

Education Today

David Banks and Eagle Academy soar to new heights

By JAIME C. HARRIS

Special to the AmNews

Keynote speaker Senator Hillary Clinton and David Banks smiled and exchanged nods of approval as Jordan Liz delivered a profound oratorical message. Standing on the stage inside the Roone Arledge Auditorium at Alfred Lerner Hall on the campus of Columbia University last Friday evening, the valedictorian of the class of 2008 of the Eagle Academy for Young Men expressed one of the event's prevailing themes.

"This is truly a historical moment," intoned Liz, who will be attending Hartwick College in the fall on a four-year scholarship.

Liz was not delving into hyperbole as Eagle, as it is commonly referred, graduated its first class after emerging as a national model for public education since its opening in 2004.



(Karl Crutchfield photo)

Conceptualized by One Hundred Black Men, Inc. to address the alarming educational crisis permeating urban communities throughout the nation, the school serves youth, all males, from grades 9 through 12.

Currently operating out of the Bronx High School for Law, Government and Justice, a groundbreaking ceremony was held in December to mark the construc-

tion of a \$42 million state-of-the-art complex located on Third Avenue and 176th Street in the Bronx that will welcome its first wave of pupils in September 2009.

There, Eagle will expand to provide its extraordinary human and material resources to pre-teens and teenagers attending grades 6 through 12.

"I cannot put into words what

this means to me," said Banks, the founding principal of Eagle, who formerly held the same distinction at Law, Government and Justice.

"To see the work and commitment of so many people come to fruition, knowing we are making a remarkable difference in the lives of our young men and the community at large, is truly amazing."

The St. John's University Law School grad and one of America's rising educational visionaries is relinquishing his role as principal to oversee the continued growth of Eagle, which includes the launching of an academy in the Brownsville section of Brooklyn.

Eagle's success can be attributed to numerous supporters, among others Clinton, who attended the ceremony only hours after appearing with the presumptive Democratic presi-

dential nominee, Senator Barack Obama, at a campaign event in Unity, New Hampshire.

Speaking to the graduates, their proud relatives and a host of other contributors and attendees, including Department of Education Chancellor Joel Klein, Congressman Gregory W. Meeks and Phillip Banks, Jr. of One Hundred Black Men, the father of David Banks, Clinton tied Sen. Obama's journey to the road the Eagle scholars are industriously traveling.

"Senator Obama has lived the American Dream," said Clinton. "The son of a single mother...he had the opportunity to go to a good school and then use his God-given talents and his willingness to work hard to pursue his own dreams."

Now, it is the Eagle class of 2008 that is charged with going forth to change the world.

ALP celebrates 40th anniversary

By CYRIL JOSH BARKER

Amsterdam News Staff

Going 40 years strong, Achieving Leadership's Purpose, Inc. is helping New

York's best and brightest young people become leaders in their communities. With over 300 people who have been through the program currently contributing to

communities around the nation, ALP is still cranking out more of tomorrow's movers and shakers.

What began as a way to get young Black men into the

priesthood in the late 1960s has now turned into a coed two-year program aimed at shaping Black high school students by giving them the tools to make change in the world. Every two years, APL selects 15 to 20 high school students from around the city to participate in the program. The students are selected through an interview process.

"The program is really about quality over quantity. We're about working with young people," said Executive Director Cheron Davis, who is an alumnus of the program. Originally from the Bronx, he is currently working at Bank of America and volunteers his time running ALP. "We look for students that we can add value to. We're not looking for a finished product."

A free program for students who are selected, the two-year duration of ALP is aimed at students with civic interests. Students participate in classes, book discussions, weekend retreats, college visits, cultural trips and community service. The organization boasts alumni of the program who have become lawyers, CEOs, educators and social workers. Distinguished alumni include Theodore Shaw, Melissa Fernandez and Gerald Adolph.

The organization says that students also receive instruction from some of the foremost and respected educators on Black culture, including Dr. Yosef Ben-Jochannan, Dr. Lenworth Gunther and Taur Orange.

Dionne Mosely went through the program from 2002 to 2004. She received



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Career Day, top scores and graduation at M.A.C.A.D.E.M.Y. School of Science and Technology

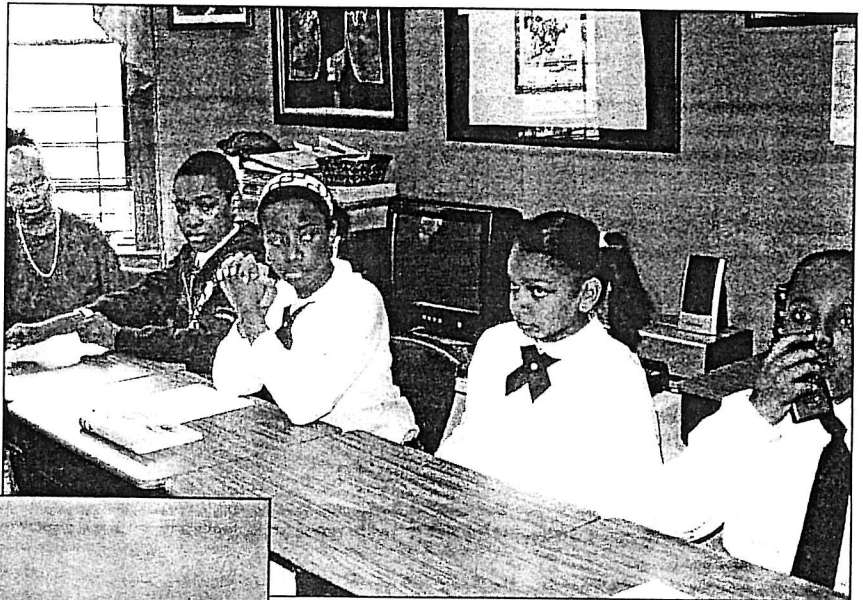
By MISANI

Special to the AmNews

The M.A.C.A.D.E.M.Y. School of Science and Technology, a private elementary and middle school at 1313 Union Street in Brooklyn, New York, recently held its annual Career Day initiative which served as an encouraging interactive learning tool for students. According to Bishop Sylveta Gonzales, the Jamaican-American founder and principal of the academy, which services pre-K through eighth grade, "The program was organized to have members of our community share their experiences with our

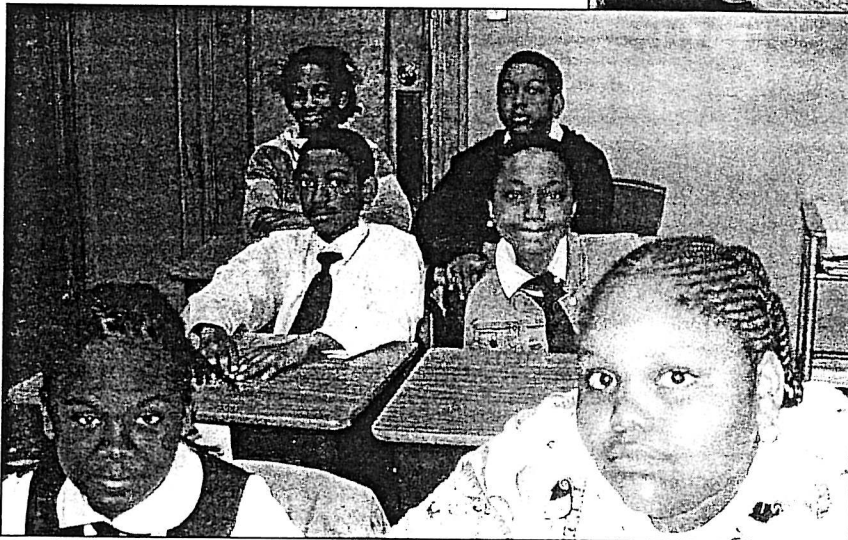
children in order to motivate and inspire them. We wanted our students to have this knowledge as they begin to put their own careers together."

At M.A.C.A.D.E.M.Y., which was awarded Five Stars by GreatSchools.net, the focus is a three-fold criterion centering on the development of academics, talent and purpose. The school, which was also recognized by "Who's Who in Middle Schools" for 2007 and 2008, scored 100% on the English Language Arts and Math State Standardized Tests. In addition, 80% of the students



M.A.C.A.D.E.M.Y.'s Bishop S. Gonzales and seventh-graders

(Misani photos)



passed with distinction, making the school's 14th annual graduation ceremony, which took place at the Brooklyn Museum on June 23, a major cause for celebration.

The Career Day presentations assisted to provide the young students with information and insight to help them further identify career areas in which they could use their academic training and talent to fulfill their life pur-

poses. Amongst the diverse group of participants were Mrs. Cecilia Zuckerman, President and CEO, Congressional Nursing Center; Mr. Michael Flannigan, Vice-President, City Bank; Una Clarke, Community Activist and former City Council Member; and Dr. Joan Byer, Pharmacist. I was also invited to speak to the middle school students about my career as a journalist.

Deas

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no treatment for this condition, and insurance companies refuse to recognize disability claims. In my practice, I have strongly made a number of recommendations.

First of all, since sleep is

essential for healing, I usually suggest that the patient remove all caffeine from his or her diet, as well as alcohol and nicotine.

Also, a good diet is essential and should be supplemented with a vitamin and mineral routine. Whole foods, such as grains, should be used frequently, and a calcium-

magnesium supplement should be taken daily. It appears that adding salt to the diet will prevent a drop in blood pressure.

Pain control is essential, and drugs to relieve such pain should be included. Often, a morphine derivative such as OxyContin or Tylenol 4, may be necessary and may be pre-

scribed by your physician.

In addition, it is essential that the patient maintain an uplifted spirit, which may be achieved through yoga and meditation. It is essential that the patient have a very understanding physician in order to facilitate such a positive outlook.

To all of you who may have

been given this diagnosis, just remember—tomorrow is another day, and the cure for this condition may be just around the corner. It has been shown that at least 12 percent of patients recover without any lasting symptoms. Like a hymn that we sing in our church, "Everything's gonna be all right."

ALP

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her undergraduate degree from La Salle University, where she studied criminal justice. She is currently preparing for the LSAT and aspires to practice family law. Living in Westchester, her sister attended the program before her.

"I learned great leadership skills while I was in the program. There is so much camaraderie, and all of us keep in touch. I attribute a lot of my motivation and drive to wanting to be in law to being in ALP," she said.

Now a CEO of an organization that gives money to community programs in Atlanta, Atiba Mbi-

wan went through ALP from 1976 to 1978, when the group was all male and affiliated with the Roman Catholic Church. ALP went coed in 1989 and has since broken away from the church.

"After going through this, I realized that as a leader I was going to make sacrifices for the greater good. I chose a career path

that would make a difference in our society," Mbiwan said.

Last Saturday, ALP celebrated its 40th anniversary with an annual program at the Lt. Joseph P. Kennedy, Jr. Memorial Community Center in Harlem. The event brought out parents and students who had participated in the program over the last four

decades and served as a reunion for students from previous classes.

At this year's event, parents were honored with plaques of African statues for their continued support to ALP. Eight families were honored at the event that was sponsored by Moët Hennessy.

Gospel

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giving a short sermon.

The witty and comedic Vick-

ie Winans performed on stage by herself with the help of pre-recorded music. Dressed in long black dress, Winans boasted that she was still able to sing in a high vocal range at

age 55 after doctors told her she couldn't when she had a cyst on her vocal chord years ago. She showed off her testimony on a song where she sang up multiple octaves.

The Brooklyn-based Hezekiah Walker and the Love Fellowship Choir gave an electrifying performance that included the songs, "That's What I Believe" and "There's Nothing Too Hard

For God." Walker, who can be heard on WLIR, was a previous contestant during the amateur round and lost years ago but proved how far he had come when his group took the stage.