

OUTREACH
From Page 5

Hart said many of the elementary schools were quickly becoming more diverse as an increased number of students with different backgrounds and ethnicities were seen in the population.

"We try to meet the needs of all our students," she said. "There are a wide range of programs. We have honors and Advanced Placement classes, cultural arts and athletics."

Reading Recovery, which has existed for eight years, is offered to low-progress readers. A group that includes about 50 percent minorities, a figure 30 percent higher than the school population.

Hart said teachers overseeing the program received specialized training to provide one-on-one tutoring to students. "Reading Recovery was formally evaluated and found to be tremendously successful," Hart said.

Many of the programs in the systems are funded by a combination of local funds and Title I federal grants, money allocated to the schools for students in a low socioeconomic status, she said. Bridges said programs in Orange

County Schools designed to help students who were not performing at grade level did not differentiate between races.

In the last four years, Bridges said teachers had worked with students to create success plans that addressed their weaknesses and gave them solutions.

"Because of these plans, we've seen a lowered retention rate," he said. "Students have shown significant improvement in both the minority and the majority even before the state put in accountability requirements."

Brenda McCormick, who teaches a minority studies class at Orange County High School, said a wide range of clubs were offered to broaden minority opportunities.

"The minority studies class covers African Americans, Native Americans, Hispanics and women," she said. "The African-American Cultural Club is also 70 members strong."

McCormick said that this year the club sponsored Black History Month and spearheaded a drive to help flood victims in Princeville, a primarily black community in eastern North Carolina. The club also tours black colleges every year.

The high school also offers the Math, Science and Educational Network,

which works with the University to make participants aware of job opportunities in those fields.

McCormick said MSEN and the minority classes offered were successful in exposing minorities to new experiences.

"I've seen students who have attended schools they would not have normally been exposed to," she said. "The MSEN has also boosted SAT scores."

McCann also teaches Community in Schools at Culbreth, a program that she said included a large number of minority students.

"The program is designed for students who need help because various barriers, such as problems at home, are preventing them from learning," she said.

"We try to remove those barriers by giving them time to do homework in school and providing tutoring and field trips."

Hart said the ultimate goal of these programs was to ensure that all students, regardless of race or socioeconomic status, would have equal opportunities.

"We want to give students the backing they need to be successful."

The City Editor can be reached at citydesk@unc.edu.

MINORITIES
From Page 5

was a B in his English 2 class.

While Li said he was comfortable with his academic performance, he said it was difficult adjusting socially at CHHS when some students ignored him because he was different.

"I have some really good friends," he said. "But I feel sometimes that other students don't like me because I'm a foreigner."

In addition to his concerns with adapting socially, Li said his future as well as his family's future was up in the air.

"My dad is asking for a green card, so we can stay here and I can go to college," he said. "I'd like to go to Duke, but it's so expensive."

Successful Endeavors

As students linger in Orange High School's cafeteria after school, sophomore Israel Martinez waves to a group of friends and approaches the school's array of drink machines.

Although Li said he struggled to establish solid relationships with fellow

students, Martinez said he enjoyed friends with varying backgrounds.

Martinez, whose parents are both native Mexicans, said despite being surrounded by exclusive social circles, he felt his ethnicity did not limit him from making friends.

"Most people (at Orange) stick to themselves and don't branch out," he said. "But I've got a wide range of friends."

Because Martinez was born in Dallas, Texas, and grew up speaking Spanish, he did not learn English until the first grade.

Though he has overcome the language barrier since moving to the area 12 years ago, Martinez said he had yet to eliminate all lingering academic obstacles.

"I'm struggling in biology right now," he said. "I've got to keep doing my work."

Martinez, who hopes to one day help others overcome the language barrier by becoming a professional translator, said he had little time for clubs or sports because he was focused on keeping up with his homework.

He said getting help after school was vital to his success.

"Teachers will only help out if you're willing to work at it," he said. "Teachers are not going to help you if you don't make the effort."

Beating the Odds

Not all area minority students feel they benefit from the same attention Martinez receives.

ECHHS senior Quinten Flemming said educational trends directed toward Scholastic Aptitude Test scores and grade point averages often left frustrated students struggling academically in the dark.

He said minority students often felt the brunt of this dilemma because they traditionally scored lower than their white classmates.

"I think minority students don't get the individual attention because there is so much emphasis on class rank and SATs," he said. "If no one is really pushing you, then you don't care."

As a minority student, Flemming said he often felt isolated from the predominantly white student body at ECHHS.

"For me, I was the only black person in my classes," he said. "It's hard to relate to people who aren't like you."

Despite his frustrations with standardized testing and the racial makeup in the classroom, Flemming said he had succeeded in beating the odds by making his schoolwork a top priority and beginning it the day it was assigned instead of procrastinating until the last minute.

Taking a cue from his mother, who was the family's first college alumna, Flemming said he would attend N.C. Agricultural & Technical University next fall.

"I have to get an education," he said. "It is something I have to do for myself."

The City Editor can be reached at citydesk@unc.edu.

VISIONS ART

From Page 3

teacher selected."

Some students responded favorably to the recognition they received.

Claire Rojstaczer, a 10th-grader at East Chapel Hill High School, said she was surprised her work was shown because she thought her teacher had misplaced it.

"I was mostly pleased because it had to be found," she said. "It was nice to know it hadn't vanished."

Claire's father, Stuart Rojstaczer, used a Yiddish term to describe his reaction to his daughter's success.

"I guess I kvelled," he said. "It means to beam with pride over the accomplishments of a loved one."

The show will run for about the next four weeks, Hrusovsky said. It runs from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. and is free to the public.

The City Editor can be reached at citydesk@unc.edu.

PLAN

From Page 3

other options to help generate affordable housing. "There are lots of initiatives going on to promote affordable housing," she said. "There will be alternatives, like Fannie Mae and the Housing Trust Fund."

Besides affordable housing, land development was also a major issue at the hearing. Chapel Hill Planning Director Roger Waldon presented the changes made to the Land Use Plan portion of the Comprehensive Plan.

He said changes included the designation of certain areas as public school sites and the designation of all neighborhoods around the University as "residential conservation areas" to maintain the character of the communities.

"The boundary to which Chapel Hill can grow has been pulled up in the south because water and sewer developments would affect environmentally sensitive areas," Waldon said.

Waldon continued to encourage residents to make their voices heard either through contacting the Planning Department or meeting with the Town Council on May 8.

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INTEGRITY

From Page 3

ferent facets," Klutz said. "We don't know what the outcome will be, whether we'll decide there is any integrity in politics or not; we just want to discuss the issues."

Guillory said that while the recent emphasis on community service was beneficial, he hoped the forum would inspire students to explore avenues of public service. "I do hope that forums like the one on Thursday night will point college students not just to private pursuits, but also to public pursuits," Guillory said. "Because the way to ensure integrity in government is to get people with integrity to run for office."

The University Editor can be reached at udesk@unc.edu.

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