

#10

HRC Date Files

5/25/94- 11/11/94

6/15

PHOTOCOPY
PRESERVATION

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- medal

June 14, 1994

COMMENCEMENT FOR THE DUKE ELLINGTON SCHOOL OF THE ARTS

DATE: June 15, 1994

TIME: 7-10 PM

LOCATION: Ellington School for the Arts
Washington, D.C.

FROM: Liz Bowyer *Clare Wofford*

I. PURPOSE

To address and congratulate the graduating class of the Duke Ellington School for the Arts and celebrate their twentieth anniversary. The First Lady will also receive the first Ellington Medal for her commitment to children.

II. BACKGROUND

and Mike Patton

The Duke Ellington School of the Arts was founded by Peggy Cooper-Cafritz in 1974 as a haven for the underprivileged but gifted youth of the city. Training approximately 400 young people for grades 9-12, it is the only predominantly African-American arts high school in the nation. Run by acting principle Carolyn Wilson, the school strives to recruit from the poorest neighborhoods of the city. 113 students will graduate in 1994. Although it is part of the D.C. public school system and continues to struggle with a lack of funding and resources, the school nevertheless has developed an excellent reputation in the community and the nation as both an academic institution and an arts training program. The school is primarily funded by the Ellington Fund (formed in 1978 as a fundraising arm of the school), the National Endowment for the Arts, corporate contributions, community groups and entertainers. The school is free to residents of the city.

demanding arts curric.

Aside from an academic curriculum which includes four years of English, three years of Social Studies, two years of Science, Mathematics, Foreign Language, Physical Education and Typing, the Ellington school offers intense training in all art forms: dance, theatre, technical theatre, vocal and instrumental music, literary arts, visual arts, media, and museum studies (in collaboration with the Smithsonian). The school strives to emphasize both parts of its curriculum equally. Students, chosen through competitive auditions, are highly dedicated and travel as much as an hour and a half to attend early morning rehearsals; they then take six academic courses and finish the day with more rehearsals in the afternoon and evening. As a result, the students' day lasts from 8:30 AM to 5:00 PM. With teachers who are often professional artists themselves, many of the students pursue successful careers in the arts. This year, the graduating class is expected to receive 1.5 million in scholarships. The

Johnny

*Students are in class
- how many students are graduating?*

Ellington school also has an exceptional record: the highest attendance rate and the fourth highest SAT scores of all D.C. District schools; 99% of its students graduate; 95% are accepted to college; however, only 85% can afford to attend. It has also been selected by Redbook as a top school of the nation, selected by Nabisco as a Next Century School and by the Department of Education as a Blue Ribbon School.

III. PARTICIPANTS

1. Carolyn Wilson - Acting Principal
2. Mr. Reeves - Assistant Principal
3. Treva Lindsey - Assistant Principal
4. Willy Macelroy - Special Assistant to the Principal
5. Peggy Cooper-Cafritz - Founder of Duke Ellington School and the Ellington Fund
6. Karen Shook - D.C. Board of Education
7. R. David Hall - D.C. Board of Education
8. Valencia Mohammed - D.C. Board of Education
9. Erica Landberg - D.C. Board of Education
10. Carol Foster - Artistic Coordinator
11. Sharon Pratt Kelly - Mayor of D.C.
12. Franklin L. Smith - Superintendent of D.C. School System
13. Jim Nathanson - Counselor
14. Hilda Mason - Former President of City Council
15. Representative from Ford Motor Company - Scholarship Presentation
16. Representative from Anheuser-Busch Company - Scholarship Presentation
17. Valedictorian
18. Salutatorian

IV. PRESS

Open Press

V. REMARKS

Provided by Lissa Muscatine

To: Lissa
From: Claire
Re: Duke Ellington School for the Arts
Date: June 9, 1993

I. Duke Ellington

Edward Kennedy "Duke" Ellington was born in Washington DC on April 29, 1889. Nicknamed for his aristocratic dress and manner, Duke Ellington has been called "the greatest American composer." The son of father who worked two jobs to provide for Duke and his sister, he demonstrated a childhood talent for painting and was later offered a scholarship to the Pratt Institute. However, his love for music proved stronger and, despite his early rejection by a piano teacher for exuberantly playing too many off-tone chords, he taught himself to play music. His first composition, "Soda Fountain Rag" was based off his work as a soda jerk and was composed entirely by ear. He continued to work with jazz bands in Washington throughout the 1910's and 1920's, until he moved to New York and started his first "big band", the Washingtonians. There he achieved his greatest popularity at the Harlem Cotton Club.

In his half-century as a composer, pianist and band leader, Duke Ellington revolutionized the concept of jazz. With his demand and love for complex arrangements and improvisation, he produced work that was "lush and complexly harmonic". Of his more than 1,000 compositions, the most famous are "Harlem Suite", "In My Solitude", "Sophisticated Lady", "Mood Indigo", and "My People" for the one hundredth anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation; he also composed pieces for motion pictures, musical comedies, and ballets.

Duke Ellington, the "greatest talent in the history of jazz" was awarded an honorary degree from Columbia University (the only Jazz musician ever to receive it), the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1970, and the Legion d' Honneur in 1973. Yet, despite his success, Ellington always maintained a focus on the "very deep African roots of jazz" (direct quote). He died on May 24, 1974.

(Source: Current Biography, 1974; The Concise Baker's Biographical Dictionary of Musicians, 1988).

II. General Information

The Duke Ellington School of the Arts, located in a 100 year-old building in upper Georgetown, was founded by Peggy Cooper Cafritz in 1974 as a haven for the underprivileged yet gifted youth of the city. Training approximately 400 young people for grades 9-12, it is the only predominantly African

American arts high school in the nation and is run by principal Carolyn Wilson. 113 students will graduate this year. Although it is part of the DC public school system and continues to struggle with a lack of funding and resources, the school nevertheless has developed an excellent reputation as both a school and an arts training program. The school is primarily funded by the Ellington Fund (formed in 1978 as the fund-raising arm of the school), the National Endowment for the Arts, contributions from local companies, community groups, and entertainers. The school is free to residents of the District. Students, chosen through competitive auditions, are highly dedicated and travel as much as an hour and a half to attend early morning rehearsals; they then take a six course curriculum and finish the day with more rehearsals in the afternoon and evening. The teachers are often critically acclaimed professional artists and performers. Aside from an academic curriculum which includes four years of English, three years of Social Studies, two years of Science, and two years of Mathematics, Foreign Language, Physical Education and Typing, the school offers intense training in all art forms, including dance, theatre, vocal and instrumental music, writing and art (see handout). The school strives to emphasize both parts of its curriculum equally. The school has an exceptional record: the highest attendance rate of all District schools; 99% of its students graduate and 95% are accepted to college; however, only 85% can afford to attend.

III. Organizations/Special Programs

1. Ellington Show Choir
2. Duke Ellington Professional Company (Theatre)
3. D.C. Youth Ensemble (formed in 1980-resident program of the school)
 - Senior Company
 - Summer Theatre Camp
 - Summer Theatre Ensemble
4. Ellington Orchestra
5. Jazz Quartet (played at the American Embassy in France in February)
6. Shepherding Program - provides 9th and 10th graders with a framework for learning. It encourages greater involvement for teachers and administrators in the lives of the students.

IV. Recent Performances/Honors

1. "Malindy Sings" - an adaptation of Cinderella. Performed the week of June 5, 1994.
2. Choir will perform the Japanese national anthem for Emperor Akhito during his visit.
3. "Iolanthe" by Gilbert and Sullivan. Performed the week

of May 13, 1994.

4. Comptroller of the Currency Eugene Ludwig recently commissioned the art students to produce a painting of Washington for his building.
5. Motown Records promised in September of 1993 to build a state-of-the-art recording studio for the school.
6. Selected for overall excellence as one of the top fifty schools in the nation in April 1994.
7. Selected in 1990 as a national winner in a grant program - received 572,175. Award funds special interventions for disadvantaged students and efforts to promote community and parent involvement.
8. Duke Ellington Youth Festival, in April of 1994, featured art exhibits, music, and dance of students from all local public schools.

V. Outstanding Students

1. Clifton Walker
He is only 17, but Clifton has sung in front of Harry Belafonte and at the Kennedy Center. He says that performing is ". . . like a rush. I turn into something totally different."
2. Joseph Kelly
He is an 18-year-old junior studying drawing. He wants to use his cartoon characters and skills to "make a difference in the black community"
3. Dyron Holmes
Originally a "shy and unmotivated teenager", Dyron has won two theatre scholarships, received critical acclaim for his performances and won national awards for his first two scripts. In September of 1993, his play "Brothers of Time" was read at the Young Playwrights Festival in New York He says he wants to write plays "that make people think and examine themselves".
4. Dave Chappelle
He graduated in 1991 and moved to Los Angeles to pursue a career in comedy. Last fall, he was given the role of "Achoo" in Mel Brooks' film, "Robin Hood: Men in Tights".
5. Maleta Carson
As last year's valedictorian, Maleta has sung five times at the White House, including the inauguration of President Clinton. Stating that so many things are "out of control", including racism, violence, and

poverty, she hopes to use her talent to express herself and change the current dilemmas.

6. Henry Malendez

A 1993 graduate, Henry has presented his artwork at the Washington Project for the Arts, the Hirshhorn Museum, the National Institute of Health, and the Children's Defense Fund. He was recently honored at CDF's "Beat the Odds" celebration. Although he admits he loved art before he came to Ellington, he credits the school with being the place where he found a means of expression and "developed a talent".

VI. Quotes

1. "Learning is pleasurable, but it is never simple and rarely easy to grasp worthwhile things. The best inspiration is success. (Jo Ann Nolen, English teacher).
2. "Nurturing the spirit and wealth of talent, creativity, dedication and entrepreneurial spirit is what Next Century schools is all about" (Louis Gerstner, announcer of grant winners - see above).
3. "The mission of the school is threefold: It seeks to instill in each student an appreciation of his or innate intellectual and creative potential; it aims to develop in each student the rudiments of discipline, cooperation, and hard work necessary to succeed in professional occupations; and it seeks to teach the skills that will contribute to the student's personal fulfillment and proficiency in his or her chosen art form" (see handout).

VII. Pop Culture Icons

1. Snoop Doggy Dogg - musician/rapper (He is controversial, though because of criminal charges against him).
2. Ice Cube - rapper
3. Ice-T - rapper (also facing or has faced criminal charges).
4. Janet Jackson - musician
5. Spike Lee - film director
6. Wesley Snipes - actor
7. Arrested Development - musicians
8. Branford/Wynton Marsallis - musicians

To: Mrs. Evelyn Lieberman

From:

Location:

Page: 456-6244

Page: 3

From: Peggy Cooper Carter

Location:

Page: 537-7040

Subject:

Date: 12/16/93 Time: 2:45 pm

Date:

Page: 244-1966

Subject:

Please call when you are in receipt of fax
Thank you

Patricia

1227858

Approx. 7-10pm.

Peggy Cooper Carter

2-14 1966

- Commencement
letter
- send back to me.

November 9, 1995

Mrs. Hillary Rodham Clinton
The White House
Washington, DC 20500

302 Chamberlayne Rd
NW

Wash DC 20016

Dear Hillary:

Congratulations for all that you have done and continue to do to keep the issues affecting America's children in the forefront of national debate and government action. I have spent all of my adult life working with and for young people. It is absolutely exhilarating finally to have national leadership that understands, that gets it, that cares!

I am writing to ask you to speak at the Ellington graduation this coming June. Aside from becoming a mother, the founding of the Duke Ellington School of the Arts is my greatest achievement. After two decades of constant struggle I can say with confidence that we have found a way to empower young people through the arts and education.

Ellington serves nearly 500 students in grades nine through twelve. Our students have to meet more academic requirements than at any other school in the system, as well as a demanding arts curriculum. Their school day is two hours longer than the normal school day. Ellington has the fourth highest SAT scores in the DC public

Mrs. Hillary Rodham Clinton
November 9, 1993
Page 2

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Between 92 and 95 percent of our students are accepted by a very impressive list of colleges.

Each entering student selects a major in theatre, technical theatre, dance, instrumental music, vocal music, visual arts, literary arts, media or museum studies. Ellington is the only high school in the country with a museum studies department, which is a collaborative effort with the Smithsonian.

Ellington has been selected by Redbook Magazine as one of the best schools in the country, by Nabisco as one of its 17 Next Century Schools and most recently, by the U. S. Department of Education as a Blue Ribbon School. I am told that in this very competitive process we received the highest marks across the board.

While we are a fine high school of the arts, we believe that our mission extends far beyond artistic excellence. We heavily recruit in the most blighted and damned neighborhoods of Washington. More than sixty percent of our students come from dysfunctional to barely functional families who live in drug-ridden, crime-torn areas. Over thirty percent of our entering ninth grade students read only between the third and seventh grade level. We even have students who have been classified as "special education" cases.

1994 will mark our twentieth anniversary. As Ellington approaches this milestone we are poised to become a National Laboratory for the Arts in Education. We believe we have cracked the code to the educational safe and that students from all over the country can

Mrs. Hillary Rodham Clinton
November 9, 1993
Page 3

**benefit from our struggles and successes, our curriculum
and programs.**



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Duke Ellington School of the Arts

3500 R Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20007
202-282-0123 • fax 202-282-1106

The School

The Duke Ellington School of the Arts is a citywide D.C. Public School which offers pre-professional training in the arts as well as academic instruction to students in grades 9-12. Founded in 1974 as Workshops For Careers In The Arts by Peggy Cooper-Cafritz and Mike Malone, Ellington's concept is very special. It is a national leader among public college preparatory high schools which offer specialized training in the arts.

The mission of the school is three-fold: It seeks to instill in each student an appreciation of his or her innate intellectual and creative potential; it aims to develop in each student the rudiments of discipline, cooperation and hard work necessary to succeed in professional occupations; and it seeks to teach the skills that will contribute to the student's personal fulfillment and proficiency in his or her chosen art form.

Students are admitted to Ellington by audition or portfolio review. The audition process is designed to identify those students exhibiting special talents in areas of Dance, Theatre, Visual Arts, Vocal and Instrumental Music, Literary And Media Arts, Museum Studies and Technical Theater. Students must also successfully complete a rigorous college preparatory program in order to graduate.

The school day is extended to accommodate such a rigorous schedule. Students are in class from 8:30 a.m. until 5:00 p.m.

The school is located in Georgetown near Georgetown University. Recent extensive renovation has given the school increased performance and exhibition capabilities.

The Ellington Theater has become a major part of the Washington Performing Arts scene; while the expansive Gallery provides ample space for both student and professional art exhibits.



The College Preparatory Program

Ellington emphasizes the importance of the balanced and well-rounded student; thus, the school-wide emphasis is projected equally toward academic and arts courses. As often as possible, courses in both areas are interrelated.

Courses are designed to develop skills in English, mathematics, science, history, foreign languages, physical education, health, and computer science. Advanced placement courses are offered in English and U.S. History. Classes are also taught in the humanities and in global perspectives. The school participates in the HighScip program which allows seniors to take academic courses at a neighboring college, university or art school, thus enriching the high school program.

The Arts Program

- The Dance Department includes study in ballet, modern, tap, jazz, ethnic, history, choreography and audition practices.
- The Music Department includes both vocal and instrumental training along with music theory, history and literature.
- The Visual Arts Department includes study in painting, drawing, ceramics, design, sculpture, photography, print making and art history.
- The Theatre Department includes study in acting, theatre history, costume design, technical theater, stage and theater management, directing, playwriting, speech and voice and diction.
- The Literary and Media Arts Department includes study in creative writing, print and broadcast journalism photography, radio and TV production.
- The Museum Studies Department combines study in communications arts with an understanding and appreciation of the performing and visual arts and their place in the exhibition experience.
- The Technical Theater Department provides hands-on experience in all of the behind-the-scenes aspects of the world of performing arts offering students practical and career-oriented training.

Since production is such an important component of the Arts program, students in all areas of study perform or exhibit several times per year.

ELLINGTON

DUKE ELLINGTON SCHOOL OF THE ARTS

EXPRESS

SPECIAL EDITION

JUNE 8, 1993

DUKE ELLINGTON IS A BLUE RIBBON SCHOOL!

(WASHINGTON) - THE DUKE ELLINGTON SCHOOL OF THE ARTS AFTER MONTHS AND YEARS OF PREPARATION, TWO DAYS OF PERFORMANCE, AND EXAMS, WEEKS OF WAITING, THE DUKE ELLINGTON SCHOOL OF THE ARTS FINALLY RECEIVED WORD THAT IT HAS BEEN CHOSEN AS ONE OF THE BEST SENIOR HIGH SCHOOLS IN THE UNITED STATES.

ELLINGTON JOINS THE OTHER AWARD-WINNING DISTRICT ENTRY - DUNBAR SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL. THE TWO SCHOOLS WERE AMONG 260 CHOSEN NATION-WIDE BY THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION.

THE BLUE RIBBON AWARD IS THE MOST PRESTIGIOUS AWARD GIVEN BY THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT IN THE AREA OF EDUCATION. ELLINGTON, IN ITS 19TH YEAR, WAS CHALLENGED TO PROVIDE CONCRETE EVIDENCE OF ITS GROWTH OVER THAT PERIOD AND IN PARTICULAR, ITS ACHIEVEMENTS IN THE PAST FIVE YEARS.

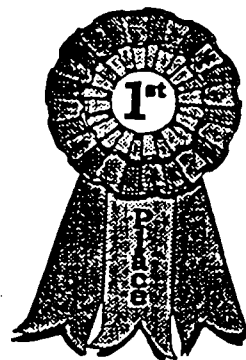
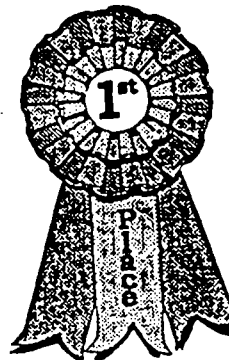
THE SCHOOL, THROUGH ITS FACULTY, SET ABOUT DOCUMENTING ITS SUCCESSES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS, INCLUDING ITS MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS. AMONG THAT DOCUMENTATION WAS THE SUCCESS ELLINGTON HAD MADE IN REFOCUSING ON ITS ACADEMIC MISSION, WHICH WAS CHARACTERIZED BY AN INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF ACADEMIC COURSES REQUIRED, AS WELL AS THE NUMBER OF AP AND ELECTIVE COURSES OFFERED BROADENING THE NUMBER OF ART COURSES TAKEN FOR CREDIT AND INCREASING THOSE COURSES WERE CONSISTENT WITH THE RIGOROUS REQUIREMENTS OF CONSERVATORIES, UNIVERSITIES OR PROFESSIONAL COMPANIES.

THE OVERALL GPA WENT FROM A 1.8 TO A 2.4 IN THE LAST FOUR YEARS. ATTENDANCE FIGURES ALSO CLIMBED STEADILY DURING THE SAME PERIOD. MANY OF THE INNOVATIONS INSTALLED AT ELLINGTON, LIKE THE "ALL-SCHOOL" READING PROGRAM AND THE "BLUE BOOK" ADVISORY EXAM WERE IDENTIFIED AS WORTHWHILE INNOVATIONS BY THE EDUCATION TEAM.

HOWEVER, NOTHING WAS MORE IMPRESSIVE TO THE EVALUATION TEAM THAN THE COLLECTIVE AND INDIVIDUAL SUCCESS THAT HAD ACCRUED TO THE ELLINGTON STUDENTS. AWARDS, SUCCESS IN NATIONAL COMPETITION, IN ADDITION TO A 90% COLLEGE ACCEPTANCE RATE AND A SCHOLARSHIP AWARD FIGURE THAT TOPPED A MILLION DOLLARS IN 1992.

THIS RECENT HONOR FOLLOWS A 19-YEAR HISTORY OF SUCCESS. IN 1989, ELLINGTON WAS SELECTED AS A NEXT CENTURY SCHOOL; IN 1992, IT WAS NAMED ONE OF THE BEST SCHOOLS IN THE UNITED STATES BY RED-BOOK MAGAZINE AND NOW NAMED A "BLUE RIBBON SCHOOL" BY THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION. AS ONE PARENT PUT IT IN A MEETING WITH THE EVALUATOR, "ELLINGTON IS AN ONGOING SUCCESS."

PRINCIPAL MARTIS DAVIS AND THE WHOLE ADMINISTRATIVE TEAM OFFER PRAISE AND THANKS TO THE FACULTY AND STAFF, THE PARENTS AND COMMUNITY; BUT ABOVE ALL THANKS TO THE GREAT STUDENTS OF ELLINGTON. "WE LOVE YOU MADLY!"



THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

December 21, 1993

G O P Y
From [unclear]

Ms. Peggy Cooper Cafritz
3030 Chain Bridge Road, Northwest
Washington, D.C. 20016

Dear Ms. Cafritz:

Thank you for your kind letter and invitation to Mrs. Clinton.

Although the upcoming official schedule is arranged only a few weeks in advance, we will be happy to keep your invitation in mind as Mrs. Clinton's schedule is being planned.

Mrs. Clinton appreciates your thoughtfulness and sends her best wishes.

Sincerely,



Patti Solis
Special Assistant to the President
Director of Scheduling
for the First Lady

Fax Transmittal Memo 7672

Mrs. Evelyn Lieberman

TO:

456-6244

Page 3
From Peggy Cooper Carriz
Date 12/6/93 2:45 pm
Fax # 537-7040
Page 244-1966
Subject: [] [] [] []

Please call when you are in receipt of this
- Thank you

Patricia

1227858

Peggy Cooper Carriz

244 1966

- Commencement
letter
- send back to me.

November 9, 1993

3030 Chain Bridge Rd
NW
Wash 20016

Mrs. Hillary Rodham Clinton
The White House
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Hillary:

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I am writing to ask you to speak at the Ellington graduation this coming June. Aside from becoming a mother, the founding of the Duke Ellington School of the Arts is my greatest achievement. After two decades of constant struggle I can say with confidence that we have found a way to empower young people through the arts and education.

Ellington serves nearly 500 students in grades nine through twelve. Our students have to meet more academic requirements than at any other school in the system, as well as a demanding arts curriculum. Their school day is two hours longer than the normal school day. Ellington has the fourth highest SAT scores in the DC public

Mrs. Hillary Rodham Clinton
November 9, 1993
Page 2

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Mrs. Hillary Rodham Clinton
November 9, 1993
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benefit from our struggles and successes, our curriculum and programs.

To celebrate our twentieth anniversary we would like you to speak at our graduation and to receive the first Ellington Medal which will be awarded every five years to a person who has made an untiring commitment to saving American children. We also give an annual Ellington Award which in past years has been received by Johnetta Cole, James Vanderzee, and Roger Stevens, among others. I can think of no better way to celebrate our twentieth anniversary, to honor the legacy of our school and to begin its future than to have graduation day 1994, be Hillary Rodham Clinton Day at the Duke Ellington School of the Arts. Graduation is scheduled for June 13, 1994, from seven to nine-thirty p.m. However, if this date is incompatible with your schedule we will change it as necessary.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Fondly,



Peggy Cooper Cafritz

Fax Transmittal Memo 7872

Mrs. Evelyn Lieberman

Location

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Comments

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From

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4566244 P.03
TO
FROM PEGGY COOPER CAFRITZ
Mrs. Hillary Rodham Clinton
November 9, 1993
Page 3

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replacing
↓
looks like a shield

I look forward to hearing from you.

Fondly,

Ellington



Peggy Cooper Cafritz

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

Duke
Ellington School.

File June.

15th

March 25, 1994

Ms. Peggy Cooper Cafritz
3030 Chain Bridge Road, Northwest
Washington, D.C. 20016

Dear Ms. Cafritz:

Thank you for your kind letter and invitation to Mrs. Clinton. I apologize for my late response to your previous correspondence.

Although Mrs. Clinton's official schedule will not permit her to attend this year's commencement ceremonies, she appreciates your thoughtfulness and sends her best wishes.

Please do not hesitate to contact our office if we can be of any assistance to you in the future.

Sincerely,



Patti Solis
Special Assistant to the President
Director of Scheduling
for the First Lady

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

copy

December 21, 1993

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Patti Solis
Special Assistant to the President
Director of Scheduling
for the First Lady

Jeff Cooper Capital

receive MEDAL
at Commencement

November 9, 1993

*Commence
to Wendy*

Mrs. Hillary Rodham Clinton
The White House
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Hillary:

Congratulations for all that you have done and continue to do to keep the issues effecting America's children in the forefront of national debate and government action. I have spent all of my adult life working with and for young people. It is absolutely exhilarating finally to have national leadership that understands, that gets it, that cares!

I am writing to ask you to speak at the Ellington graduation this coming June. Aside from becoming a mother, the founding of the Duke Ellington School of the Arts is my greatest achievement. After two decades of constant struggle I can say with confidence that we have found a way to empower young people through the arts and education.

Ellington serves nearly 500 students in grades nine through twelve. Our students have to meet more academic requirements than at any other school in the system, as well as a demanding arts curriculum. Their school day is two hours longer than the normal school day. Ellington has the fourth highest SAT scores in the DC public

Mrs. Hillary Rodham Clinton

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school system and the highest college acceptance rate of all DC public schools.

Between 92 and 95 percent of our students are accepted by a very impressive list of colleges.

Each entering student selects a major in theatre, technical theatre, dance, instrumental music, vocal music, visual arts, literary arts, media or museum studies. Ellington is the only high school in the country with a museum studies department, which is a collaborative effort with the Smithsonian.

Ellington has been selected by Redbook Magazine as one of the best schools in the country, by Nabisco as one of its 17 Next Century Schools and most recently, by the U. S. Department of Education as a Blue Ribbon School. I am told that in this very competitive process we received the highest marks across the board.

While we are a fine high school of the arts, we believe that our mission extends far beyond artistic excellence. We heavily recruit in the most blighted and damned neighborhoods of Washington. More than sixty percent of our students come from dysfunctional to barely functional families who live in drug-ridden, crime-torn areas. Over thirty percent of our entering ninth grade students read only between the third and seventh grade level. We even have students who have been classified as "special education" cases.

1994 will mark our twentieth anniversary. As Ellington approaches this milestone we are poised to become a National Laboratory for the Arts in Education. We believe we have cracked the code to the educational safe and that students from all over the country can

Mrs. Hillary Rodham Clinton
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benefit from our struggles and successes, our curriculum and programs.

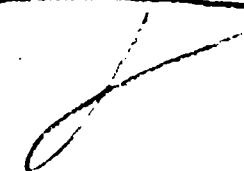
To celebrate our twentieth anniversary we would like you to speak at our graduation and to receive the first Ellington Medal which will be awarded every five years to a person who has made an untiring commitment to saving American children. We also give an annual Ellington Award which in past years has been received by Johnetta Cole, James Vanderzee, and Roger Stevens, among others. I can think of no better way to celebrate our twentieth anniversary, to honor the legacy of our school and to begin its future than to have graduation day 1994, be Hillary Rodham Clinton Day at the Duke Ellington School of the Arts. Graduation is scheduled for June 13, 1994, from seven to nine-thirty p.m. However, if this date is incompatible with your schedule we will change it as necessary.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Fondly,



Peggy Cooper Cafritz



America's Best Schools

EDUCATION EXPERTS RATE THE
140 THAT STAND FOR EXCELLENCE

First Annual High School Report Card

BY

MICHAEL J.

WEISS

- At Blue Valley North High School in Overland Park, Kansas, a recent Back-to-School Night attracted 1,800 parents for teacher conferences—a remarkable number given that the school has 1,399 students.
- To create a more trusting, relaxed climate at Ohio's Chagrin Falls High School, principal James Trusso, Ed.D., removed the locks from lockers and banned ringing bells between classes. Instead, music of the students' choice is piped in. The atmosphere is more "like a professional office," Dr. Trusso says.
- Every morning every student at New Trier Township High School in Winnetka, Illinois, meets for counseling with a teacher-adviser—the same adviser through all four years.
- When students have perfect attendance for a semester at Arkansas's Arkadelphia High School, they receive a Coke-and-ice-cream party. Those with a 3.5 grade point average are celebrated at an annual banquet that's become the school's premier social event. "It may be bribery, but our kids enjoy coming to school," observes principal Herman Thomas. "The goal is to reward rather than punish."

These are some of the innovative—even radical—ideas that schools are using to improve their students' chances for success. At a time when headlines expose declining test scores, rising dropout rates, and draconian budget cutbacks, many of America's public schools are fighting to reverse the trends. Urban and rural, rich and poor, traditional and alternative, these schools

are creating reforms to address the needs of diverse student bodies. In short, they take the education of our children seriously.

To help spotlight these efforts, *Redbook* has launched the America's Best Schools project. This year we focus on public high schools. (See box, "How Our Great Schools Were Found," for details about the judging process.) The

140 winners are a tribute to all that's right about the nation's schools today.

This is a critical time in American education. While spending on education has more than doubled since 1980, U.S. students still rank near the bottom in international comparisons. Most 17-year-olds cannot read well enough to understand a newspaper editorial, according to a June 1991 study by the National Assessment of Educational Progress. In math, only one high school senior in 20 is prepared for college-level work and most score below the eighth grade level. The poor quality of public education is the number-one threat to the economy, say *Fortune* 1000 executives. "Most children aren't learning what they need to know," agrees Secretary of Education Lamar Alexander.

The problems did not emerge overnight. Nearly a decade ago, a national commission blasted the nation's schools for a "rising tide of mediocrity." And while everyone wants schools to improve, there's no consensus on how to do it. Debate rages over every detail—from teacher training to the length of class periods.

To make American schools more competitive with those in Europe and Japan, some reformers argue that students need to spend more time in class, with longer school days and a longer school year. The every-summer-off rule that kids love originated more than a century ago, when all hands were needed to help with the harvest. But while America's economy has changed, its school year hasn't, running an average 180 days compared to Japan's 240 days and Germany's 210 days. (continued)

as football games and midterms. Studies have shown that volunteerism improves students' problem solving and critical thinking. To do their part, merchants near Tennessee's Dyersburg High School offer discounts to students who carry "gold cards" signifying that they've made the honor roll. Like athletics-booster clubs at many schools,

Dyersburg residents belong to an Academic Booster Club, which pays entry fees for students who want to participate in academic competitions.

INNOVATIVE TEACHERS
Even though they're on the front lines, many teachers have little say about how their school operates. But at Kenne-

bunk High School in Maine, for example, 35 teacher "initiative committees" have developed ideas such as "diversified diplomas" that allow students to focus their interests the way college students do, and job portfolios for non-college-bound graduates. Every day, interdisciplinary teacher teams meet to discuss projects that may (continued)

Best of the States

These 51 winners (all states and the District of Columbia) have the vision and the energy to make excellence a reality.

STATE	HIGH SCHOOL	CITY	HIGHLIGHTS
AL	Vestavia Hills H.S.	Vestavia Hills	A superior academic program results in 92 percent of all seniors attending college and more than \$4 million in scholarships being awarded to the class of 1991.
AK	Petersburg H.S.	Petersburg	Located in an isolated fishing village, Petersburg offers its 174 students advanced-placement courses in calculus and biology as well as innovative classes in aquaculture and surveying.
AZ	South Mountain H.S.	Phoenix	Magnet programs in aerospace, the arts, and law-related studies have helped turn around a school once plagued by dismal test scores and a high dropout rate.
AR	Arkadelphia H.S.	Arkadelphia	Arkadelphia has found success with its Badger Scholars program, in which students pledge to make a 3.5 GPA; this year 200 of the school's 459 students made the honor roll.
CA	Rancho Buena Vista H.S.	Vista	This four-and-a-half-year-old school for 2,150 offers a rigorous international baccalaureate program along with 53 athletic teams and 41 special-activities clubs.
CO	Smoky Hill H.S.	Aurora	At Smoky Hill, 92 percent of the students graduate, 70 percent of the teachers hold postgraduate degrees, and the drug-and-alcohol awareness program is a model for schools across the country.
CT	Joel Barlow H.S.	West Redding	Joel Barlow's 658 students can choose from a provocative list of current-affairs courses and projects, focusing on, for example, black history, terrorism, and Chinese culture.
DE	Caesar Rodney Senior H.S.	Camden	An exemplary arts program for 1,581 features innovative courses in theatrical production and photography; the school's show choir has toured Europe.
DC	Duke Ellington School of the Arts	Washington, D.C.	A novel "shepherding program" that assigns students to supportive team teachers helps send more than 90 percent of these arts-school graduates to college.
FL	Mainland H.S.	Daytona Beach	A comprehensive school for 2,060, Mainland boasts a 97 percent graduation rate and a model technology program with \$1 million in computer equipment.
GA	Benjamin E. Mays H.S.	Atlanta	A nationally recognized school-within-a-school offers advanced students in math and science accelerated courses and small classes.
HI	Waialae H.S.	Hilo	At this school for 1,905, every teacher offers after-school tutoring for any student every day.
ID	Cascade H.S.	Cascade	At this small but overachieving school for 97 students, all the seniors graduate, a third of the grads get scholarships, and many earn state awards in math, science, and choir.
IL	Oak Park and River Forest H.S.	Oak Park	Impressive facilities cater to this school's 2,629 students: state-of-the-art science labs, three theaters, two pools, and a two-story library.
IN	North Central H.S.	Indianapolis	Dynamic principal Eugene White, Ed.D., uses a mix of discipline and high standards to maintain quality at this school for 2,800; last year 36 students qualified for National Merit Scholarship recognition.
IA	North H.S.	Sioux City	An emphasis on individualized learning provides talented, at-risk, and special-needs students with tailored textbooks, small-group instruction, and tutoring. ➤

STUDENT-TEACHER ACCESS

A disproportionate number of our winning schools have fewer than 1,000 students, permitting greater personal contact among students, teachers and administrators. At Cedar Rapids, Iowa's Metro Senior High School, an alternative school for students who've left conventional high schools, teach-

ers spend Monday through Thursday in their classrooms and every Friday with their students—at their homes, job sites, or outdoors.

America's Best Schools winners offer hundreds of ideas that can inspire excellence in any public high school. But these solutions can't be left for teachers and administrators to develop on their own.

Parents and the community as a whole must take responsibility for improving education in America. These winners prove that we *can* put our children's schools back on the road to excellence. □

Michael J. Weiss is a Washington, D.C.-based writer and Redbook's Best Schools project director.

Best of the States continued

STATE	HIGH SCHOOL	CITY	HIGHLIGHTS
NM	La Cueva H.S.	Albuquerque	At this school for 2,040, some 84 percent of the teachers hold advanced degrees, seniors receive \$4 million in scholarship offers, and gifted students participate in honor seminars, mentorships, and internships.
NY	A. Philip Randolph Campus H.S.	New York	In this inner-city high school, where 99 percent of the 1,325 students are minorities and nearly half come from public-assistance-eligible families, a rigorous 8-class-a-day academic load results in 98 percent of the grads going to college.
NC	The North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics	Durham	This state-run school for 546 students gifted in science and math ranks second in the nation for the greatest number of National Merit Scholarship semifinalists.
ND	Beulah H.S.	Beulah	A small-town school for 228 students, Beulah still maintains an impressive curriculum thanks to an interactive TV system and courses such as robotics, laser technology, and aquaculture.
OH	Fort Hayes Metropolitan Education Center	Columbus	Home of an innovative arts and academic high school, Fort Hayes challenges its 461 students with a 10-period school day, a foreign-language requirement, and progressive classes in the arts.
OK	Norman H.S.	Norman	A nurturing faculty, 70 percent of whom hold advanced degrees, has helped turn this comprehensive school for 1,297 into an award winner in music, art, writing, and agriculture.
OR	Burns H.S.	Burns	Twice nationally recognized by a government program, innovative Burns requires its 330 students to complete an art course in "visual literacy."
PA	Central H.S.	Philadelphia	This urban school draws 2,027 students from more than 300 schools and sends 99 percent of its graduates to college.
RI	Classical H.S.	Providence	A top-rated internship program at this college prep school for 1,054 allows students to work at area legal firms, government agencies, and hospitals.
SC	Riverside H.S.	Greer	Impressive in its commitment to academics as well as athletics, Riverside consistently wins awards in history, foreign language, and music as well as basketball, track, and soccer.
SD	Yankton H.S.	Yankton	This school combines a record of academic excellence with an alternative learning center for individualized, self-paced instruction.
TN	Dyersburg H.S.	Dyersburg	Achievement is encouraged at this comprehensive high school for 1,186 with innovative community support, such as an academic-booster club.
TX	Northside Health Careers H.S.	San Antonio	Located near South Texas Medical Center, this school specializes in preparing students for medical careers through internships, guest speakers' presentations, and field trips.
UT	Murray H.S.	Murray	Murray personalizes its program for 1,120 students by dispatching teachers to each incoming student's home, having parents accompany students when registering, and allowing students to work in teams or independently.
VT	South Burlington H.S.	South Burlington	One hundred community volunteers help out in classrooms, and numerous businesses sponsor an "alternative learning program" for on-the-job instruction. ➤

Category winners continued

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT Whitney High School of Cerritos, California, which has been called America's "most ethnically diverse community," proves that the best education in the country is not restricted to the wealthy and white. Whitney serves a local population that is 33 percent white, 17 percent Hispanic, 16 percent Filipino, 13 percent Korean, 12 percent black, 7 percent Chinese, and a smattering of other ethnic groups. Even though many of Whitney's 980 students have only recently learned English, all of its graduates in the last three years have gone on to college. In standardized tests, Whitney students boast an average combined SAT score of 1151 and consistently rank in the 99th percentile in California Assessment Programs tests.

Whitney's record of academic success is a testament to the school's philosophy that "college should be a reality, not just a dream, for all students," according to principal Pauline Ferris, Ed.D. Toward that end, students are supported with peer tutors, faculty "adopt-a-student" teams, college-application workshops for parents, and an enriched curriculum studded with honors and AP courses. There are also 32 extracurricular clubs that reflect the student body's diversity.

THE ARTS In the hit movie and Baltimore TV series *Fame*, School for the Arts danced their way to success with fancy footwork and street smarts. But great arts schools don't ignore students' minds.

Now in its 12th year, the Baltimore School for the Arts provides its 290 students with a rigorous academic program in addition to top-notch preprofessional training in music, theater, dance, and visual arts. After gaining admittance by audition or portfolio review, students face four periods of academic study and four periods in their arts discipline, in addition to after-school rehearsals. Classes are small—the student-teacher ratio in arts courses is 20 to 1—and many of the faculty members are professional dancers, actors, musicians, and visual artists. School officials report that some 94 percent of all graduates go on to college.

But that's as it should be, maintains BSFA principal David Simon. "The whole notion of an arts school as a trade school no longer works," he says. "Today you can't have a good arts program without a high standard of academic study."

THE ARTS Offering a variety of arts classes, employing certified arts teachers and working professionals, and providing numerous outlets—performances, exhibits, and competitions—for students to hone their talents make these five schools superior.

HIGH SCHOOL	CITY/STATE
New World School of the Arts	Miami, Florida
Eleanor McMain Magnet	New Orleans, Louisiana
Baltimore School for the Arts	Baltimore, Maryland
Columbus	Columbus, Nebraska
Capital	Charleston, West Virginia

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT Sixteen schools were chosen for their commitment to the intellectual growth of their students. With accelerated classes, a high percentage of advanced degrees among their faculties, and students who rank near the top in achievement tests, these schools graduate tomorrow's leaders.

HIGH SCHOOL	CITY/STATE
W.P. Davidson	Mobile, Alabama
University	Tucson, Arizona
Little Rock Central	Little Rock, Arkansas
Whitney	Cerritos, California
Laguna Hills	Laguna Hills, California
Benjamin Banneker Academic	Washington, D.C.
H.B. Plant	Tampa, Florida
Duluth	Duluth, Georgia
Adlai E. Stevenson	Prairie View, Illinois
Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy	Aurora, Illinois
Wayland	Wayland, Massachusetts
Mountain Lakes	Mountain Lakes, New Jersey
Baldwin Senior	Baldwin, New York
S.C. Governor's School for Science and Mathematics	Hartsville, South Carolina
J.J. Pearce	Richardson, Texas
Richmond Community	Richmond, Virginia

MOST IMPROVED

These five are honored for showing improvement on test scores, attendance, and graduation rates, as well as for transforming a troubled school into a source of community pride.

HIGH SCHOOL	CITY/STATE
Shelby County	Columbiana, Alabama
Perryville	Perryville, Arkansas
Adams City	Commerce City, Colorado
Harlem	Harlem, Georgia
Ridgefield Memorial	Ridgefield, New Jersey

MOST IMPROVED

Adams City High School

For years, residents of Commerce City, Colorado, regarded Adams City High School as an educational basket case. Test scores of the 1,200 students were abysmal, pregnancy and truancy rates soared, and only a third of all students were college bound.

But four years ago, Adams City school officials vowed to turn the school around, and to do it without budget increases. They initiated academic-enrichment programs, an adult-mentoring program, and a reading workshop. An automatic telephone-dialing machine was installed to check up on all student absences. And to stem dropout rates, officials began a condom-distribution program, an intervention program for substance abusers, and a system of peer counselors for those in need of emotional support.

Today, those aggressive tactics—and reallocated school funds—have paid off. Attendance rates are up to 92 percent, lateness is down to 3 percent, and writing scores on standardized tests are up 25 percent.

Principal C. Thomas Budde, Ph.D., believes the secret to Adams City's success was to involve teachers, parents, and community leaders. "You need everyone to fix longtime problems," he says.

How Our Great Schools Were Found

To discover the nation's outstanding public high schools, *Redbook's* America's Best Schools project solicited nominations from the heads of state education departments and national education organizations. We also contacted local education reporters and scoured the stacks of the Library of Congress to identify standout schools that might have been overlooked. Nomination forms were then sent to principals requesting quantitative data—such as the school's average SAT

scores and the percentage of college-bound students—as well as in-depth background material on award-winning programs and extracurricular activities. Altogether, 383 schools responded with completed nominations, representing every state and the District of Columbia.

Evaluation of the nominees began with graduate students from Teachers College, Columbia University, who reviewed all the schools' information packets and selected 250 finalists. Then, last fall, the following panel of ten judges—all distinguished educators—made the final, winning selections.

"Americans will feel better about supporting public education if schools instill a sense of civic obligation in their students."—BARBARA BURNS, president of the Pittsburgh Board of Public Education.

"High schools today need to accept a broader mission than ever before. You should be able to go to high school and find a health clinic, social worker, or psychologist on staff."—MICHAEL CASSELY, Ph.D., interim executive director of the Council of Great City Schools. With the group for 15 years, he now heads up legislative research-and-development activities.

"A real hallmark of excellence is when a school takes risks, experiments with new techniques, and allows students the freedom to try to learn in new ways."—SHARON FIELD, Ed.D., associate professor (research) at Wayne State University and program director for Transition and Employment at the Developmental Disabilities Institute.

"Too many schools don't demand enough of our kids. I was impressed with the number of winning schools that cared about academic excellence for disadvantaged students—not just gifted kids from wealthy families."—MARY HATWOOD FUTRELL, past president of the National Education Association and a senior consultant for the Quality Education for Minorities (QEM) Network. She is also associate director of George Washington University's Center for the Study of Education and National Development.

"Every student should be required to take at least one year of fine arts for admission to college, and they should be taught by certified teachers. Right now, a lot of administrators think that if you bring in a puppeteer, that's art."—DONNAMARIE GILBERT, the awards coordinator for the National Art Education Association, a Virginia-based organization that comprises 15,000 elementary and secondary teachers, administrators, and museum educators.

"We don't need more testing to know that children have trouble reading. We need to deal with their reading problems."—STEPHEN L. KOFFLER, Ed.D., director of test development and state services for the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP).

"Today it's no longer enough to have a school where everyone feels wonderful about themselves. Achievement requires hard work—and American students need to value hard work more."—JEAN NARAYANAN, director of the U.S. Department of Education's School Recognition Programs.

"Teachers must have a say in curriculum development and textbook selection. And we must heighten the respect for the educational community."—JOSEPH NEWLIN, Ed.D., executive director of the National Rural Education Association, an advocacy organization that represents the roughly 10,000 rural and small school districts in the country.

"Money is not the whole answer in making a school outstanding, but you do need sufficient resources to do what needs to be done."—A. HARRY PASSOW, Ed.D., a professor emeritus of education and assistant to the president of Teachers College, Columbia University, where he acts as adviser on urban education, curriculum development, and educational policy.

"Schools shouldn't punish students for being unable to meet standards. Rather, they should figure out ways of knowing when kids are having trouble in order to assist them."—ROBERT SINCLAIR, Ed.D., professor of education at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst and director of the National Coalition for Equality in Learning, an organization dedicated to improving the learning skills of marginal students. □

Divorced

(continued from page 57)

for the kids waking up if I do bring him home. It makes you think twice about whether you really want to go out with someone."

You, your kids, and the man in your life form a fragile triangle. "Go slow," says Janine Roberts, Ed.D., professor of family therapy at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. She advises protecting younger children as much as possible from temporary relationships so as not to trigger feelings of loss when you and he go your separate ways. "Try to include him in family outings only as a friend, and only occasionally, until you're sure he's going to be staying in their life for a while."

Mothers of teenagers, says Dr. Roberts, should be sensitive to competitive feelings stirred by two generations of daters in one house. "You're both dressing up and presenting yourselves appealingly to the opposite sex. Your child may feel he or she is supposed to have the spotlight now and you're supposed to be the parent."

How about this parent trap: Have you caught yourself staring across a restaurant table at some perfectly nice man you give not a whit about, wondering if your child might like him as a stepfather? Beware of placing your own needs for intimacy, caring, and an egalitarian relationship second.

"It's not that a marriage made largely for the kids' sake can't work out," says Dr. Benningfield. "Sometimes it's a marriage in which you can grow and are loved." But you are less likely to see remarriage as rescue—and more likely to build a strong partnership—if you know you can take care of yourself and your children economically, physically, and emotionally. "You can be more selective about your next partner."

And you can forge a new romance that really fulfills you. Your second great love can be more exciting than your first. "We think of youth as rebellious and age as tradition-bound," writes philosopher Robert C. Solomon in *About Love: Reinventing Romance for Our Times*, "but the fact seems to be that young love unwittingly follows the rules of romance even as it pretends to rebel against society, while older couples are forced to invent their own rules.... First love is never unique—no matter how miraculous it may seem. Love the second or third time around is always of necessity creative."

Lesley Dornen writes about love and sex for many national magazines.

The Washington Post

SATURDAY, MARCH 12, 1994

Proposal Would Make Arts A School Staple, Not a Frill

Guidelines Part of Educational Reform

By Jacqueline Trescott
Washington Post Staff Writer

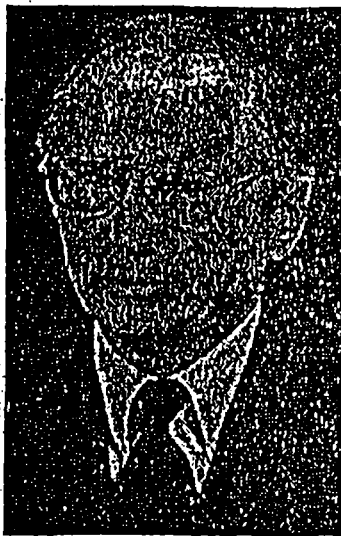
Every American high school graduate would be required to have a vigorous working knowledge of dance, music, theater and the visual arts and to be skilled in at least one artistic form, according to new standards expected to be approved by the secretary of education.

Proposed new national standards for arts education were presented to Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley yesterday as part of the broad education reform effort he is pushing through Congress. They were drawn up by a government-sponsored coalition of arts educators, business leaders and performing arts professionals and will be finalized after passage of the education reform bill now in the final stages of approval by Congress.

The guidelines, which would be mandatory by school districts that adopt them, are the first in a series to be developed this year to meet the agenda of the national legislation Goals 2000: Educate America Act. After a full-throated lobbying effort last year, the arts were included in the school reform measure as a core curriculum subject on an equal footing with English, mathematics, science, history, civics, geography and foreign languages.

Riley enthusiastically accepted the recommendations at a press conference yesterday and ratified his own belief in the broader importance of the arts.

"We seem to be . . . to the rest of



RICHARD W. RILEY

cites "a passion for expression"

the world . . . a nation consumed by a passion for expression, be it through film, theater, music or the elegance of the dance," he said. "Arts in education elevates and gives structure to that passion for expression and connection."

A sample of the panel's expectations for high school graduates includes:

- The ability to create and answer 25 questions about dance and dancers prior to the 20th century.
- Identify and demonstrate complex steps from two different dance

See STANDARDS, A12, Col. 4

Arts Included in Educational Reform

STANDARDS, From A1

styles; choreograph a duet, create a dance on a contemporary social theme.

■ Sing music written in four parts, with or without accompaniment; identify sources of American music genres, such as swing, Broadway musical and the blues, trace their evolution and cite well-known musicians associated with them.

■ Write scripts for theater, film, television and electronic media in traditional and new forms that include original characters with unique dialogue that motivates action.

■ Reflect on how artworks differ visually, spatially, temporally, and functionally, and describe how these are related to history and culture.

Testing for arts proficiency would eventually be given in grades 4, 8 and 12 and a sampling of students would start in 1996 by the federally funded National Assessment of Educational Progress.

"This first step must be followed by implementation, assessment and revision in the years ahead," said A. Graham Down, president of the Council for Basic Education.

The standards would be strictly voluntary, with states and 12,000 American school districts largely determining development of a curricu-

lum from kindergarten through high school, teacher preparation and recruitment, and building of financial and other resources.

In anticipation of the guidelines, some states, including Tennessee, Georgia and Nevada, are drafting their own related standards, according to the National Coalition for Music Education. Riley said yesterday that a series of guidelines developed by math educators and introduced five years ago had been adopted by 40 percent of the country.

At the presentation were two music teachers, Frances Prince of the District and Dorothy Straub of Fairfield, Conn., who said the national endorsement of the standards would be helpful in the battle to keep music education central to the curriculum. Prince, who teaches at Fletcher Johnson Elementary School, said the key was "convincing the school administrators that arts are viable in our schools. Without the support of administrators, we can't do it."

Funding, said Riley, will follow the realization that education reform is a serious endeavor of the administration and education community. "When that begins to happen," said Riley, "I think you will see strong support locally." The secretary added that 93 percent of funding for education comes from local sources. The president's budget, he said, sets

aside \$700 million to cover all core subjects of Goals 2000.

The voluminous blueprint was developed over the last two years through consultation with more than 80 arts and education groups. The work of the Consortium of National Arts Education Associations, spearheaded by the American Alliance for Theatre & Education, Music Educators National Conference, National Art Education Association and the National Dance Association, was supported by a \$1 million grant from the education department and the National Endowments for the Arts and Humanities.

The push to include the arts in education and social initiatives has recently gained momentum. Besides Goals 2000, now in congressional conference committee, Congress is considering the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, which has included the Community Arts Partnership Act, a new program. The act would mandate bringing arts education to at-risk youth.

As an example of the impact of arts education, Riley cited the success rate of Washington's Duke Ellington School for the Arts. He said the school had the highest attendance record of all District schools, graduated 99 percent of its students and sent 95 percent to college.

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

October 7, 1993

Congratulations to the 260 schools selected in the 1992-1993 Blue Ribbon Schools Program.

Excellence in education is the key to America's future. Every one of our educational institutions, from the smallest country schoolhouse to the largest state university, plays a vital role in preparing young Americans to succeed in the next century. That is why it is so important to recognize those schools that, through the efforts of visionary leaders, gifted teachers, motivated students, and involved parents, are producing superior results in education that will benefit all of our nation's 105,000 schools.

The challenges that face American education are daunting, but your resourcefulness and dedication have propelled you to success. Now, through my proposed Goals 2000: Educate America Act, I hope my Administration can help other schools replicate the feats that you have accomplished. I am counting on your support as I work to build an educational system of the highest quality in the United States.

Best wishes for continued success.

Bill Clinton



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

THE SECRETARY

1993 BLUE RIBBON SCHOOLS PROGRAM

WASHINGTON, D.C.

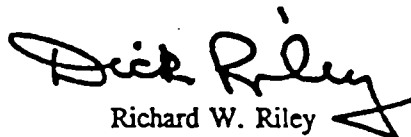
October 22, 1993

The U.S. Department of Education has established as its mission "to ensure equal access to education and to promote educational excellence throughout the nation." Although simple in statement, this vision will require the commitment, creativity, and perseverance of all of us to become a reality nationwide. It is therefore both gratifying and energizing to me, personally, to honor the diverse group of 260 Blue Ribbon Schools for 1993. These schools provide concrete testimony to the possibility of attaining these lofty goals.

In recent months the Education Department has had a hand in introducing a number of important pieces of legislation which, I believe, can both capitalize on and extend your impressive successes. The first of these, Goals 2000: Educate America Act, would establish in law the National Education Goals as the framework for a new education system for the 21st century and provide resources to support and accelerate state and local improvement efforts aimed at helping all students master challenging content standards. You have demonstrated significant progress in realizing these goals in your school community. I now challenge you to help other schools replicate your successes and to continue to strive for increasing excellence for your own students.

The Safe Schools Act will provide assistance to help schools prevent violence and improve security as part of a coordinated attack on the twin scourges of drugs and violence. Since you have already proven your ability to create a safe and productive learning environment for your students, other schools will look to you for good ideas and successful practices. Key to your achievement of Blue Ribbon status is a commitment to providing excellent learning opportunities for all your students, including those not going on to college. The School-to-Work Opportunities Act of 1993 will bring together partnerships of employers, educators, and others to prepare young people for careers in high-skill, high-wage jobs. You may find new ways to serve your students through this legislation. And finally, the National and Community Service Trust Act will extend and expand the existing Serve-America program for school-age youth to create a variety of ways for all American children to serve our country and to instill in them the values and attitude to serve effectively as adults.

Best wishes to all of you. I applaud your many accomplishments and look forward to collaborating with you to ensure equal access and educational excellence for all America's children.


Richard W. Riley

400 MARYLAND AVE., S.W. WASHINGTON, D.C. 20202-0100

Our mission is to ensure equal access to education and to promote educational excellence throughout the Nation.

Office of the Superintendent

415 12th Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20004
(202) 724-4222
FAX (202) 727-1516

June 10, 1993

Ms. Peggy Cooper-Cafritz
3030 Chain Bridge Road, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20018

Dear Peggy:

As a follow-up to the meeting held in your home on Saturday, June 5, 1993, with the Ellington Fund Committee, this is to confirm our agreement concerning the selection of a successor to Marty Davis, principal of Duke Ellington School for the Arts.

The Ellington Fund Committee is to assume the responsibility for the following:

- Development of an appropriate job description for the future leadership of the school.
- Organize an appropriate screening and selection committee inclusive of the P.T.A., Ellington staff members, students restructuring team member and any other key members of organizations affiliated and interested in Ellington becoming a model school for the arts.
- Assist in procuring necessary funds to conduct a nationwide search.
- Adhere to the guidelines for hiring a principal as outlined in the D.C. Board of Education Rules.
- Review the appropriate staffing level for a school of the arts.
- Reallocate the budgeted dollars for Ellington if there is a consensus with the restructuring team.
- Supplement the salary of the new Ellington leader if necessary.

Additionally, I agreed to do the following:

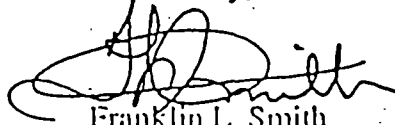
- Designate a person from my office, who understands my vision for Ellington, and who is willing to work with the committee.
- Investigate the possibility of an executive search firm that is willing to provide pro bono assistance in searching for a new principal.
- Appoint an interim principal to serve until a successor is identified and placed.

- Arrange a meeting for members of your committee to meet with Dr. Constance Clark and a staffing specialist from personnel to discuss the 1993-94 staffing needs at Ellington.

Please be advised that it is my intent to work with you to make Duke Ellington School of the Arts second to none in the country. The children of the District of Columbia interested in this level of the arts deserve no less. Working together, we can make it happen.

Thank you for your support in this endeavor.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'F. L. Smith', written over a horizontal line.

Franklin L. Smith
Superintendent of Schools
Chief State School Officer

FLS/njb

cc: Dr. Constance Clark
Mr. Richard Winston
Ms. June Gregory
Mr. Riley Temple

DUKE ELLINGTON SCHOOL OF THE ARTS

RECENT PRESS



After donating recording equipment to school, Stevie Wonder greets Carolyn Wilson, acting principal at Duke Ellington School of the Arts and D.C. Superintendent of Schools Frank Smith.

Wonder Gives Recording Gear To Ellington School

Superstar Stevie Wonder recently donated state-of-the-art recording equipment to the Duke Ellington School of the Arts in Washington, D.C.

The \$500,000 worth of equipment is part of Motown Records' educational program.

"I am very, very pleased and happy to be at a school named after Duke Ellington whose music brought so much joy to so many," Wonder said at the presentation.

"His music was universal and spoke in strong positive images, whether it be describing a beautiful woman as a *Satin Doll* or the simple beauty of *The A Train*," he added.

Wonder also said that he wanted to return to the school on April 29, the late bandleader-composer's birthday, to donate a piano.

D.C. Mayor Sharon Pratt Kelly, who presented Wonder with a proclamation and key to the city, said the gift fulfilled "a long held dream" by the school system.

Style

THE WASHINGTON POST

...B1

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 1993 D3

Names & Faces

Wonderful Stevie

■ Stevie Wonder serenaded an auditorium full of budding artists and performers yesterday at the Duke Ellington School of the Arts and then joined Motown executives in announcing that they will build a recording studio at the school.

"Duke Ellington, you are the sunshine of my life," sang Wonder, who also used his Grammy-winning voice to admonish the rap industry for disrespecting women in their music.

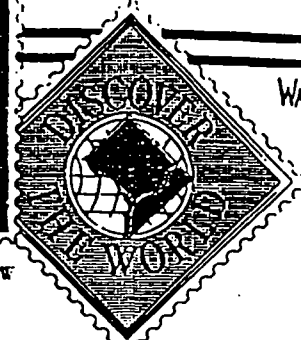
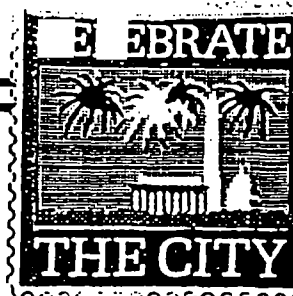
"It is totally out of the question for men to continue to talk about women and call them bitches," Wonder told the more than 500 students and city officials, including Mayor Sharon Pratt Kelly.

Afterward, the entertainer, who's in Washington to perform at the Congressional Black Caucus Legislative Weekend, told The Post's Hamil Harris that he plans to move to Ghana within the next year. Then he added his two cents on the Michael Jackson flap.

"The press and the media have taken some allegation and made it reality," Wonder said. "They are acting like it is true."



Stevie Wonder, sunshine of Ellington students' lives; right, Geena Davis isn't thinking small for her wedding.



WASHINGTON, DC

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NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 31, 1994

CONTACT: Daisy Voigt
(202) 724-4091

COOKIES AND KIDS PROMOTE D.C. FOR PARIS SALES MISSION

Champ Cookies and the Duke Ellington School Jazz Ensemble will represent the District of Columbia at a reception at the American Embassy in Paris on Tuesday, February 8, 1994. The reception will follow a day of workshops and seminars designed to familiarize French tour operators and media with the Nation's Capital region. The trip is part of a European sales mission sponsored by TWA Airlines and the Capital Region USA partnership. The regional coalition includes the D.C. Committee to Promote Washington, the Washington Convention and Visitors Association and representatives from the Virginia and Maryland state tourism offices.

"This is an opportunity for us to share some of the unique talent and creativity that makes Washington, D.C. a vibrant, exciting world capital," said Mayor Sharon Pratt Kelly. The Mayor added, "I am especially pleased that we are sending young people from a school named in honor of a great Washingtonian, and that they will offer Parisians a taste of jazz, America's most unique, indigenous music form."

Four members of the Jazz Ensemble, all seniors at the Ellington School, will play at the reception with the group's leader, saxophonist/drummer Davey Yarborough. The students are Ephram Stevens (piano), Mike Leibowitz (bass), Jack Radner (guitar) and Donvonte McCoy (trumpet). The students will depart from Dulles via TWA's direct flight to Paris on Sunday, February 6. They will spend Monday touring the city as 'goodwill ambassadors' and meeting French students and fellow musicians.

Also making a premier appearance in Paris are samples of Champ Cookies, which are manufactured in Southeast Washington and sold by D.C. youth to promote entrepreneurship skills as an alternative to involvement with the drug trade. Student participants in the Champ Cookies Youth Entrepreneurship Society (YES) program learn food manufacturing and marketing skills in addition to earning an hourly wage and a commission for each bag sold. The chocolate chip and oatmeal raisin cookies will be served, along with other regional foods and beverages, at the Embassy reception.

Regional News

Ellington students will play in Paris

Jazz quartet to represent District

By Gretchen Lacharite
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

There are 476 talented students at the Duke Ellington School of the Arts, but only four of them will have the opportunity to perform in Paris tomorrow.

The quartet, selected to represent the District during a recep-

tion at the American Embassy in France, boarded a plane yesterday for the French capital for their first international performance.

"It's a wonderful opportunity for our students to represent Washington," acting Ellington principal Carolyn Wilson said of the trip, organized by the Washington Convention and Visitors Association (WCVA) to familiarize French tourism representatives with the nation's capital.

Trumpet player Donvonte McCoy, pianist Ephrim Stevens, guitarist Jack Radner and bass player Mike Lebovitz were each selected based on their experience and their talent from the full, 24-member jazz orchestra at the school on 35th and R streets NW. They will be accompanied by their director, Davey Yarborough, and representatives from the D.C. Committee to Promote Washington.

The students, all 17-year-old District residents, are no novices. The ensemble members have a combined 31 years of musical experience, which includes audiences before President Clinton and Vice President Al Gore.

Still, some members of the group seemed surprised by their selection, which came just two weeks ago.

"I won't believe it until I step foot in Paris," said Ephrim. "I



Photos by Peter A. Harris/The Washington Times

Senior Mike Lebovitz prepares his bass for the trip to Paris.

didn't think a trip like this would happen until I made it big."

The students, who are accustomed to long hours of hard practice, said the short notice for the

trip won't affect their ability to perform.

"One thing that you get [from the extra hours] is the talent and the skills above and beyond the call

of duty," said Mr. Yarborough, 40, who is also a professional musician and will play drums with the students during the performance.

"This [trip] is an example of the dedication of this group here," said Mr. Yarborough.

Since they are scheduled to return Wednesday, the four young musicians vowed not to waste a minute of their all-expenses-paid trip to France.

"This is like a vacation," Mike said last week, as the students packed up their instruments in preparation for the trip.

The students said they hoped to visit the Louvre museum, the Paris Conservatory and a Parisian jazz club.

The Duke Ellington School of the Arts was established in 1974 as a citywide public school offering pre-professional training and academics. It has departments for both instrumental and vocal music, dance, theater, technical theater, visual arts, literary and media arts and museum studies.

The trip is funded by TWA, the Washington Airports Authority, Washington Flyer, WCVA, the Hotel Association of Washington and the D.C. Committee to Promote Washington.



The performers (from left) are Jack Radner, Davey Yarborough, Mike Lebovitz, Ephrim Stevens and Donvonte McCoy.

THIS
ARTICLE



BY CHERYL A. MEYER—THE WASHINGTON POST

Dyron Holmes improvises a scene about an addict. His acting and writing abilities have won him two scholarships.

NEIGHBORS

Talent Gives Direction to Life Story

By Leonard Hughes
Special to The Washington Post

Ask 17-year-old actor and playwright Dyron Holmes what he's been doing lately and he'll laugh and say, "A little bit of everything."

He's not kidding.

In the last several months he has won two theater scholarships, received critical acclaim for his performance in a professional production and won national awards for his first two scripts (he produced, directed and performed in the second). Meanwhile, he graduated from high school.

It's hard to imagine that four years ago, Holmes was a shy freshman at the Duke Ellington School of the Arts, inexperienced, unmotivated and barely interested in theater.

His parents, now proud and supportive, even laughed at his first impulse to transfer out of Rabaut Junior High to tread the boards at Ellington. "My parents always told me I acted like a clown," he said. Other than that, he added, "I didn't have any acting experience."

Today, Holmes still has some lingering shyness offstage, but despite his sometimes self-deprecating humor, he comes across as a focused, perceptive young adult who knows where he's going and how to get there.

"I hope to be a playwright who writes plays that make people think and examine themselves," Holmes said.

That's playwright. Not black playwright. "People want to see black and white. I want them to see themselves."

Next month, his first play, "Brothers of Time," will be read on stage at the Young Playwrights Festival in New York as one of five

winners among 900 scripts submitted this summer for the prestigious honor.

"Brothers of Time" follows four black teenagers back in time to the days of slavery and of the civil rights movement of the 1950s, as Holmes describes it, a "Back to the Future" with a social conscience.

It caught the attention of Alfred Uhry, writer of "Driving Miss Daisy" and a judge of the Young Playwrights contest, who said he thinks Holmes shows great promise.

But "Brothers of Time" didn't come easily for the novice playwright. Finishing only one scene last year in his writing class, Holmes said he had to be pushed to expand the piece, then titled "Jungle Boys."

"My playwriting teacher forced me to do it over the summer. I did it in two weeks. I thought it was crap."

But when his teacher, Carolyn Jones Howard, got excited about the project, he became enthusiastic himself, he said.

He procrastinated until two weeks before his deadline, banged it out on a typewriter (he usually writes with a computer) and handed it to Howard, who sneaked it off to the Young Playwrights contest.

When a contest official notified him of his being a winner, he recalled, "I didn't know what he was talking about."

In June he was invited to New York for a reception and forum of noted scriptwriters, hosted by Young Playwrights Inc., a nonprofit group founded in 1981 by Stephen Sondheim to encourage young writers. The group sponsors the festival Sept. 14 to Oct. 10, during which the reading of "Brothers of Time" will be staged.

His teacher likes to say he fin-

ished the winning work only because she "was on his case." And Fredric Lee, Holmes's acting teacher at Ellington for the last four years, said she can believe that. "Sometimes, you have to take him aside and say, 'Dyron, come on.'"

But Lee also said he takes advice well and is adept at rewriting. His characters are so well thought out, Lee added, that he can answer questions about them as if they have lives beyond the script.

In his spare time, Holmes likes to "walk around watching people and taking mental pictures," he said.

"But he tends to be busy a lot," Howard said.

Busy indeed. Earlier this summer he won critical praise for his performance with the Duke Ellington Professional Company in a production of the full-length play "Ceremonies of Dark Old Men."

And last month, he attended Arena Stage's two-week summer performance workshop for teenagers on a full scholarship.

In July, at the NAACP's national convention, he was a finalist in the organization's theater contest. He didn't win the final heat, but his acting brought tears to some of the judges' eyes.

In the scene he performed, a 17-year-old recalls having seen, at 6, his mother raped and murdered. It might have been a bit rough for the contest, Holmes said later.

Tackling serious problems is what he likes to do, and that's the whole point of where he's heading, he said. When he was little, he would think a lot about what he wanted to be. "I didn't want to be a teacher or a policeman. I really wasn't sure—maybe some kind of doctor. I wanted to help people some kind of way."

X
The
Dyron
Holmes
Story

Hurdling Obstacles, Pursuing Dreams, They Go to Head of the Class

For Ellington Graduate, Singing Provides the Rhythm of Life

By Cindy Loose
Washington Post Staff Writer

Maleata Carson struck a bargain with her father three years ago: If he would allow her to study music at the Duke Ellington School of the Arts, she would get straight A's.

Maleata held up her end of the bargain on Tuesday, graduating as 1993 valedictorian of the District's performing arts high school.

"Being number one in academics supersedes everything," said her father, Weldon Carson, a U.S. Postal Service supervisor. A stickler for education, Carson had reservations about whether a performing arts school could give his eldest daughter the best academic training, but she softened his resistance with her straight-A pledge and tears.

"The thing I'm most proud of is [her] being valedictorian," he said last week, "because that shows what one does over the school lifetime, as opposed to one event, like singing at the White House."

And Maleata did sing at the White House—so many times, she says, that she's lost count. Four, she finally decides—no, wait, maybe five. She sang backup for Randy Travis outside the White House and even sang at President Clinton's inauguration.

Maleata maintained an almost



Maleata Carson, 18, sings at a graduation program. "I don't have a social life. . . I practice, eat, study, practice, go to bed," says Maleata, who plans a career in music.

perfect academic record while she pursued her musical ambition, spending hours practicing and performing with Ellington's regular choir, its elite 20-member Show Choir and its 20-member female

ensemble, not to mention her solo gigs.

She appreciates academics, but music is her life. "It's what she wakes up for; it's the thing she goes to bed doing," said Show

Choir director Samuel Bonds. "That's what it takes to be successful, and she has it all—the talent, the desire and the intelligence to put it all together."

Voice coach Monica Otal said

Maleata is one of the most talented students she's seen in her 16 years at Ellington.

Asked if he'd be surprised to see Maleata at Carnegie Hall or

See VALEDICTORIAN, B3, Col. 1

For Duke Ellington Graduate, Songs Are the Key in Her Life

VALEDICTORIAN, From B1

the Metropolitan Opera in coming years, choir director Edward Jackson said he *expects* it.

The accolades and advantages have not come without a price. What's in her life besides music? Maleata thought a long time before asking if eating and sleeping counted.

"I don't have a social life," she said. "I don't have any life at all outside of Ellington. I practice, eat, study, practice, go to bed."

Maleata, who plans a singing career, is headed to Oberlin College in Ohio to study music, with a planned double major in languages.

Her father, however, is still worried. He would prefer she become a doctor or lawyer.

"Performing arts are fine," he said. "But I draw an analogy with

what [Georgetown coach] John Thompson tells his players: What are you going to do if the ball is deflated?" Like an athlete with a bad knee, she could lose her voice, he said.

Maleata said that when her father tells her music is not "a real profession" she replies, "Daddy, this is what I do; this is what makes me tick."

"But my father is like, 'No, no. Brain surgeons, now there are people who will always have a job,'" she added with a grin.

But as her accomplishments have expanded, her father has grown increasingly comfortable about her musical aspirations. Even at her tender age, he said, "Maleata has done things we only read about."

Her talents won her a spot the last two summers with Creative Response, an international peace

group. The first summer she studied; last summer she traveled the world, singing in London, Tokyo, Moscow and Beijing. Just hours after graduation Tuesday, she left with the Show Choir for performances in Jamaica.

She met Michael Jackson on Jan. 17, the day she sang at the inauguration. It was her 18th birthday—she remembers freezing at the Lincoln Memorial as she waited all day for her turn to sing, missing her parents, wishing she would have a normal day with cake and family.

But Michael Jackson was a reminder, she said, "of how powerful music and a musician can be. He can change the way people think and feel."

And therein lies her dilemma: Should she pursue a classical and operatic career, which rejoices in



BY GERALD MARTINEAU—THE WASHINGTON POST

Maleata Carson, right, valedictorian at the Duke Ellington School of the Arts, has sung at the White House several times.

the pure beauty of sound? Or should she go with a style that would allow her to use words to change the world?

There is so much she wants to say and to change.

"So many things are out of con-

trol," she said, citing issues such as violence, racism and apathy.

Too many in her generation, she said, "don't care anymore; it's all me-centered."

Her father, meanwhile, continues to hold out faint hope that she will

turn to law or medicine. But he will support her any way she goes.

"I had to realize that law and medicine was my goal, and not her goal," he said last week. "I can feel her desire to perform; I see the look in her eyes."

A SELF-PORTRAIT OF INTENSITY

The Washington Post

THURSDAY, JUNE 17, 1993

The first self-portrait Henry Melendez painted at Duke Ellington High School shows a frightened kid, back pressed against a brick wall, tears running from haunted eyes.

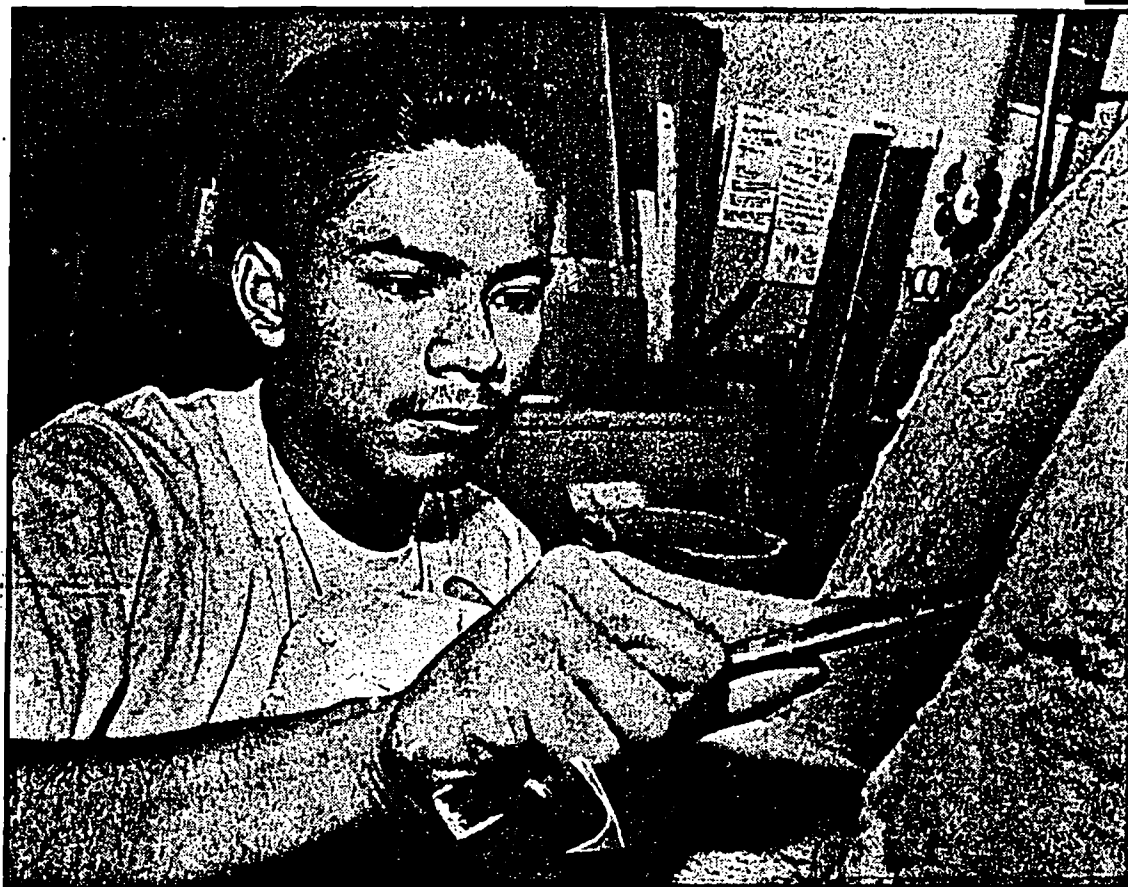
Later comes a four-faced sculpture, also a self-portrait, now stored in the bowels of the school for the arts in Georgetown. "Anger, seriousness, sadness," Henry explains as he rotates the heavy plaster block. "And anger again."

In a poem introducing his one-man show at the Children's Defense Fund, the first show the national advocacy group has mounted, this exceptional student tells of "the happiness of a brush stroke, to a world that brought hope within a soul."

At 19, Henry already has presented his work in group shows at the Washington Project for the Arts, the Hirshhorn Museum and National Institutes of Health.

But the Salvadoran immigrant with intense shining eyes, who arrived in Washington at age 12 and grew up with both parents largely absent, describes his work in terms of the power of shifting moods and bruising anger. "I'm not a person that hides behind color and brush strokes," he said. "When I'm sad, I put sadness [on canvas]."

In a basement art room, he also talks about how Ellington has changed him: "Art has been with me since I was little—sketches, stick drawings. But before I came here, I didn't have the means of expression. . . . At Ellington, I developed a talent."



BY BILL O'LEARY—THE WASHINGTON POST

Lately he's been in a Van Gogh mode, immersed in the troubled Dutch painter's history and work. "Sometimes I kind of compare my life with him, and see the same stages."

He pulls out two recent paintings of art teacher Cathy Conn's back yard in Bethesda, the leafy trees and shed in a profusion of bold Van Gogh-like brush

strokes. "I love these two, colorful and happy. Maybe I'm hiding myself in the landscape."

Conn, who has been Henry's mentor at Ellington, said he also is talented in French, writes well, and has considered a career in medicine or engineering. He plays a little piano and trumpet, and likes dancing and soccer too.

"But his passion is art," Conn

said. "He doesn't do work for teachers, or by rote. He goes beyond assignments, makes problems out of problems." Last year Henry was honored at a Children's Defense Fund "Beat the Odds" celebration for students who succeed despite poverty or problems. Fund President Marian Wright Edelman was so impressed with Henry's work she decided to

"I don't think about art as a way to survive, but just a way to live."

— HENRY MELENDEZ

set up the show to give him a boost. He has been accepted at Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, N.Y., and Cal Arts in California, and will choose in part by which offers more financial aid.

But he eschews thoughts of making a living this way: "I don't think about art as a way to survive, but just a way to live," he said.

— Elizabeth W

* The Henry Melendez Story!



Comedian Dave Chappelle, who appears in "Robin Hood": "I don't really have dirty thoughts. Well, I have some, but none that I talk about onstage."



Dave Chappelle's Big Shot

Former D.C. Comic Hits Bull's-Eye in Mel Brooks Spoof

By Peter Gilstrap
Special to The Washington Post

Two summers ago, Dave Chappelle was receiving his high school diploma from the Duke Ellington School of the Arts, right here in Washington. This summer the comedian is back in town—at a theater near you. He has a role in Mel Brooks's "Robin Hood: Men in Tights."

Quite a stretch.

He still *looks* 19, but he jokes with the insight, timing and polish of a comic many years his senior. Doing stand-up, Chappelle works the room with observational vignettes that mine the humor in everyday black-white relations: "I took two white friends of mine to see 'Malcolm X.' They were in shock.

Mouths hanging open. They had no *idea* that black people like to talk at the movies." He's got the pointedness of Richard Pryor and the poignancy of Bill Cosby, two of his heroes.

But Chappelle's observations aren't confined to generating laughs in the spotlight. As show business success broadens his vision, he's getting a new perspective on where he came from and where he's headed.

"It's sad going home sometimes," he sighs long-distance from Los Angeles. "When I lived there I remember a limited feeling, almost a feeling of desperation to get out of D.C. All my buddies got out of there. We all moved to New York. . . . It used to amaze me that I would get jaywalking tickets in Georgetown when there's all that stuff going on in my neighborhood. It's like, 'Well, let's keep the white neighborhoods safe at least.'"

His last visit to Washington was at Christmastime. "Now when I go home I see what I love—my mom, my grandma. All the peer

See COMIC, B2, Col. 1

Washington Post August 9, 1993

Dave Chappelle's Big Break

COMIC, From B1

pressure, the drugs, that stuff just seems behind me, even though it's around me. Like in high school, it used to be all the football players got all the girls—now all the drug dealers do."

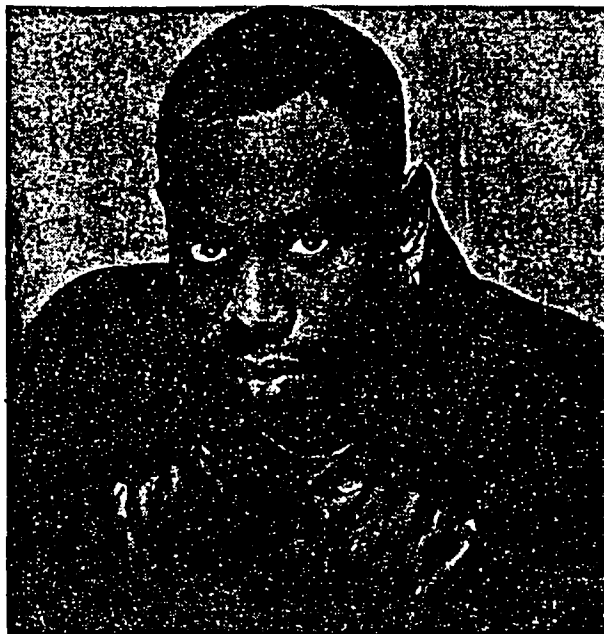
Chappelle's is one of those overnight success stories that took years to happen. He found his calling at age 14. "It hit me like a revelation, man, I'm not lying. I didn't think I could do anything—I was a mediocre basketball player, a bad student—and all of a sudden I realized I could make money being funny."

Which brings us to Bill Cosby. "I read this article on Cosby in Time magazine called 'Funny, 50 and Filthy Rich,' and then I bought a book about him," Chappelle says, memories of dollar signs flashing in his voice. There were many similarities between funny man and funny boy. "He was a bad student—hey, I'm a bad student. The kids thought he was funny—well, the kids think I'm funny. And this guy made a million-dollar career out of being funny."

Chappelle took to the stage in local clubs—Garvin's, the Comedy Cafe, the Comedy Connection—and in case you're wondering how a kid barely out of junior high had the maturity to handle nightclub audiences, here's your answer:

"I think I was sort of advanced because of the way I was raised. My parents always treated me, to an extent, like an adult," he says. "I had the kind of parents who didn't have to beat me, but if they were to say something like, 'Oh, I'm very disappointed in you,' that would hurt, 'cause I revered them. They had that kind of control on me—they could let me go to a comedy club when I was 14 and trust the fact that I wouldn't get into anything ridiculous."

It was the local comics—guys such as Andy Evans, Andy Woods and the Fat Doctor—who influenced Chappelle the most, in action and in deed. "I would look at the comedians in D.C., how they were all just trapped there," he says. "They made their money, they



Dave Chappelle says his parents "could let me go to a comedy club when I was 14 and trust the fact that I wouldn't get into anything ridiculous."

were comfortable, and that was it. They were always talking about doing better things, but they never did 'em."

They also gave him some advice. "They would pull me aside and say, 'You're 14, you shouldn't tell a lot of dirty stuff, because what do you know? Even if you do know something, you don't look like you know anything.'"

To curse or not to curse is a choice every comedian must make, and Chappelle usually stays on the clean side. "I've never been a dirty comic," he states. "I don't really have dirty thoughts. Well, I have some, but none that I talk about onstage. I'm not ready to be *that* honest."

Some crowds expect it, however, and for an appearance on HBO's "Def Comedy Jam," Chappelle gave in. "I didn't know [the show] was going to be as huge as it was," he says. "I had kind of regret being dirty on the show. If I had known so many people were watching I might have represented myself differently."

"Def Comedy Jam" has become a major showcase for black comedians, and though Chappelle admits there are "a lot of positive things to the show," he sees a negative side too. "It kind of changed a lot of things for black comics, where now both black and white

people expect you to be dirty. . . . It's not fair, man, because now it's limiting everyone."

But this young man is not one to limit himself. When the chance came to appear in "Robin Hood," he jumped. "I auditioned in New York, they put me on tape, sent it out to L.A.," he explains. "Two or three days later I was in Mel Brooks's office." Without having gone through the entire script—"I didn't think I'd make it that far"—he read cold for the director in the morning and was given the part of Anchoo that night.

Chappelle was already a fan. "I'd seen 'Young Frankenstein' and 'History of the World,' and when I rented 'Blazing Saddles' on video I really appreciated him."

So what's Mel Brooks like?

"Hysterical," Chappelle says with reverence. "And real, real approachable. He'd sit me down and teach me how to make movies. Here's a guy that's been in Hollywood all these years, and he's not pretentious at all. To me, that shows tremendous strength of character."

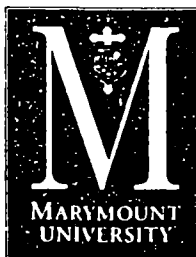
Most families want nothing more than for their offspring to succeed, and Chappelle is keeping them smiling back home. "They're just happy to see me in the movie. They were so scared when I didn't go to college. Especially my grandmother. I was the first person in my family not to go to college—there were escaped slaves in my family that went to school."

In September Chappelle will fly to Scotland for an appearance in the Edinburgh Comedy Festival. He appeared in, then was edited out of, an upcoming film starring Dennis Quaid and Kathleen Turner, and did a television pilot for Disney that wasn't picked up. Of course, he still got paid. And he's still got his dreams of a Cosbysque sitcom and writing his own movies.

Will success spoil the mediocre basketball player?

"I keep my same friends. It's funny how many people pop up when your income increases—and I don't know how people know, but they just *know*," he says. Chappelle seems genuinely awed by and wary of the Hollywood snake pit he's stepping into. "This is the first time in my life I've ever had to think about things like that. I never had money, or the kind of looks that women would sleep with me for. Now all of a sudden—*kaboom!*"

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\$600 and Thoughts of Bill Cosby Fuel a Star's Rise

By BERNARD WEINRAUB

Special to The New York Times

HOLLYWOOD, Aug. 1 — Less than three years ago, Dave Chappelle took a train from his home in Washington to New York and moved into a cramped apartment in the West Village with a high school friend. He had \$300 in savings, another \$300 that his grandmother had given him and a dream of turning into a comedy star.

Today, Mr. Chappelle has a manager, an agent, a lawyer and a public relations adviser. He has apartments in New York and Los Angeles. He's 19 years old and very funny.

"I don't want to sound arrogant or weird," he said in a serious moment the other day, "but it's all unbelievable."

Mr. Chappelle is one of the country's fastest rising and busiest comedians. He appears in the Mel Brooks comedy, "Robin Hood: Men in Tights," as Ahchoo, one of the merrier men of Sherwood Forest, who wears high tops and his hat backwards. He's appearing in two other films, "Undercover Blues" and "Getting In," is opening a one-man show at the Edinburgh Festival in Scotland this month, has a development deal with Walt Disney Television, has more nightclub and television dates than he can handle and is writing a

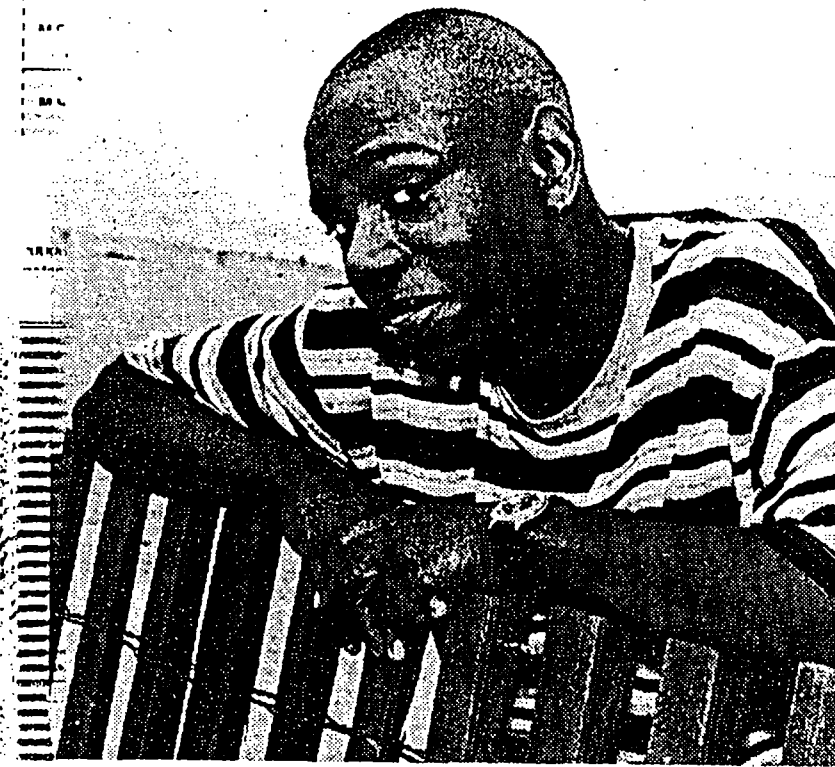
movie for himself.

A surprisingly modest, if very confident, comedian and actor, Mr. Chappelle seems well aware of the pitfalls of sudden success. He grew up in mostly black neighborhoods of the Washington area, began performing at comedy clubs at 14 and says that virtually every day he becomes frightened of losing touch with his past, his roots and the wellspring of his comedy.

"I look at my life now, and all I do is run from plane to plane, crisscross the country, people pick me up at the airport and treat me special," he said in an interview the other day in a restaurant on Sunset Strip. "It's not normal. I know it's not normal."

Mr. Chappelle said he always performed imitations as a child. At 14, he read an article in Time magazine about Bill Cosby that changed his life. "It hit me like a revelation," he said. "It never occurred to me that being funny was a niche, something you could build a career on. I went out and bought his book. Here was a kid from the projects who dropped out of school, was bouncing around until he found comedy and became one of the richest men in the country. What's not to like?"

Mr. Chappelle is the eldest of three



Jan Sonnenmair for The New York Times

Dave Chappelle, a 19-year-old busy making many an audience laugh.

Continued on Page C12

\$600 and Dreams of Bill Cosby Fuel a Star's Rise

Continued From Page C11

children. His parents were divorced when he was a child.

On the advice of his mother, who is a Unitarian minister, as well as of his grandmother, he enrolled in Duke Ellington School of the Arts, a high school specializing in the performing arts. At 14, he began showing up on open-mike nights at such Washington comedy clubs as Garvin's and Comedy Cafe.

"I was horrified," he recalled. "I was scared beyond nervous. My mother and grandmother showed up. I was in shock. I had my little brother tell my grandmother that she might hear David use some bad words." His grandmother proceeded to use a bad word and said not to worry. That broke the ice. At 17, he won a contest, best comedian in D.C.

His comedy then — and now — was a bit rude, funny and unsparing to black as well as white audiences.

His first jokes were about growing up black.

"I did a bit about how there were no black people on Fantasy Island, or how Batman never fought crime in black neighborhoods, stuff like that," he recalled.

He still remembers his closing joke:

"Jesse Jackson is running for President. Wow. Twenty years ago a black guy would say, 'I'm going to college, get my degree and be the best damn mailman you've ever seen.'"

Now he asks an audience, "Any police officers here tonight?"

Someone raises his hand.

"Tough job eating all those doughnuts."

There's laughter.

"I'm just kidding, man. Just kidding. You don't want to mess with me anyway. I got a camcorder in the car."

Skipping College for New York

After graduating from high school in 1991, Mr. Chappelle moved to New York and a small apartment on Washington Street. His mother and grandmother, Beatrice Reed, were agast.

"My grandmother really wanted me to go to college," he said. "She cried. I told her, 'I love you, I respect you, but there's nothing you can say that'll make me change my mind.' So she gave me a check and said there'd always be a place for me to stay on the sofa in her apartment."

On his first night in New York, Mr. Chappelle showed up at Boston Comedy, a popular club for young comedians, and asked to appear. The club's managers were reluctant, largely because he seemed even younger than 17, but gave him a chance. They nicknamed him "high school."

He talked about sex, about high school, about the way blacks and whites look at each other and at themselves.

"Someone sees a black kid with a beeper and they say, 'Hey, drug dealer!' Someone sees a white kid with a beeper and they say, 'Hey, Doogie Howser!'"

Within days, the club's owner, Barry Katz, began managing his career. Mr. Chappelle began appearing, al-

Nicknamed High School not long ago, he's now 19 and a success.

most overnight, on such national comedy programs as "Evening at the Improv" and "Caroline's Comedy Hour," as well as the Arsenio Hall show.

Now he likes to discuss what he calls "racial paranoia" among whites as well as blacks. He cracks jokes, some of them a little startling, about the uses of the word "nigger."

"I like to do stuff about hanging out

with white friends when I was growing up, and how they didn't know black people like to talk in the movies, or how black people like to call each other 'nigger' in endearing ways, but when a white boy wants to be endearing, and imitates us and says, 'Hey nigger, how you doing?' he gets himself beaten up."

Mr. Chappelle said he agreed that most comedians are troubled people. "A lot of comedy comes from pain and insecurity, and that's what drives you to the stage," he said. "You're loved and accepted up there onstage. Comedians are guys who couldn't get dates in high school."

"I still feel a little bit like Clark Kent," he said. "When I was performing in Washington, at night women would sometimes throw themselves at me. I felt like Superman. But the next day in school I was like a bumbling klutz. Clark Kent."

NORTHWEST PASSAGES

THE PEOPLE AND PLACES OF NORTHWEST WASHINGTON

JUNE 2, 1993



The Write Stuff

After a year in journalism, student Patrin Watanatada wears the ink stains well

by **BRUCE LENTHALL**
Current Staff Writer

The pursuit of perfection seems to come naturally to Patrin Watanatada.

As a student journalist, the Washington International School junior poured hours and hours into the school's paper, the International Dateline. By the time she brought her feature articles in for the school's journalism teacher, Catherine Fitz, to read, they had been brushed so smooth the teacher almost never found any tangles to comb out.

"I know she's a perfectionist, and I don't know how many hours she's

battled the computer, but when she brings those articles in, they're perfect," Fitz said. "Her verbal abilities are just outstanding."

So it's no shock Watanatada would be honored as one of the most outstanding high school journalists in Northwest. She took both first-place and third-place honors in the feature story category of the 1992-1993 Current Newspaper Journalism Awards, and her top-ranking story, a first-person account of this spring's unfolding of the AIDS Quilt, received the highest score of any story in any category in this year's awards.

Actually, though, the recognition

did shock Watanatada.

"I was surprised you didn't want to see this other guy. His editorials are incredible," she said. "I don't really even enjoy writing that much."

That's not apparent from her articles. In print, she is a remarkably deft storyteller, easily passing from the serious to the lighthearted and back again. What is evident in her works, is that even if Watanatada finds the writing process hard and lonely, she puts enough into it to be pleased with the results.

"I like having written," she said. "I'm proud of my writing when I like it."

See Writer/Page 19

Current Newspapers name award-winners

The 1992-1993 Current Newspapers Journalism Awards offered a chance for Patrin Watanatada to showcase her expertise: The Washington International School junior took first and third place for feature writing.

But Watanatada was not the only talented journalist in Northwest this year. In all, 17 entries were honored.

• News: First place — Andrew Ching, sophomore, St. Albans School, for "Cheating Widespread on Term Papers in AP Omni, Poll Says." Second place —

Sharishi Kobayashi, junior, and Dawn Brown, junior, Duke Ellington School of the Arts, for

"D.C. Superintendent Holds Press Conference With Student Editors."

Third place — Joshua White, senior, St. Albans

School, for "McWilliams Dismissed."

• Feature: First place — Watanatada for "International AIDS Quilt Evokes Feelings of Sadness During Display on Mall." Second place — White and John Ackerly,

senior, St. Albans School, for their pieces on their experiences while traveling thanks to Eisenstein grants.

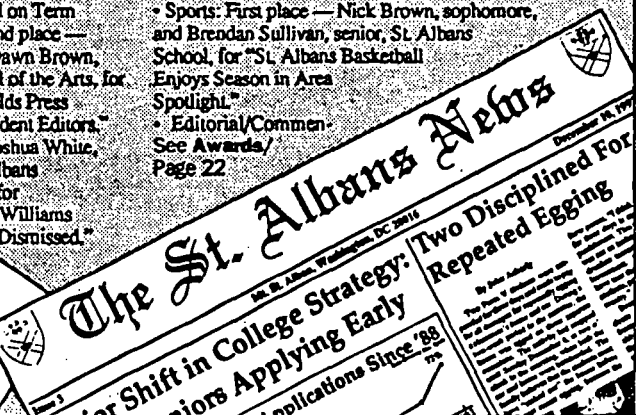
Third place — Watanatada for "Dateline Reporter Crashes Inaugural Ball."

• Sports: First place — Nick Brown, sophomore, and Brendan Sullivan, senior, St. Albans School, for "St. Albans Basketball

Enjoys Season in Area Spotlight."

• Editorial/Commentary: See Awards/

Page 22



AWARDS

From Page Nine

tary: First place — Mark Narron, senior, Washington International School, for "Fact or Fiction: Getting Smashed and Crashed With The Doomed Adolescent." Second place — Narron for "Worldly, Well-Behaved, But Sheltered." Third place — Jeffrey Rosenbaum, senior, St. Albans, for "Time to Rethink Honor Code."

- Column: First place — Denise Oliveira, junior, Washington International School, for "Where is Home? — An International Perspective."

- Overall newspaper design: First place — The St. Albans News, Dec. 10, 1992. Second place — The Ellington Express, March 9, 1993. International Dateline, April 15, 1993.

- Photography: First place — Ben Burke, sophomore, St. Albans School. Second place — John Hauck, sophomore, St. Albans School. Third place — Chonte Long, junior, Duke Ellington School of the Arts.

The Current Newspapers Journalism Awards recognize the work of student journalists from Northwest's public and private high schools. Students from Bell Multicultural High School, Cardozo High School, Duke Ellington School of the Arts, School Without Walls, Wilson High School, Edmund Burke School, Field School, Georgetown Day School, Georgetown Visitation Preparatory School, Maret School, National Cathedral School, St. Albans School, St. John's College High School, Sidwell Friends School and Washington International School were invited to submit their work.



Some of Goodwin and Wurzburg's earliest projects were treatments of Washington cultural life, including a documentary about the Melvin Deal dancers and another about the students of the Duke Ellington School of the Arts doing a dramatization of Langston Hughes's poetry.

BY LUCIAN PERRONS—THE WASHINGTON POST

Gerardine Wurzburg: "I think ... kids have a lot to say. We don't ask them and we don't listen."

A Film of Tears, and Triumph

Local Documentary's Bittersweet Oscar Odyssey

By Jacqueline Trescott
Washington Post Staff Writer

The "we" is always present when filmmaker Gerardine Wurzburg discusses her work.

Sometimes, the we speaks with affectionate attachment of her 20-year partnership with Tom Goodwin, which ended with his painful death last winter.

At other times, the we speaks to the hold documentary filmmakers solder onto their subjects, and right now, Wurzburg's we includes Peter Gwazdauskas, an engaging 13-year-old who has Down's syndrome. "Educating Peter," the straightforward look at his first year of inclusion in a typical classroom, is the last film Wurzburg and Goodwin made together.

The collaboration of the three has been nominated for an Academy Award in the documentary short subject category. Entertainment Weekly, says the short is the sentimental favorite. The 30-minute film will be aired on HBO May 12 at 9:30 p.m.

"It's been amazingly bittersweet," Wurzburg says of the honor and excitement attached to the nomination, and the irony of its coming just months after Goodwin's death from prostate cancer.

A willowy woman with clear green eyes, she is sitting in the Adams-Morgan office of State of the Art Inc., the company the two filmmakers founded in 1975. Around her is clutter with specific purposes—videotapes,

See WURZBURG, C6, Col. 1

Filmmaker Wurzburg

WURZBURG, From C1

reference books, advertising fliers. Taped on a laminated calendar—where a yellow star marks next Monday, the day of the Oscars ceremony—are color photographs of young Peter, his blond head buried in an embrace.

And tumbling out of her memory bank are the daily conversations she had with Goodwin in this same office. "I talk to Tom up there. He is still pushing the pencils in a certain direction. We had a certain kind of Buddhist perspective on it all," says Wurzburg, 42. She smiles slightly, heading off any questions about her ceaseless sentimentality. Goodwin, 51, died in December; his cancer was diagnosed right after they finished shooting "Peter" in June.

As she talks, it's clear that this is a woman who has a well-honed set of beliefs, ones that her film subjects recharge. "I'm sorry," she says at one point. "I am just too old not to be an advocate, at a certain point you have ethics. And there is just not enough time in life to function without beliefs."

State of the Art specializes in films on children, education, AIDS and other health care issues, working conditions and cultural snapshots. Before Goodwin's death, the team had produced more than 50 films and won a national Emmy and a long sheet of other awards. In 1988 Wurzburg and Goodwin produced "Regular Lives," a documentary about mainstreaming people with disabilities. The segment on children caught the eye of an executive at Home Box Office, who asked for a fuller look at the issue.

"One story, one child, one classroom. With that focus I then went out to find the story," recalls Wurzburg. Peter, a resident of Blacksburg, Va., had been traveling back and forth to another city for his schooling in a classroom with kids of all degrees of disabilities. When his neighborhood school decided to include him in its third-grade classroom, his mother told Wurzburg, "finally someone wanted my son."

His new school, says Wurzburg, had a supportive classroom teacher, school leaders who backed his attendance and cooperative parents—Peter's and his classmates'. That met her technical criteria, but she didn't make any promises, except to spend one week in Peter's

several times during the school year. "We had to make sure everyone understood what was involved. Number one, we did not know the outcome. We did not know if Peter was going to work or not work. Personally as a human being I thought it would work but in fact we had no idea," she says.

In this genre of close-up study, the personality of the subject had to be compelling, if not likable. The teacher and classmates frankly testify in the film that they weren't sure if they liked Peter, who was 10. "He had learned how to be abusive, how to fight to get attention," Wurzburg says of his past schooling. "He wasn't respected, he was considered an idiot. When he went into the regular school, he had to learn how do you ask for attention, how do you express affection other than piling on top of your friends."

In September 1991, Wurzburg and Goodwin got on the school bus with Peter. They went into the classroom with the filmmaker's equivalent of a brand-new notebook—blank cassettes that would be filled with inspired adventure, some frustrating starts, unexplainable outbursts, perhaps some failures. They finished with a diary of insights and clarity.

The film focuses on the incidents of school life, with one-on-one interviews at the end of each day with the main teacher and the students.

On his first day, Peter stood at attention and said the Pledge of Allegiance, totally out of sync with the other pupils and louder than them. He looked around with expressions that indicated insecurity rather than patriotism.

Later, the teacher talked about how scared, excited and "always on guard" she was. The kids, with their unedited candor, spoke of being afraid of his looks and his noises. In the third week, during an outdoor physical education drill, Peter kicked a child in the face. That incident led to sessions in which the other kids worked out ways to play and study with Peter. In the seventh week, the teacher got Peter to apologize to a child he had been interrupting. "Sorry," he said to a classmate, then he hugged and kissed him.

Finding the balance between the routine and tense moments was the hardest part for the filmmakers. "You are kind of sitting there, you laugh, then the head knock, and you laugh, and finally, the boy gets kicked. Then it is a totally different ballgame. You are on full alert. There is an unknown. What I love about the film is that it does have a real progression to it," she says.

Besides offering snacks, the only technique Wurzburg used with the students was listening. "It is like good parenting, you say, 'uh-huh,' and if you keep listening and they know you are really paying attention and they know you want to know, kids will talk. I think basically kids have a lot to say. We don't ask them and we don't listen," says Wurzburg.

After the school year ended, and filming was complete, Goodwin became gravely ill. A native of Baltimore and graduate of Harvard, Goodwin started his film career in 1966 at Andy Warhol's Manhattan studio, was assistant director on a film starring Jimi Hendrix in 1969 and assistant cinematographer on the classic '70s TV documentary on the Loud family. "He was pretty committed," says his widow, Dorothy Jackson. The story of Peter and those of other children with special needs were a lifetime interest. "His mother and father were both pediatricians and were advocates for children with disabilities. Tommy wholeheartedly believed in this

Wurzburg grew up in a rural, farming community in Hunterdon County, N.J., joining the 4-H Sheep Club and starting off on the premised track. In the midst of her studies at Catholic University, she borrowed a friend's camera. "That was the end of everything and the beginning of everything," she says. A grant from the National Endowment for the Arts in 1973 gave her independence. Wurzburg lives in Woodley Park with her husband, Grady Watts, a producer and editor who worked on "Peter," and their daughters, Charlotte, 11, and Emily, 7.

Some of Goodwin and Wurzburg's earliest projects were treatments of Washington cultural life, including a documentary about the Melvin Deal dancers and another about the students of the Duke Ellington School of the Arts doing a dramatization of Langston Hughes's poetry. In 1984 they produced a seven-part series on children that was broadcast on PBS and received a national Emmy nomination. "Regular Lives," which inspired the search for Peter, appeared in 1988 on PBS and garnered four national awards.

"It was a wonderful, wonderful collaboration, the kind of thing very few people get in their lifetime," says Wurzburg. "Every morning we would sit in this room and go over the horrors of the current administration and once that was off our chest, got down to the work at hand."

Because of Goodwin's condition, the staff decided to accelerate the work to complete "Peter." As they edited from June to October they tried to include him in all the post-production steps. "Every day we were trying to find something to give him, something that meant ongoing and hope. I would tell him all the things that were going on, and if he was feeling better, he could screen footage. I would transfer stuff to VHS so he could [screen it] and he was never able to do any of that. But it was important to show him that I kept believing. We talked on the phone every day. And the hard part was at the end he couldn't talk," says Wurzburg, with the hurried tone of someone trying to forget.

The decision to enter the Academy Awards sweepstakes became another incentive to finish quickly. "I realized if we got it in by October and opened in a movie theater for a week, we could qualify. I just had this kind of hope that if we got the nomination it would come at a time when he wasn't well but it would be a bit of good news. I was always trying to find things like that we could do."

Before Hollywood saw the finished film, Goodwin reviewed a copy. He watched it alone and cried, he told Wurzburg later. "I knew we had a good show because at State of the Art we are known for our crying. Someone jokingly referred to us as the company that loves misery," she says.

What emerged from the filming of Peter was another look at how friendships are formed.

Another we. Obvious in every frame is Peter's growth. By the seventh month Peter was playing Scrabble, and the teacher noted, "There are still a few outbursts—usually at the end of the day when it is time to leave his friends." By the end of the year the youngster Peter kicked was saying, "Peter is one of my best friends. Some normal people in my class aren't." And then a girl, who said at the beginning she could only stare at Peter, observed: "He changed because we changed. . . . He is teaching us how to think and how to react to other problems."

While describing the passages, the filmmaker smiles. The transference of the "we" to another set of lives was perhaps unintended but successful. "Coming up with the title 'Educating Peter' was an ironic kind of title. We are not educating him, he is educating us."

Party lines: *people, places and politics*

Artful plan aids Ellington school

The party wouldn't stop. And here it was almost 2 a.m. on a school night, with **Karen Akers** and **Stevie Wonder** both appearing (though at separate times) at B. Smith's restaurant in Union Station.

That was the third leg of an evening that began with a tony cocktails-cum-dinner gathering (\$1,000 a plate) at the residence of **Conrad** and **Peggy Cooper Cafritz** to benefit the Duke Ellington School of the Arts. Guests included Secretary of Education **Richard K. Riley**, **Riley Temple**, **John** and **June Hechinger**, **Henry** and **Malan Strong**, **Robert** and **Mary Haft** and film maven **Ted Pemas**, who said he was going home to change because he felt overdressed.

Amid the frightfully well-organized catering dispatch (waiters and waitresses communicated via headsets and beepers), we chatted with Motown ambassador **Eddie Brown**, who flew in from Los Angeles to announce that his company was donating a recording studio and scholarship to the Ellington school to commemorate its 20th anniversary.

"Do you believe it, we've a recording studio to install and our roof leaks," sighed Mrs. Cafritz, the school's founder and the blood and bones of its fight to stay alive despite enormous operating costs.



Stevie Wonder sang many of his hits at the Duke Ellington school's benefit. Photos by Kenneth Lambert/The Washington Times



Duke Ellington student Clifton Walker (right, above) brought down the house with his rendition of "Luck Be a Lady."

our students go to college. These are the same students, 30 percent of whom enter our school reading between third- and seventh-grade levels."

After the dinner there was a performance in the school's auditorium, where guests attended with other supporters paying a more modest \$500. (Those paying \$250 supped cabaret-style with Miss Akers at a separate gig at Union Station). Former mayor and current D.C. Council member **Marian Barry** was there, sans chapeau, with a beefy bodyguard ("I wonder who pays for that?" someone asked.), trying to reach his wife, **Cora**, on a cellular phone before she arrived fashionably late. "I helped fund this school," he said, as ticketless supporters passed out campaign buttons and literature in the foyer.

Lengthy performances by Ellington students and well-known alums, including comedian **David Chapell** and vocalist **Tony Terry**, were followed by a riveting finale with Mr. Wonder, who sang so many of his hits with so much of his heart that it put much of the audience in a "Soul Train" time warp. His new album, "Natural Wonder," is slated for release in the fall.

—Alexa Gelmi



"We are the most successful school of this kind in the country," noted board member **Carol Olson**. "Ninety-two percent of



The school's founder, Peggy Cooper Cafritz (left) tells the audience of its successes over the past 20 years. Earlier, she hosted a buffet dinner at her home (above) for \$1,000 donors.

The Hottest Spot in Town

Ellington School's 20th-Birthday Bash Sizzles

By Gigi Anders
Special to The Washington Post

Maybe it was the decrepit air conditioning system. Or maybe it was Stevie Wonder's unrelenting "Sunshine" that turned up the heat last night at the Duke Ellington School of the Arts.

It was a long, steamy evening for the crowd of more than 200 patrons of the D.C. public high school, celebrating its 20th anniversary with a black-tie benefit. And it pointed up both the need of the school for money to repair its aging building, and its success in training young artists and performers and creating a community.

Before headliner Wonder finally took the stage, the Ellington Show Choir sang a medley of "Take the 'A' Train," "In My Solitude" and "Luck Be a Lady Tonight," the drama department performed selections from Lorraine Hansberry's "A Raisin in the Sun," and there were assorted spirited dances and poetry readings and singers. A perky Debbie Allen, the first dance teacher at Ellington, emceed smoothly.

"This is a great evening," declared a relaxed and trimmed-down Marion Barry, there with his new wife, Cora. "I support the arts very strongly. Peggy Cooper Cafritz and I were

working on this school way back, years ago."

"My daughter is an alumna of Ellington," Cora Barry explained. "Lalanya Masters. She graduated in 1985. An actress. She's been on 'A Different World' and all kinds of things."

Changing the subject just for a moment—this is Washington, after all—Marion Barry added that he feels pretty upbeat about the upcoming D.C. mayoral election.

"We're gonna outwork, outthink and outrun everybody!" he vouched. "And then we're gonna win!"

Cafritz, a founder of the school, looked chic and wrinkled in her linen tunic. "You'll fall in love with the place and understand why I have so much passion for the place," she said.

For \$1,000, last night's guests got to not only help the school and enjoy the concert but also hang with Cafritz and her husband, Conrad, earlier in the evening at their exquisite house on Chain Bridge Road. About 100 guests politely scarfed down paella, salad, peasant bread and strawberries the size of golf balls.

Among them, Robert and Mary Haft of the famous feuding business family.

"We've been supporting Duke El-



BY GERALD MARTINEAU—THE WASHINGTON POST

Stevie Wonder performs at last night's fund-raiser at the Duke Ellington School of the Arts, which was celebrating its 20th anniversary.

lington for years," he said. "We think it's great for the city to have such an excellent arts education school."

"This city can be a barren landscape to so many children," she said. "The school offers them a window of inspiration and hope and opportunity. We have three small children ourselves, so children are important to us."

"The school reminds me of 'Schindler's List.' 'When you save one life, you save the world.' That's how I see it too."

The Haft's couldn't stay for the show, however. Babysitter problems.

Had they gone, the sitter would have been into serious overtime pay. The program began at 8 and gave a thorough overview of just how talented Ellington kids are.

And finally, at 11, there was Stevie Wonder accompanying himself at the piano to—what else?—"You Are the Sunshine of My Life."

Peggy Cooper Cafritz told the audience that the star performer also contributed a recording studio and his first piano to the school. And Motown established an endowment and scholarship fund for needy students.

Now that's a lot of sunshine.

The Reliable Source

Wonder Never Ceases

Twenty years after he shot to superstardom with "Songs in the Key of Life," pop and soul singer Stevie Wonder is still keeping the beat, preaching his own positive brand of musical gospel.

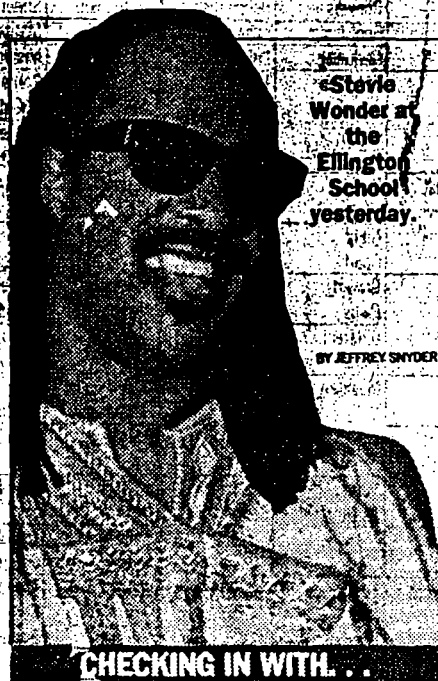
"People can feel my love and love is an everlasting thing," Wonder told us yesterday in between various commitments around town. "As long as I have it in my heart to put it in my music then people will listen and that's cool. When I can't do that anymore, then I'm outta here."

He is now 44 and sounds as upbeat as the rhythmic music that's become his trademark. And he's still going strong: He comes out with a new album this summer, hopes to tour in the fall and is about to move from L.A. to Ghana because "there's more of a sense of community there."

Yesterday, he presented one of his harmonicas to the Hard Rock Cafe, and then jammed at the Duke Ellington School of the Arts 20th anniversary celebration.

Wonder turns a bit more serious when asked about the violent, rage-filled lyrics of some of today's popular music. "Some people do it because it's the thing to be done," he tells *The Post's* Mary Alma Welch. "Others live it and their reality is that."

"I'm supportive of anyone having the right to express themselves," says the entertainer, who calls himself a fan of music from KRS-One, Salt-'N'-Peppa and Sting. The best form of censorship, Wonder



Stevie Wonder at the Ellington School yesterday.

BY JEFFREY SNYDER

CHECKING IN WITH . .

argues, would be to "eliminate all the conditions that make it possible for people to write that kind of negative music—provide equal opportunity for all and give everyone hope."

Meanwhile, Wonder doesn't forbid his own three children to listen to the music, but he does try to get them to think about it. "That's what parents have to do. You're not going to stop the world from changing. The thing is, you've either got to be in it, or you're going to be out of it."

AN OVERVIEW OF THE DUKE ELLINGTON SCHOOL OF THE ARTS

SHEPHERDING PROGRAM

In 1968, two energetic college students-Peggy Cooper Cafritz and Mike Malone-established a summer arts training program in Washington, DC known as WorkShops for Careers in the Arts. "Workshops" was born of the idea that Washington students deserved a creative alternative to traditional education, and that artistic training could tap hidden wellsprings of talent within inner-city youth, and become a vehicle for an exciting career.

By 1974, it was clear that the city needed more than a summer program. With support from the District of Columbia Public School System and the Board of Education, a School of the Arts was founded at Western High School. When Western's last class graduated in 1976, the school was renamed the Duke Ellington School of the Arts at Western in living tribute to a native Washingtonian.

Today the Duke Ellington School of the Arts is a unique oasis in an arid urban educational landscape. The school offers both a comprehensive pre-collegiate academic program and strong pre-professional artistic training to 400 students in grades 9-12. Although a public school, Duke Ellington has many private characteristics. Admission is selective, based on audition or portfolio review; the student-teacher ratio is low; and school administrators have an uncommon degree of autonomy in school operations.

The school's uniqueness extends to its funding. Because the fiscal demands of the Ellington curriculum far outweigh the resources of the public sector, the Ellington Fund was established in 1974 as a 501(c)(3) corporation to make additional private resources available. Public funding agencies like the National Endowment for the Arts and the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities have provided leadership funding; so too have major US corporations such as Xerox, IBM, Time/Life, and other national and local philanthropic foundations.

Ellington has also benefitted from the loving support of many professional artists who generously give their time and talent to the school. Lena Horne, Andre Watts, Colleen Dewhurst, Debbie Allen, and many others have visited the school to give Master Classes or help raise funds. They are role models; living proof of the power of the arts to transform lives and create new possibilities.

Stevie Wonder

As a major arts institution with its roots in the inner city, Ellington is a vital experiment in education. Many Ellington students come from distressed and disadvantaged inner-city neighborhoods where drugs and violence are common. These and other systemic problems place rigorous demands on the intellectual and emotional resources of students.

For many years, educators have realized that social and environmental problems have had an adverse effect on school performance for many inner-city children. Because many of the academic deficiencies and poor socialization skills could not be overcome by traditional means, alternative programs such as Head Start were developed to give pre-school children additional knowledge and values to help them through the elementary and junior high school years. At Ellington, we believe it is essential to reinforce this idea at the high school level, and to accomplish this we have devised the Ellington Shepherding Program. The Shepherding Program was originally funded by the RJR Nabisco Foundation as one of its Next Century Schools, schools that focus on new and innovative educational concepts. This program is the critical next step in the evolution of our educational system. It is designed to respond to the educational and cultural realities of the District of Columbia by addressing the critical need to provide entering 9th and 10th grade students with a highly personalized framework for academic learning, artistic training, and human development.

Shepherding begins before the first day of school. All in-coming students attend a summer empowerment session, summer retreat, in which they receive insight into the development of self esteem, self confidence, and goal setting. Summer retreat gets each student off on the right foot, and establishes the basis of the Shepherd-Student relationship to follow.

Once school starts, incoming students are assigned to a "House" according to their preferred artistic discipline. These houses are: The James Baldwin House (Literary Media Arts); the Katherine Dunham House (Dance); the Romere Beardon House (Visual Arts); the Ira Aldridge House (Theater); the Duke Ellington House (Music); and the Henry O. Tanner House (Museum Studies). Special House programs are developed to provide supplemental learning experiences which will enable each student to realistically determine his or her potential for a career in the arts.

Each Shepherd is assigned a small group of students (not to exceed 8). Through close and lasting relationships with faculty, student performance is enhanced as a result of on-going personal attention and support. Shepherds interact with students on a regular basis throughout the school advisory (in either individual or group settings) to discuss student schedules, progress in classes, disciplinary concerns, family concerns, the need for support staff assistance (therapy or tutoring), whether the student is feeling comfortable, accepted, by Ellington peers and faculty, and goal setting. After consultations with the student shepherds are expected to make recommendations for appropriate follow-up action. Follow-up could include attending the Learning Center (an after school tutorial program in the school library), or seeing the school therapist in individual or family settings to work through family challenges.

Shepherds are expected to know their students family situation, as well as the physical and social environment in which each student lives. By involving parents/guardians, it extends the school and learning process to the home so that each student receives an on-going, consistent educational message. Parents/guardians receive quarterly summary reports of each child's academic, artistic, and social experience along with recommendations for appropriate parental action.

When the school year is coming to a close exit interviews and surveys are designed to help the student consolidate learning and evaluate the overall success of the Shepherding experience. Teachers and parents/guardians also receive exit interviews and surveys designed to help the Shepherd Office run a manageable and efficient program for all.

The benefits of the Shepherding Program are, first and foremost, a basis for trust due to a supportive and caring environment. Since many students come from distressed situations, shepherding offers both support and healing. Intense and long term interaction is key to the success of the relationship, and this in itself sends a powerful message about success in life.

Shepherding also ensures that no student will be neglected or left to "fall through the cracks" of the educational system. The program is designed to reduce the frustration of poor academic performance whether it be caused by previous educational problems or a stressful cultural or home environment.

The final component of the Shepherding Program is the enhancement of a college counseling program to support the students with continued education. Many Ellington students are the first in their families to attend college. Without an organized mechanism of support to assist them in the difficult task of identifying and qualifying for the school of their choice, these students often do not develop the proper resources to make informed decisions about the university or college that can help them achieve their academic potential. The counseling component will enhance the possibility of making the best choice.

Keys To The Ellington Shepherding Program:

- Provides a supportive and consistent framework for learning.
- Gives students a "head start" on their secondary education.
- Involves teachers, administrators, and staff in the lives of students inside and outside of school.
- Offers career oriented counseling and guidance.
- Facilitates parent-school interaction.
- Supports, nurtures, and encourages marginal students.
- Promotes and accelerates strong students.
- Identifies and helps at-risk students.

THE ELLINGTON EXPERIENCE

THE PROOF IS IN THE PUPILS

School of the Arts to Celebrate 20 Years of Creative Education

By Jacqueline Trescott
Washington Post Staff Writer

The building is nearly 100 years old and almost every corner of its block-long sprawl is too hot or too cold and the roof leaks and the toe shoes have worn way past the pink satin. But inside the sculpture studio, instructor Bill Harris lets the Latin jazz flow, and the hands of his beginners form masks, facsimiles of themselves colored with the ragged, sharp lines of improvisation. Lynn Welters turns on her boombox in the dance hall, and a smooth, mournful sound escapes as a graceful parade of young bodies almost flies across the floor. On the third floor, band leader Davey Yarborough coaches the jazz orchestra, and two dozen heads are bent over "Mood Indigo."

It's Ellington. And it's school. For 20 years now, students have attended the Duke Ellington School of the Arts in upper Georgetown, the only predominantly African American arts high school in the country. Some travel a solid hour and a half to be there for a 7 a.m. rehearsal before the academic half-day begins, and then they stay after the six-subject arts curriculum has spun into more rehearsals. Typically, 92 percent of the senior class are accepted by colleges, although only 80 percent can afford to attend. Education Secretary Richard Riley has cited the school's success rate; First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton is scheduled to speak at this year's graduation.

As any institution leaving its teens, Ellington, a part of the D.C. public school system, is struggling with its next role: how to make an impact in this era of talk of pumping up arts education nationwide, and how to find the dollars to match a collection of substantial dreams.

Tomorrow night, a three-year effort to build the school's endowment will kick off with a black-tie benefit at which longtime patron Stevie Wonder will perform. The show will be emceed by Tony Award winner Debbie Allen, the first dance teacher at



BY TOM ALLEN—THE WASHINGTON POST

The Show Choir will sing Japan's national anthem for that country's emperor during his state visit next week.

Ellington, and choreographed by Helen Hayes award winner Mike Malone. The benefit was organized by Peggy Cooper Cafritz, the president of the Ellington Fund, the nonprofit foundation that supports the school. Cafritz was the principal founder of the school and co-founder of its predecessor, the Workshops for Careers in the Arts.

For the past few weeks, the school has been busy with the usual rites of spring—finals, papers and projects, graduation, a trip to Great Adventure. But there's also the out-of-the-ordinary, because the talents of Ellington's 500 or so students are in demand. The students this week mounted "Malindy Sings," their adaptation of the Cinderella story. The art

classes exhibit work at downtown offices; the singers appear at the White House and embassies. The Show Choir is rehearsing the Japanese national anthem for Emperor Akihito during his state visit next week.

Some of these hard dreamers took a break in class today to talk about what their personal expectations are for the Ellington code.