highest rank.



Colin Powell



Former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Lt. Gen. Colin Powell applauds as he viewed a NFL football game in 1993. American people say they don't know much about Powell's politics, but they know they like the former military leader and possible 1996 presidential candidate.

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