Love Of Learning Is On Track With **Black Students**

Davidson, NC - Don't be surprised if you visit the Davidson College campus on a sultry summer afternoon and find 13 black teenagers jotting down meters per second as their classmates take turns running a 40-meter course marked off along the service road beside the Dana Science Building.

What may seem like an unusual exercise on a hot July day is a carefully planned lesson in calculating velocity and accelera-tion. Using the campus as an outdoor lab, physics teacher Kara Gilmore is trying to make abstract principles come alive for her students all 12th graders for her students, all 12th graders participating in the month-long Love of Learning program at Davidson.

"I want to make physics less intimidating," says Ms. Gilmore, a 1985 Davidson graduate who has taught physics and chemis-try at Charlotte Latin school for the past two years. "I'm planning a lot of hands-on activity and lab investigations to show how physical processes work.'

Kara Gilmore typifies what Love of Learning Director Bren-da Tapia looks for in every in-structor involved in this innova-tive, educational support program for black high school students. "You want teachers who are

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full of energy, creative, who love what they're doing, because they stimulate love of learning in their students," says Ms. Tapia. "Their students remember them years later. Some of them choose careers in teaching be-cause a special teacher has touched them." Alarmed by the shrinking numbers of black students en-rolling in college Davideon offi

rolling in college, Davidson offi-cials launched Love of Learning last summer as a pilot project to identify "diamonds in the rough" -- talented black students who might not otherwise aspire to college careers and help them develop the skills, motivation and self-esteem they need to

succeed in college. Begun with 29 11th graders last summer, this year's pro-gram expanded to include 31 ninth graders and 22 12th grad-ers from the Charlotte-Mecklenburg School System. Love of Learning stresses early intervention, identifying prom-ising minority students in the eighth grade and involving them in a five-year sequential program of summer and academic-

year experiences. Thomas Kirkley, a senior at West Charlotte High School, is in his second year with the Love of Learning program. This sum-mer, he feels more comfortable with the other kids, knows his way around campus and is even more convinced of the program's value than he was at the outset.

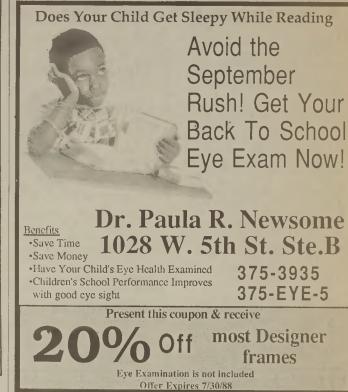
"My SAT scores went from 770 to 1,060 after last summer, and I hope they'll go up again when I take the test in August," he said. "We have fun while we're learn-ing, we get a head start on tough subjects like calculus, and best of all, we're like brothers and sisters -- we help each other out

to describe it -- to "turn stum-bling blocks into stepping stones." Twelve Davidson stu-dents work as counselormentors with the Love of Learning program to overcome one big stumbling block - the notion that a high academic achiever is a nerd.

"We try to show these kids that you can do well academically and still be fun and popular," explains Ms. Tapia.

She's delighted by the fact that at least a dozen members of the pilot groups of students have expressed an interest in enrolling at Davidson. That's a promising at Davidson. That's a promotion sign that Love of Learning is right on track toward its long-range goal: to encourage students to enroll in college, go on to graduate school and pursue careers in teaching.





Charlotte-Mecklenburg Ninth Graders Lakesha Crawford, Northeast Junior High; and Darryl Hart, Alexander Graham Junior High You can't have a good day without a good night's sleep. Almost one-third of your life is spent trying to get the sleep you need to enjoy the other two-thirds.

Thursday July 21, 1988 - THE CHARLOTTE POST - Page 3A

when there's something we don't understand. For Kisha Davis, a ninth grad-

at Harding High school in Charlotte, this is her first exper-ience with life on a college cambut she's determined it pus, won't be her last.

"I want to go to college," she says, "and this program gives me a chance to see what college is all about, as well as brush up on my greatest weakness -- alge-bra!"

A typical day in the life of a Love of Learning participant in-cludes classes in math, English and science, physical education, SAT test preparation, leadership training and a study period

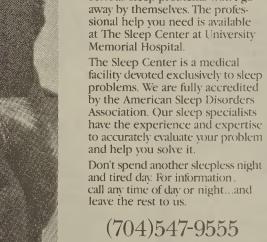
in the college library. Although it's a long, intensive day -- with activities scheduled from 8:45 a.m. to 9 p.m. - time is set aside for social activities like picnics, dances and trips to Carowinds and to the Afro-American Cultural Center in Charlotte.

Despite the rigorous schedule, Ms. Tapia doesn't expect to find students falling asleep in class.

"All the teachers will try to connect concepts learned in the classroom to the kids' lives and career interests," she says. "Classroom material will include thumbnail biographies of fa-mous blacks who have excelled in their particular disciplines."

Love of Learning participants will also get plenty of "hands-on" experience with computers. The Charlotte-Mecklenburg School system has loaned the program 15 computers to supplement equipment available at Davidson.

Although academic skills are emphasized, the most important goal of the program is to build elf-esteem, or as Ms. Tapia likes



cally and mentally.

If your nights aren't as restful as they should be, it's important

to find out why. Frequent difficulty

in falling asleep, or staying asleep,

can be harmful to you both physi-

Serious sleep problems won't go

The Sleep Center

University Memorial Hospital W.T. Harris Blvd. at U.S. 29 Charlotte, NC W.T. Harris Blvd. at U.S. 29 Charlotte, NC 28221 A Facility of The Charlotte-Mecklenburg Hospital Authority