

# Student earns state volunteer award

CHRONICLE STAFF REPORT

Joshua Nzewi, the 16-year-old son of Emmanuel and Sochi Nzewi of Kernersville, took home one of the four state youth volunteer awards at the State 4-H Council Conference in Raleigh on Nov. 21.

The awards were presented to individuals who have demonstrated outstanding leadership and volunteer service during the past one year period. Nzewi

has served more than 40 hours teaching 4th grade students at five local elementary schools 4-H workshops on "The Magic of Electricity."



Nzewi

He has also earned the Congressional Silver Award and the Gold Presidential Award for his volunteer work.

His other 4-H volunteer activities include teaching two 4-H Summer Adventures workshops; organizing and participating in N.C. Big Sweep

with his 4-H club; writing Christmas cards and thank you notes to soldiers in Iraq; helping with the Adopt a Highway Clean-Up four times; and volunteering at the 4th-grade 4-H Heritage Day Program.

For his 4-H volunteer work, Nzewi was also selected as the 2009 4-H Volunteer of the Year for Forsyth County.

"Forsyth County 4-H is proud to call Josh one of our own," said April Bowman, 4-H Extension agent. "Josh's commitment to helping others is a role model for other youth to follow."



Photos by Layla Farmer

Mayor Pro Tempore Vivian Burke presents the proclamation to ACS President Christine Jolly.

## Diabetes

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well, and his blood sugar and pressure under control.

Since that time, James has been seeing an endocrinologist, a specialist in diabetes and other metabolic disorders, at Wake Forest University School of Medicine, to monitor his diabetes. He says she "has been such a positive influence, role model, physician and friend. She is a tremendous motivator." One day James was nervous about going to his appointment because he had been to a fish fry the weekend before, and had "eaten everything I could eat there."

But he says, his doctor gave him some sound advice that day.

"You can't fall off the deep end in one meal, you're not letting it become a lifestyle. Sometimes it's good to enjoy at gatherings or reunions like that, but you stay with your plan," said James. "Have a piece of cake instead of the whole thing, for example."

James says it is kind treatment like that that makes him feel comfortable asking questions, or talking about something he has read or heard somewhere, and he makes notes in between visits about things he wants to talk about the next time.

James also believes that he has to play an active role in the management of his diabetes; in addition to making healthy food choices, exercise is an important part of his day. He

describes how he drove by his local YMCA many times, "every time I drove past the Y it was like I needed to stop in there, and one day I did. They showed me around, I had no idea all of those facilities were in that one building! They helped me set up my weight and cardiovascular exercise regimen."

James says it wasn't easy at first, "the first time I got on the elliptical I struggled to do 7 minutes, I mean struggled. The next time I did 5 minutes, and I thought, 'I can't do this.' But, I kept doing it until I could do 30 minutes and I could do the 12 weight machines on my regimen." He said he was so proud to be able to show his doctor how well he was doing, and how he was getting trimmer and losing weight. One day, he says there was an older gentleman in the Y, lifting a lot of weight, and James was somewhat embarrassed, because he was only lifting a little. But he says he then realized that his taking care of himself is an individual thing, you follow your plan and you do what's best for you.

In talking about what advice James would give to others with diabetes, he says it's important to "learn about the disease. Understand that though it may not be curable, it is very much so treatable. And you can enhance your treatment by doing those things you can do, eating correctly, and exercising."

Having an open relationship with your doctor is especially important, and James

recommends people go in to see their doctors with an open mind, and be willing to work with them to take care of themselves.

He also says that "developing a new lifestyle doesn't mean that you can't enjoy some of the ethnic things we always enjoy, but you will find that food tastes just as good without it." James says his faith is his motivation, and that he prays every time before he exercises, and that developing hobbies and making time for your family are just as important to taking care of yourself. "Check your lifestyle and don't be afraid to change it" he says is the most important thing, "keep a positive attitude and realize that life is meant to be enjoyed and appreciated."

Remember, eating a healthy diet, maintaining an active lifestyle and getting regular checkups with your doctor are the best ways to take care of your diabetes and enjoy an active lifestyle.

For more information, check out the American Diabetes Association website at [www.diabetes.org](http://www.diabetes.org) and the National Diabetes Education Program at [www.ndep.nih.gov](http://www.ndep.nih.gov).

Do you need further information or have questions or comments about this article? Please call toll-free 1-877-530-1824. Or, for more information about the Maya Angelou Center for Health Equity, please visit our website: <http://www.wfubmc.edu/minortyhealth>.

## AIDS

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tant for me to be involved, helping, in the sense of being part of the solution," said the Puerto Rico native.

While medications and treatment have improved vastly, people's attitudes about HIV/AIDS have not, Perez said.

"I feel that the stigma (of the disease) is the biggest challenge that we're facing," he commented. "...sex is still a taboo (subject) in our American society."

For much of the forum, participants broke into smaller groups to talk about the challenges in the fight against HIV/AIDS. The need for awareness; integrating diverse groups in HIV prevention; and fighting the stigma of the disease were among the topics discussed during the sessions.

One participant talked of the importance of instilling self-confidence in people living with HIV/AIDS.

"The 'blame game' is sometimes one of our worst enemies because we lay so much of the blame on ourselves," said Laura Barnes during a session on erasing stigmas. "If you empower a patient and you move them from a victim status to someone who is taking control, you will get a better quality of life for them."

Dr. Samuel Pegram, director of the Infectious Diseases Specialty Clinic at



Tracie Kochanny



Dr. Samuel Pegram

Wake Forest University Baptist Medical Center, gave the keynote address, touting the advances in treatment and global efforts to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS.

"This is what we tell all our patients," Pegram related. "If you take your medications, we can put your virus to sleep. If your virus is asleep, your immune system is left alone."

Pregnant women who are infected can now reduce their babies' chances of contracting the disease below one percent, if they are treated before the baby is born, Pegram said. New drugs that have hit the markets in recent years have helped to slow the mortality rates of the disease as well, he added.

Despite many medical advancements, the disease is still a serious problem, causing millions of deaths across the globe each year, Pegram said. Some groups, such as

African Americans and MSMs (men who have sex with men), are at a greatly increased risk, he added.

Mayor Pro Tempore Vivian Burke was on-hand at the start of the discussion to read a proclamation issued by Mayor Allen Joines proclaiming the city's support of World AIDS Day.

ACS also launched its newest fundraising and awareness effort, "The 1500," on World AIDS Day, in honor of its 15th anniversary. The organization's goal is to get 1500 people in the community to donate \$15 by the culmination ceremony for its signature Dining with Friends events, slated for Feb. 27, 2010. More than 20 people had contributed to the campaign by the end of the program.

Learn more about ACS by going to [www.aidscareservice.org](http://www.aidscareservice.org).



Photos by Layla Farmer

Ground is officially broken on the renovation project.

## Apartments

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complete with complementary washers and dryers for the new tenants. The exterior of the buildings and grounds will also be given a facelift.

"I really hope it will improve the area as far as the quality of life for people who live in the units," remarked HAWS' Alisa Quick. "I think the upgrades are long overdue."

The project is part of the Housing Authority's strategic plan to revitalize a 130-acre area in the east side of town, in hopes of making it more appealing to retailers and developers, Woods said.

"One of the roles of the Housing Authority, in my thinking, is to stimulate private investment by using public dollars to come in first," he remarked. "Hopefully, we'll start changing the image of this area."

Mayor Allen Joines was among those in attendance at the ceremony. Joines, a



A rendering of the new design.

champion of the city's many revitalization efforts, praised HAWS for taking the initiative to begin breathing new life into the area.

"I applaud the Housing Authority ... for rethinking this to make it more market friendly," he remarked. "It'll ... be a great asset for the community here."

Constructed around 1971, the Tenth Street Apartments were remodeled in the early 1990's and named Johnson Square, in honor of then-community organizer Joycelyn Johnson prior to her election to City Council.

"Housing has been a very strong passion of mine for a

long time," she noted. "(This facility) has not had an major upfit, so it's time to do something."

Johnson, now in the waning days of her term, was all smiles at the groundbreaking.

"The strong east wind is blowing again in our community," she declared, surveying the audience.

The new units will have an additional half bath, a trait that Johnson believes will make them more comfortable for tenants. The project is one of a handful of similar efforts that Johnson says she is helping to bring online.



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