

Fashion, technology meet at MLK

Continued from page 1A

web log or blogs now available through Microsoft.

"The idea was first introduced to me by Cary Mitchell," said Juan Flowers. "He and I met some months ago at Microsoft and had a meeting to discuss his vision."



Mitchell said he was "trying to do something different to let the students know that someone is doing something special for them."

"Fashion in the Schools is a way I can do something to help a child feel better about [themselves]," said Mitchell.

And by joining with Microsoft, they are able to capture the entire process of the design experience in the students' own words, thus allowing them to share with others if the program did make them feel better about themselves.

"From our perspective, we felt it was a great opportunity for us to engage with the students, as well as Cary, and help with the technology side," said Flowers. "We're helping them to set-up a web blog...that can be publicly available for viewing...to show the progress from the vision to fruition. From our standpoint, we thought it was best for us to jump on."

From a technology standpoint, keeping a web diary or blogging is one of the fastest growing trends. In November of 2006, blog search engine Technorati tracked nearly 60 million blogs. And, as with most newer technologies, it is very popular with the younger generation.

"The unique thing about a blog is it's pretty much a mechanism where you can tell your own story," said Flowers. "That technology has been very attractive to young people...and the accessibility of using it is so avail-

able now. Everywhere you look there's MSN spaces, Myspace...just to name a few, which are available for students to actually log their whole life if they wanted to."

But rather than their whole lives, Mitchell and Flowers, both graduates of Johnson C. Smith, have taken a slice of the students' lives to share with the world.

"As far as the blog is concerned, for this project, it's a perfect platform for the students. [They] can just jot down rather than in a notebook or loose leaf paper but actually electronically record the progress of the whole project."

Flowers is also a member of the diversity advisory council at Microsoft, who work to promote diversity in the workplace. As president of Blacks at Microsoft, for Flowers it was more than an opportunity to create access to popular technology and promote diversity, it was a chance to get involved with the commu-

nity. "It was perfect for BAM, Cary Mitchell and other partners to collaborate and come up with a great idea to promote team spirit...and school spirit around the character of the students," Flowers said.

"With that the blog is a great way you can pretty much introduce to the whole world an idea for education and technology to collaborate together as well as show community involvement, community outreach and philanthropic ways in which you can benefit many."

In addition to the students, faculty that were involved with the program also have the opportunity to share their thoughts online. The website includes the uniform designs, photos from the kickoff event, the trip to Atlanta, and the final event, and students' thoughts on the whole process which began on October 2, 2006 and concluded with the final unveiling last week.

The Eighth graders at the school felt their uniform design would be the legacy they left at the school, yet with their online blogs and discussion of their experiences, they are able to leave their mark in more ways than one.

"It's a great way...and a great responsibility to assist students in being the best they can be," said Flowers. "And it's great when you have positive people come together to make positive things come to life. That's the best reward you can give anybody, particularly our youth today."

The Charlotte Post



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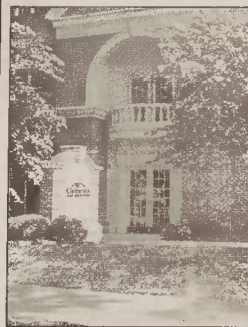
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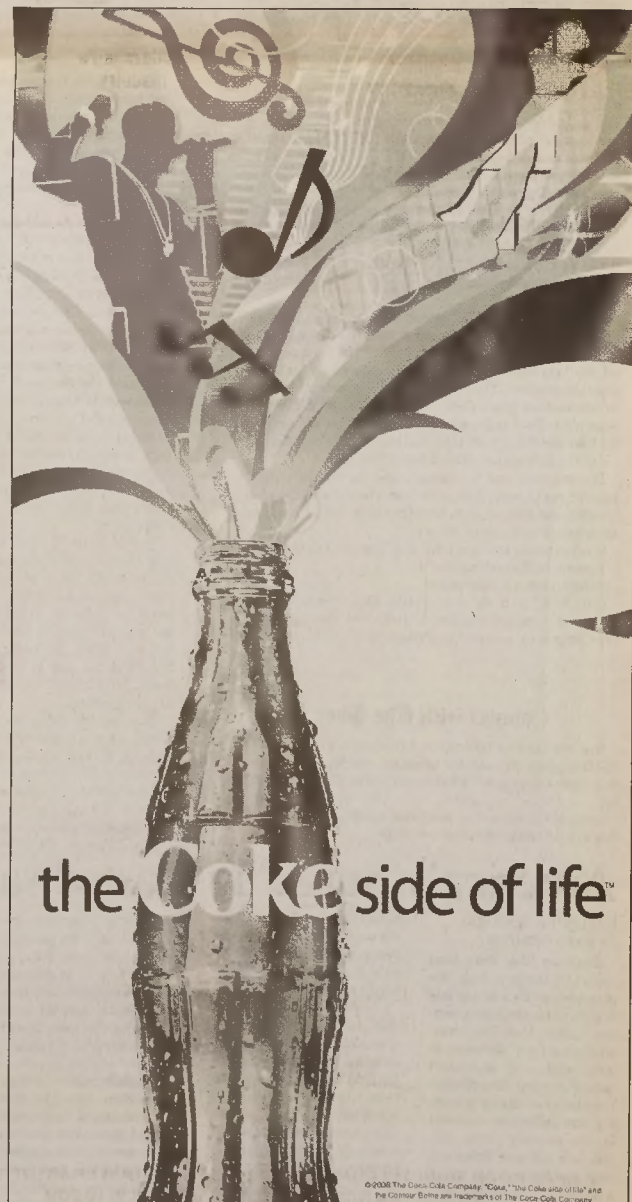
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Historians dispute aviators' record

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MONTGOMERY, Alabama — It has been part of the lore of America's first black fighter pilots since the end of World War II: The Tuskegee Army Airmen never lost a bomber to enemy fire.

But now, more than 60 years later, a leader of the group says he has uncovered records proving the claim is not accurate.

The Tuskegee Army Airmen were the first group of black fighter pilots allowed into the U.S. Army Air Corps. They got their name from the Alabama town where they trained.

With nearly 1,000 pilots and as many as 19,000 support personnel ranging from mechanics to nurses, the group was credited with shooting down more than 100 enemy aircraft and — for years — with never losing an American bomber under escort. But Air Force records show that at least a few bombers escorted by the red-tailed fighters of the Tuskegee Army were shot down by enemy planes, William F. Holton, historian of Tuskegee Army Airmen Inc., said in an interview with The Associated Press. And the group's losses may have been much greater, he said.

Holton's research was first reported Sunday by the Montgomery Advertiser.

Some surviving Army Airmen were offended by the findings of Holton and Daniel Haulman of the Air Force Historical Research Agency at Maxwell-Gunter Air Force Base in Montgomery, who came to the same conclusion.