



Former Homeless Student Fights Adversity to Graduate

There is every reason Ashley Leath should have been a dropout. But she wouldn't let that happen.

Ashley was only 12 when her mother died from breast cancer. Her father was remarried, but her step-mother's drug addiction left Ashley neglected. She left home and lived with other family members and then, finally, in a shelter for a period of time.

But a caring cousin took Ashley in, and Houston's Booker T.



Ashley Leath

Washington High School did too. This shy and reserved student has mastered the rigorous academic requirement of the engineering magnet program at Washington High.

On May 28, Ashley graduated from high school, where she had been a member of the National Honor Society and president of the Key Club. This fall, she plans to study architecture at the University of Texas.

This compelling graduation story comes from the Houston Independent School District, which recently highlighted some of its 7,400 graduates who struggled against all odds to even make it to graduation day.

With eight of 10 students living in poverty in the Houston district, graduation day is a huge celebration for families in the nation's seventh largest school system, which also educates children from more

than 90 countries.

"When I think about how a young person today has to overcome so many distractions, I marvel. However, Ashley has had to overcome much more just to live and still finish in the top of her senior class," says Washington High counselor Howard Bruce.

Ashley used the adversity as motivation.

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New Leaders Named in 4 Cities

The school boards of Florida's School District of Hillsborough County in Tampa, Indianapolis Public Schools, Buffalo Public Schools and Denver Public Schools recently named new superintendents.



MaryEllen Elia

MaryEllen Elia, Hillsborough County's chief facilities officer, has been appointed to take the reins from the retiring Earl Lennard, who has led the school district since 1996. She had

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New Leadership At Council

Superintendent Arlene Ackerman of the San Francisco Unified School District becomes chair of the Council of the Great City Schools' governing body, effective July 1.



Arlene Ackerman

She succeeds Judy Farmer, a board member of the Minneapolis Public Schools, for a one-year term as chair

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urban Educator

A newsletter published by the Council of the Great City Schools, representing 65 of the nation's largest urban public school districts

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Long Beach School Lives Up To Its Championship Persona

With "HOME OF SCHOLARS AND CHAMPIONS" emblazoned on the entrance of the school, California's Long Beach Poly High School lives up to its motto.

Sports Illustrated magazine recently ranked Long Beach Poly No. 1 of the 25 "Best High School Athletic Programs" of 38,000 high schools in the United States.

The criteria included all-around excellence during the last 10 years, state titles won and college athletes produced.

Said the article in the May 16 edition of *Sports Illustrated*, "But what is all the more remarkable about Poly is that many of the athletes really are scholars, just as the sign says."

Some 90 percent of incoming freshmen graduate from the inner-city

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Former Homeless...

"Every time I was told I would not amount to anything, it only encouraged me to try harder," she says in a news release. "When we lived in the shelter, I caught buses every morning downtown in the dark and brutal cold just to make it to school. I did not tell anyone about my situation because I did not want pity, and for a long time I was ashamed."

Ashley said there were "so many obstacles along the way that I wondered not only how I would succeed, but how I would survive. I am grateful I had the determination to succeed and I had the courage to change my situation. I know now that my future is bright."

school, the article points out.

"Oh God, I loved that sign. I loved its message," says tennis legend Billie Jean King, who graduated from Poly in 1961.

"The sign is no joke," says Willie McGinest, the New England Patriots' two-time Pro Bowl linebacker and Poly graduate of 1990. "'SCHOLARS AND CHAMPIONS' is not just paint, man. It's been written in blood and sweat."

In the school's 110-year history, four dozen grads have gone on to the National Football League. But the urban school's exceptional athletic prowess includes basketball, track, golf and tennis.

Another big-city school also made *Sports Illustrated* magazine's top 25 list of sports high schools in America. New Mexico's La Cueva High School in Albuquerque ranked No. 22.

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New Leadership...

of the Council's Board of Directors, composed of the superintendent and one board member from each of the organization's 65 member school districts.

Moving up to Ackerman's chair-elect post is George Thompson III, a board member with the Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools.

Taking his position as secretary-treasurer to round out the Council leadership for 2005-2006 is Superintendent Patricia Harvey of Minnesota's Saint Paul Public Schools.

Inside the Council

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New Leaders...

served earlier as general director of secondary education and director of nontraditional programs in Tampa.

In Indianapolis, Eugene White, superintendent of the Metropolitan School District of Washington Township in Indiana, has been named to head the state's largest school district. He succeeds the retiring Duncan N.P. Pritchett Jr., who has been at the helm since 1997.



Eugene White

A former Dayton Public Schools superintendent, James Williams, will lead the Buffalo school system, succeeding interim superintendent Yvonne Hargrave. Williams headed Ohio's Dayton school district from 1991 to 1999, and won the Council of the Great City Schools' Richard R. Green Award as the top urban school leader in 1996.



James Williams

In Denver, the school board decided to select Mayor John Hickenlooper's chief of staff, Michael Bennet, to succeed retiring superintendent Jerry Wartgow, who has led the district since 2001.

After the decision, a leading candidate for the Denver job, Superintendent Patricia Harvey of Minnesota's St. Paul Public Schools, announced that she would step down from her current post at the end of December.

Oklahoma City School Improvements Draw New Residents to Inner City

Local realtors in Oklahoma City recently reported that home sales have increased because of improvements in inner-city schools.

"Recent sales figures show an increase, especially in homes priced below the \$150,000 mark," says realtor Joe Pryor in *Realty Times*. "Why has this happened? In 2001, Oklahoma City residents voted a temporary sales tax, called MAPS for Kids."

The MAPS for Kids initiative is a community-designed plan approved by the district and voters to rebuild Oklahoma City Public Schools into a model urban school district.

Funds became available for school district improvements in such areas as instruction, safety and facili-

ties. As a result, the city has seen student achievement gains, new school buses and modernized school buildings.

"A community is only as successful as its local school district," says Schools Superintendent Bob Moore. "It is extremely gratifying to see success materialize for the children and the entire Oklahoma City community."

Rochester Extends Superintendent's Tenure

New York's Rochester Board of Education recently decided to keep its top administrator, approving a new four-year employment contract for Superintendent Manuel Rivera, who has led the district since 2002.




Photo by Scott C. King

The Class of 2005

Atlanta Public Schools Superintendent Beverly Hall, right, congratulates Neiman Buffard at recent Grady High School graduation exercises. Atlanta graduates were offered \$66 million in college scholarships. More than 100 of the 2,011 graduates of the 10 Atlanta high schools received scholarship offers of over \$100,000 each, and three received offers totaling more than \$1 million, according to the school district.

Atlanta Fifth Graders Win National Stock Portfolio Contest

Students at an Atlanta elementary school have successfully invested in the stock market.

A fifth-grade class at W.T. Jackson Elementary School recently won the 2005 National Stock Portfolio Contest. The class surpassed the performance of 100 classes from schools in 18 states that participated in the stock contest sponsored by investment firm Smith Barney.

The contest was part of the 'Take Your Parents to School Day Program, a three-day financial education curriculum held in elementary and middle schools across the nation.

In the competition, each participating class formed teams to create a hypothetical portfolio consisting of five shares of stock selected from a list provided by Smith Barney.

The Atlanta students portfolio increased by 0.85 percent, the largest increase in portfolio value of all classes participating.

Teacher Nancy Guy Kelly said the program was a fabulous experience for his students. "As elementary students, to have a portfolio that out-earned 6th, 7th and 8th graders from all over the country was the icing on the cake."

Newark Students Win NASA Competition – Again

For the second year in a row, the students at Franklin School in Newark have placed first in the NASA (National Aeronautics and Space Administration) Student Involvement Program competition.

A first-grade class from the school took home the top prize for its entry based on a research project about surface temperature.

And the class was not the only winners from Newark. The second-place prize was awarded to students from Newark's Martin Luther King Jr. School, whose project demonstrated how soils differ.

The NASA national program was created to stimulate math, science, technology and geography excellence through six competition categories for students in grades kindergarten through twelfth grade. Approximately 2,860 students entered this year's competition.

'Million Dollar Class' Cited In Rochester

Graduating seniors at Wilson Magnet High School in Rochester, N.Y., have earned more than \$6.8 million in college scholarships – far exceeding the challenge issued by their principal at the beginning of the school year.

Principal Marilyn Patterson-Grant dubbed them the "Million Dollar Class" in September when she challenged the students to earn at least \$1 million in academic scholarships.

The principal is not surprised that her graduating seniors earned scholar-

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Guilford Co. High Schools Ranked Among the Best

Superintendent Terry Grier of North Carolina's Guilford County Schools in Greensboro recently had every reason to congratulate his entire "high school family."

All 14 of the district's high schools ranked in the top 4 percent of America's Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate schools for the second consecutive year, making *Newsweek* magazine's recent list of the nation's top 1,000 public high schools.

The *Newsweek* list ranks public schools based on the number of AP or IB tests taken by all students at a school, divided by the number of graduating seniors.

Moreover, Grimsley High in Greensboro became the first Guilford County school to be ranked in *Newsweek's* top 100.

Study Shows Parent Satisfaction With Louisville Area Schools

Kentucky's Jefferson County Public Schools in Louisville wanted to know just how satisfied parents are with the school system.

The school district found in a comprehensive survey that parents of school-children attending Jefferson County schools are significantly more confident and satisfied about their public schools than most parents throughout the nation.

Parents' satisfaction exceeds national averages by as much as 27 percentage points. An impressive 71.6 percent – almost three of four – Jefferson County parents give their district an "A" or "B" grade compared with the national average of 61 percent in the 36th annual Phi Delta Kappa (PDK) Gallup Poll of the Public's Attitudes Toward Public Schools.

The highest praise from Jefferson County parents involved grading their children's individual schools. Nine out of 10 Jefferson County parents, or 86.6 percent, grade their child's school with an "A" or "B".

The PDK survey corresponds with the annual Parent Satisfaction Survey of the 97,000-student school system in Louisville. The school system survey polls parents about school climate and atmosphere, quality of education, and safety.

Subsequently, the responses compile a final letter grade for two subjects: the overall school district and the child's individual school.

More than half of Jefferson County students receive free or reduced price lunches. Two of the fastest growing groups in the district are English as a Second Language (ESL) students and homeless and migrant students, according to the district.

Jackson Student Excels At World Science Fair

A student in Jackson, Miss., recently walked away with fourth-place honors in the Intel International Science and Engineering Fair in Phoenix, where he competed with 95 students from more than 40 countries and every state in the U.S.



Jonathan Priester

Jonathan Priester, a junior at Murrah High School, placed fourth in the bio-chemistry category of the international fair for his project titled "Us-

ing Absorbance Difference Spectroscopy to Investigate the Interaction of Selected Inhibitors Cytochrome p450 Aromatase."

Jonathan's older brother, Melvin, a Murrah graduate, placed fourth in botany at the 1996 fair and first in medicine and health in 1997. They are believed to be the only siblings from Jackson Public Schools to reach such a high level of science competition.

Philly District Plans Mandated African Studies

The Philadelphia school system this coming fall plans to offer a required African and African-American history course in all of its high schools.

The course will be mandated for the freshman class this fall, requiring all high school students in the predominantly African-American district to have taken the course by 2009 graduation.

"This isn't about being politically correct. It's about being comprehensive," said school district Chief Executive Officer Paul Vallas in the *Philadelphia Inquirer*. "We have a whole continent that has been absent from most of our textbooks."

"I think what Philadelphia is doing makes sense," stressed Michael Casserly, executive director of the Council of the Great City Schools.

In another development, the School District of Philadelphia has partnered with the city's fire department to launch the Firefighter Training Academy Program this September at four high schools, aimed at training the next generation of Philadelphia firefighters.

"Being a firefighter is a noble and honorable profession," says James Nevells, chairman of the school reform commission.

"I'm confident this program will result in public school graduates being hired and serving long and successful careers in important public service jobs within the Philadelphia Fire Department."

Four Urban Districts Receive Federal AP Grants

Four big-city school districts were among 13 education operations to win Advanced Placement Incentive grants recently from the U.S. Department of Education.

Anchorage, Chicago, Des Moines and Florida's Orange County Public Schools in Orlando won funding to boost their advanced placement programs in competition with other school systems and state education organizations in the nation.

In Orlando, Superintendent Ronald Blocker two years ago created the Advanced Studies Department to ensure that all students in Orange County Public Schools had opportunities to take more academically challenging courses.

His district received a \$1.9 million Advanced Placement Incentive grant, designed to expand participation and success of low-income and minority students in AP and pre-AP programs.

The funds will be targeted to three Orange County high schools and their feeder middle schools, according to the district.

In receiving a \$2.4 million grant, Des Moines Schools Superintendent Eric Witherspoon said, "This exciting news is directly aligned with our school board's goal of increasing rigor in our classrooms, particularly in core subjects at the middle school level."

Urban Schools Win 'Grammy Awards'

Students at the Las Vegas Academy High School can pursue a major in either dance, vocal music, instrumental music, piano, theatre or visual arts.

These arts programs offered by the school are one of the reasons Las Vegas Academy High was among 42 schools across the nation recently selected for a GRAMMY Signature School Award.



Presented by 7 UP, the awards honor public high schools for their outstanding commitment to music education programs.

The Las Vegas Academy High School was one of six schools designated as "Grammy Signature Schools Gold" recipients and given an award of \$7,000.

Schools in Austin, Boston, Jacksonville, Seattle, Los Angeles, Cincinnati and Long Beach were named "Grammy Signature Schools" and received a grant of \$2,000.

In addition, the Las Vegas Academy High School and McCallum High School in Austin, Tex., were selected as recipients of the Gibson Guitar award and received a \$5,000 grant toward their guitar programs.

Fundraiser Event Nets \$1.2 Million For Denver

In just one night, the citizens of Denver were able to raise \$1.2 million to help fund after-school programs for students in Denver Public Schools.

The money was raised during the 2005 Annual Celebration of Denver Public Schools, an evening gala celebrating the accomplishments of the district's students and teachers as well as the achievements of the school system.

A sellout crowd attended this year's event, which also paid tribute to departing Superintendent Jerry Wartgow, who is leaving the district after four years.

Colorado Gov. Bill Owens and Denver Mayor John Hicklenhooper were just two of the people at the event who took the podium to thank Wartgow for leading the district.

"There is no challenging position in public administration than being the superintendent of a large urban school district," said Owens. "Thanks to Jerry, the school board and the teachers, we can ensure that the next generation continues to enjoy the same level of education as the last."

The proceeds from the event will continue to support after-school programs that focus on arts, athletics, and extend academics for students during the 2005-06 school year. District officials have found that student involvement in after-school programs lead to improved attitudes toward school, better work habits, increased attendance and improved grades and test scores.

Top Urban Educator Awards Scholarship to Boston Student

Graduating senior Meilani Wilson of Boston's Madison Park Technical Vocational High School has been awarded a \$10,000 college scholarship from the nation's top urban educator.



Meilani Wilson

As the 2004 Richard R. Green Award winner, Boston Public Schools Superintendent Thomas Payzant had a choice of giving his \$10,000 scholarship prize to a high school senior in his

school district or from his high school alma mater.

Presented by the Council of the Great City Schools, the nation's top honor for urban school leadership comes with a \$10,000 college scholarship that is given to the Richard R. Green Award recipient by ARAMARK, a food and facilities management company.

Payzant awarded the college scholarship to Wilson at a recent school board meeting. She plans to pursue a degree in criminal justice at Bethune-Cookman College.

Urban School Board Leaders Targeted to Win 2005 Award

The nation's top prize for urban school leadership this year will be awarded to a past or current school board member of a district represented by the Council of the Great City Schools.

The Richard R. Green Award last year was open to superintendents, with Boston Public Schools Superintendent Thomas Payzant winning the high honor.

Named for the late leader of New York City and Minneapolis school systems, the Richard R. Green Award this year will be presented at the Council's 49th Annual Fall Conference in Atlanta.

ARAMARK, a food and facilities management services firm, will give a \$10,000 college scholarship to the award winner to give to a senior student.

Queen Smith Award

Another award will be given at the conference to an employee or board member of a Council district who has made "significant contributions to education and the community."

The Queen Smith Award for Commitment to Urban Education honors the memory of a Macmillan/McGraw-Hill Publishing Co. executive who spearheaded inner-city school initiatives. The winner receives a \$1,000 award.

For Green and Smith award applications, access the Council web site at www.cgcs.org, or contact Terry Tabor for further information at (202) 393-2427.

Council Ad Wins Award Of Excellence

The Council of the Great City Schools has won the highest award for its "Tested" public service announcement that it considers equivalent to the Olympic Gold Medal: the National School Public Relations Association's Award of Excellence.

In NSPRA'S 2005 Publications and Electronic Media Contest, the Council's PSA faced competition from 198 entries in the audio/visual category. Eighteen top awards were presented among three available in the competition.

Last year, the Council's first-ever advertisement, "Thank You," won the equivalent of the Olympic Silver Medal, when it was given the Award of Merit.

The "Tested" spot, which aims to dispel stereotypes about urban schools by recognizing advanced student placement, has been televised on numerous television stations nationwide since its launch in December.



GREAT CITY SCHOOLS. GREAT EXPECTATIONS.

Council Researcher Dies

Jack Jepson was probably one of the few educational researchers who could also say they made dinner for more than 100 people. That's because Jepson was a chef before he became a research specialist at the Council of the Great City Schools.

On May 31, Jepson, who was only 33 years old, died from a brain tumor. A native of Rhode Island, he joined the Council in August 1999.



Jack Jepson

During his three-year tenure, Jepson conducted all of the statistical work for the Council's research on the New York City school system's funding issues. His work contributed to a Council report and two legal briefs to show what constitutes adequate funding to New York City's students, supporting a court decision in favor of the district's schools.

Jepson was also responsible for designing the format for the Council's first *Beating the Odds* report, which was the nation's first look at how major city school systems were performing on state assessments.

He held a master's degree in public policy from American University, but before entering the world of educational research, he used his talents in the kitchen.

For four years, he was an executive chef at the Newport Harbor Hotel and Marina in Newport, R.I. In this

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Three Urban Students Named To All-USA Academic First Team

In 2001, a flood destroyed the home of Josh Sommer, a student at Western Guilford High School in Greensboro, N.C. After his family began experiencing chronic health problems because of toxic mold, Sommer developed methods for assessing indoor mold contamination.

For his efforts, he was recently named to the 2005 All-USA High School Academic First Team. Sponsored by *USA TODAY*, the program honors 20 outstanding high school students across the nation.

Sommer was not the only big-city student recognized. Christopher Kaimmer, a student at Garfield High School in Seattle, was selected by the program for organizing trips to set up needed computer labs in countries such as the Republic of Georgia and Belize.

Also recognized was Robert Cordwell, a student at Albuquerque's Manzano High School, who has received numerous awards for his accomplishments in mathematics.

Each of the recipients receive a trophy and a \$2,500 cash award.

Louisville Area Schools Join Partnership to Create 'Green City'

Kentucky's Jefferson County Public Schools in Louisville has joined the city government and the University of Louisville to create a "Green City."

A partnership for a Green City combines the three entities into a comprehensive environmental program aimed at promoting energy conservation and reducing energy costs.

The Jefferson County school system has for many years pursued many methods to reduce energy consumption, according to *National Facilities Journal*.

"We have many successes in saving energy and learning how to improve energy efficiency in our school buildings" says Michael Mulheirn, the district's executive director of facili-

ties and transportation in the *Journal*. "We would like for all of our buildings to be 'green' buildings."

With the creation of a Green City partnership, Mulheirn stresses, "We can now harness the collective knowledge of three motivated and innovative institutions; the outcome will be much greater than the sum of our individual efforts!"

Students from the Jefferson County school district and the University of Louisville will have an opportunity to participate in energy audits of buildings and conservation awareness campaigns.

Louisville is not the first "Green City." Others include Minneapolis, Seattle, Portland, Ore., Boulder, Colo., and Austin, Tex, according to the *Journal*.

Program Opens College Doors To Austin Grads

More than 3,100 high school graduates of the Austin Independent School District in Texas will experience a “seamless transition” to higher education thanks to a new program, according to district officials.

The graduating seniors have received official college acceptance letters from Austin Community College through a partnership called College Connection between the Austin school district and ACC.

During the spring semester, the College Connection program provided seniors at all 12 Austin high schools with comprehensive information and individual assistance in completing the application process to ACC. This included financial aid, individual academic advisement, testing and career planning.

“The first year of College Connection has been remarkably successful due to the solid partnership we have with ACC,” said Austin Schools Superintendent Pat Forgiore in a press release.

“We have provided many seniors with a seamless transition to higher education by awarding them both their high school diploma and a college acceptance letter at graduation,” he stressed.

Steve Kinslow, president of Austin Community College, says of the program, “College Connection increases access to higher education for thousands of students, and is an innovative partnership in which AISD (Austin Independent School District) and ACC are responding to the state’s ‘Closing the Gaps’ challenge to dramatically increase enrollment in higher education.”

Chicago’s Top-Performing Schools Rewarded With Autonomy

As a reward for high achievement and sound management, the Chicago Public Schools will give 85 elementary and high schools increased autonomy from the school system’s central office, beginning this fall.

These schools have been designated Autonomous Management and Performance Schools (AMPS), allowing them to implement a restructured day calendar, tailor their own professional development schedule to their individual needs, and spend funds and transfer funding from one program to another without area instructional officer approval.

“We looked hard at all of the factors that go into creating a successful school that truly serves the needs of our students,” says Chicago Schools Chief Executive Officer Arne Duncan in a press release. “These schools have obviously got it figured out. The best thing we can do is get out of their way.”

To qualify for the AMPS program, schools had to meet criteria determined by a committee of Chicago school system administrators, encompassing student performance, management, school climate and special education.

Council Creates New Post

Ricki Price-Baugh, retired assistant superintendent of curriculum and instructional development for the Houston Independent School District, has been named to a new position at the Council of the Great City Schools.

She becomes director of academic achievement after serving on numerous Council support teams in the area of curriculum and instruction.



Ricki Price-Baugh

She is looking forward to providing urban school districts with “high-leverage research, support and tools,” she emphasizes.

“We created the position as part of the Council’s overall efforts to help its membership boost student achievement,” says Council Executive Director Michael Casserly. “Ricki brings extraordinary experience in curriculum, instruction, professional development, bilingual education and instructional technology to the Council’s table.”

Since retiring from the Houston school system last year, Price-Baugh has provided consulting services to school districts and educational organizations to design curriculum as well as strategies to improve student achievement.

She has been a teacher, curriculum director and adjunct professor, and holds a doctorate in educational administration from Baylor University.

House Cuts NCLB Funding and Shortchanges IDEA

By Jeff Simering, Director of Legislation

The numbers are stark and depressing. The newly passed House appropriations bill for elementary and secondary education is one of the worst of the last 10 years.

Funding for the *No Child Left Behind* Act is actually cut by more than three-quarters of a billion dollars, the first reductions in the program since it was passed in 2001. And the federal share of special education costs under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is down again under the proposed spending plan.



LEGISLATIVE COLUMN

school programs don't fare much better. Funding for Teacher Quality, Education Technology, Vocational Education, Safe and Drug-free Schools, English Language Acquisition, and 21st Afterschool Centers are all frozen or cut, a proposal that is likely to reduce services at the local level as school systems work to meet inflationary costs.

This new House spending package suggests that Congress has abandoned its priority on education reform, and is refusing to adequately fund its own statutory requirements—a step that belies the claims of all too many Washington politicians that they are

pro-education.

The Council of the Great City Schools and nearly every other elementary and secondary education organization opposes the FY2006 House education appropriations bill. It is time for every school district in the nation to hold their House and Senate delegations accountable for under-funding public education in the same way we are being held accountable to results under NCLB—Congress' own handiwork.

And it is time that President Bush and Secretary Spellings abandon their passive acceptance of these inadequate funding levels and at least fight for the numbers they originally proposed.

The good news was that the House Appropriations Committee did not accept the program eliminations proposed by the President's budget. But, the spending bill still represents a sizable step backwards in the financial support of one of our most important national priorities.

In fact, the small increases the House approved for Title I and IDEA are below not just the authorized spending level, but below inflation and the President's proposed FY06 budget. In all, the House bill reduces funding for NCLB programs by some \$800 million from FY 2005 levels. And, the \$150 million increase for IDEA reduces the federal contribution to special education to just 18.1 percent, compared with the initial 40 percent that was promised.

Other elementary and secondary

Great City Grads



Billie Jean King
Former Championship
Tennis Player
1961 graduate
Long Beach Polytechnic
High School
Long Beach Unified School
District

Legal Internship Launched

Nine Newark students will have an opportunity this summer to intern at local legal offices and law firms thanks to a new school district initiative.

The internships have been made available through what is called the General Counsel Initiative, a collaborative that includes the Newark school system's general counsel offices and University High School's Thurgood Marshall Law Academy.

"The goal of the initiative is to team district high school students interested in a legal career with practicing attorneys, paralegals and other le-

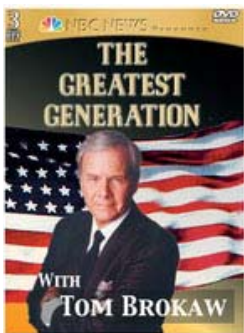
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Inside the Council

Six NYC Students Receive 'Greatest Generation' Scholarships

Six New York City graduating seniors recently received "Greatest Generation" Scholarships, a \$2 million scholarship program for high-potential students from low-income families.

They were selected among more than 100 applicants for the grants, which recognize academic performance, leadership skills and commitment to community service.



The program is named in honor of retired NBC News anchor Tom Brokaw, whose best-selling book, *The Greatest Generation*, tells the story of the generation of men and women who transformed America after World War II.

The program is named in honor of retired NBC News anchor Tom Brokaw, whose best-selling book, *The Greatest Generation*, tells the story of the generation of men and women who transformed America after World War II.

The scholarships seek to support students who demonstrate the values of the "Greatest Generation" – duty, courage, responsibility and selfless service to the community and world.

As part of the program, the GE Foundation will provide recipients with \$15,000 a year for four years in college tuition. Moreover, the foundation will provide \$2,500 a year for four years to a service or leadership program with which the student works and support for the high school that the student attended.

"I'm deeply grateful to the GE Foundation, the New York City Department of Education and its students for such an outstanding launch of the Greatest Generation Scholarships," said Brokaw in a news release.

"We have a distinguished first class of recipients," he emphasized. "I expect to hear much more from them in the future."

Preschoolers, Teens Share Class In Seattle

Preschoolers and high school students going to class together?

At Seattle's Ballard High School, students have been going to class with preschoolers in a Montessori classroom for nearly two years.

When Ballard High was rebuilt in 1999, it had two rooms originally designed for a teen-parenting program. Instead, a Montessori preschool was created, giving high school students an opportunity to observe the youngsters and receive internships.

During the school day, up to five high school interns work in the classroom every period, observing and studying alongside Montessori-trained teachers, according to Seattle Public Schools.

In addition to the school's family and consumer sciences department, other Ballard departments have also begun to partner with the preschool.

Council Launches Online Conference Registration

Participants who want to register online to attend the Council of the Great City Schools' 49th Annual Fall Conference, Oct. 19-23, in Atlanta will soon be able to do so.

In mid-July, the Council will launch its new online registration through the Council's website at www.cgcs.org.



"Achieving the Dream: Great City Schools for All"



Students from Western Hills High School stand in front of one of the cars that was given away at the drawing.

Fort Worth Students Win Cars For Perfect Attendance

Six students from the Fort Worth Independent School District in Texas recently won new cars. The cars were donated by local dealers as part of the district's *Every Child in School Every Day* incentive program, designed

to encourage students to attend school.

To qualify for the drawing, students had to have perfect attendance for one or more six-week periods.

Portland School Places Second In Civics Contest

Grant High School in Portland, Ore., took home the second-place prize at the *We the People: The Citizen and the Constitution* competition held in Washington, D.C.

Sponsored by the Center for Civic Education, the national competition test students' knowledge and understanding of constitutional principles.

More than 1,200 high school students from 50 states and the District of Columbia participated in the competition.

In addition to Grant High School, another big-city high school was among the top 10 finalists in the competition. Highland School in Albuquerque, N.M., came in tenth place.

We the People is an instructional program to promote civic competence and responsibility and enhance students' understanding of the institutions of American constitutional democracy.

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Million Dollar Class...

ships beyond her challenge. "They have been exceeding expectations continuously throughout their high school careers," Patterson-Grant emphasized in a news release.

In May, Rochester school district officials saw Wilson Magnet High School rank 27th among *Newsweek* magazine's list of top 100 high schools in the nation. The school had ranked 56th in 2003, climbing from 143rd in 2000.

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Legal Internship...

gal professionals," says General Counsel Perry Lattiboudere in a press release.

A \$3,800 grant from the New Jersey Hispanic Bar Foundation will provide some of the funding for the paid internships.

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Council Researcher...

position, he managed food operations for a 144-room resort hotel.

And while he no longer worked as a chef, he didn't leave the world of cooking completely behind when he joined the Council. He would often bring treats he made at home to the office for the staff to share.

"I loved his oatmeal raisin cookies," remembers Sharon Lewis, the Council's research director.

In addition to his love of cooking, Jepson was also a sports nut. Although he was from New England, his favorite team was the rival New York Yankees.

Other activities included bike riding as well as spending time at the beach.

"Jack was a very unique individual who made an enormous contribution to our organization," said Council Executive Director Michael Casserly. "He will be missed enormously."



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