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Westfield PTSA  
Minority Achievement Committee Newsletter

# THE MAC

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**8th Edition March 2007**

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## **The Chairman's Corner**

**Mark Richardson, MAC CHAIR**

Greetings and Happy New Year to all of our Westfield students, teachers, administrators and parents. It's hard to believe that we are already in the third quarter of this school year. By now, students should be completely engaged in all of their classes, and parents should be completely engaged with their teachers. Remember, parental involvement is the key to academic success.

It's that time of year when we celebrate Black History Month. It is a time of remembrance and reflection on those African American pioneers that have preceded us and have paved the way for the lives we enjoy today. Let us not forget to teach our children the importance of their heritage and how proud they should be as an African American.

A sincere thank you goes out to the entire Westfield Community, including the staff of Westfield High School for a very successful Martin Luther King Festival that was jointly hosted by the Chantilly Pyramid Minority Student Achievement Committee (CPMSAC) and Westfield High School. There were many performances by students representing the many schools supported by CPMSAC, including Westfield, in honor of a great pioneer and leader, the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Once again, the wonderful partnership between the Community and Fairfax County Schools was demonstrated. Again, thank you to all the volunteers, supporters, participants and parents who came

out to participate in remembering and honoring a great man. Please keep Wednesday March 14, 2007 open on your calendars as that is the date of our next Parent Coffee. We will host the meeting in the Lecture Hall starting at 7:00 p.m. Look for more announcements in the upcoming week.

**MAC Spring Coffee  
Wednesday March 14,  
2007 at 7:00 p.m. in the  
Lecture Hall**

## **REFLECTIONS**

**Tim Thomas, WHS PRINCIPAL**

As we begin the third quarter, it is a time of both reflection and anticipation. We reflect on a first semester during which your Westfield students demonstrated high achievement in academics, athletics and the fine and performing arts. We anticipate a second semester that will be filled with equal numbers of accomplishments in and out of the classrooms; on and off the playing fields and stages. As always, your involvement in the education of your child is of tremendous importance.

During the next couple of months, students will be registering for courses for next year. We have instituted activities at school to familiarize both students and their parents with the registration process. I encourage all parents to explore the 2007-2008 WHS Course Catalog and Class Registration Workbook with your students to ensure a complete understanding of the registration and

course selection process. Please contact your student's counselor if you have any questions about courses available to your students next year.

Thanks to all of those involved in the celebration of Dr. Martin Luther King at the MLK Festival that was hosted by Westfield High School on January 14, 2007. It was a huge success and very well-attended. The student performances were nothing short of spectacular and everyone seemed to enjoy the celebration.

During the second grading period, Westfield High School began a new initiative known as the "Principal's Cabinet". The program was designed to offer additional academic support and encouragement to students who experienced academic difficulty as evidenced by their grades at the end of the first grading period. Many of these students were minority students.

We used the grades from the second quarter to determine the success of the students who were identified to participate in the Principal's Cabinet. Over 50% of the students in the Principal's Cabinet improved their grades during the second quarter! The assistance and supervision provided by administrators, teachers and counselors were instrumental in encouraging students to believe in themselves. The students in the Principal's Cabinet were rewarded with an after-school celebration with cake, ice cream and certificates for all those who participated.

Go Bulldogs!



**Congratulations  
To Our  
Minority!  
2006 National Honor  
Society Inductees**

Mariana Cruz Colareta  
Rana Elamin  
Jessica Fisher  
Chanelle Grannum  
Malika Hunasikatti  
Ellen Lumagui  
Puneetinder Mann  
Dominique Nguyen  
Alexandra Ong  
Razan Osman  
Shannon Page  
Carol Vera  
Kevin Wang



## Black History Month

Ashley Bellamy is a sophomore at North Carolina A&T State University, majoring in English. Ashley plans becoming a lawyer and editor or an African American cultural magazine.

### **Transition and Acceptance; I'm at a HBCU** By Ashley Bellamy

Attending North Carolina A&T State University has been one of the utmost experiences in my life. It has been a drastic change, but it has only made me a better person. Coming from a predominately white high school and community to a Historically Black College/University (HBCU) has honestly been a life altering experience. Westfield High School is an excellent school and prepared me for the academy; however, something was missing from my high school career.

What was missing was my self knowledge of my African and African American past and heritage. One downfall of attending high school was the absence of African American history. Most high schools, including predominately black high schools, do not include African American history into the curriculum. Not only that, but there are limited activities that are targeted towards the African American culture. I find this to be very disappointing.

Coming to North Carolina A&T State University and being exposed to courses, such as African American history and literature, has been very different. I have learned the beginning of my history starting with the cradle of civilization in Africa, to the Middle Passage and Slavery, and the Civil Rights Movement. Even better, I learned the positive things about the continent of Africa.

Through entertainment, grade schools and the media, Africa is usually portrayed as a continent filled with famine and diseases. Or sometimes it is viewed as a place where people of color run around in loincloths shouting and blaring. The part about how they had the first universities, libraries and their own written language is left out in the public eye. How their greatest Queens and Kings were responsible for creating a civilization is not mentioned when the topic of Africa is discussed. The knowledge that I have obtained so far at a HBCU is being applied to my daily routine. I have been able to view the world in a different perspective; not in a negative perspective, but just different. I have come to realize that I have to be able to accept who I really am and be willing to allow myself to grow.

This experience also gave me a chance to try something extremely different. I have been around Caucasian people all of my life and that was all I was really used to. Not implying that it is a problem, but to never really be exposed to my culture and heritage is when it does become a problem. So attending a HBCU gave

me a chance to become familiar with my culture and my heritage as well as receiving a great education in the process. Now that I have been exposed, I can take with me a couple of life changing experiences. I feel confident in taking on the world. Being at Westfield High School was hard at times because I felt lost in translation. I can now continue on with my life without the feeling that I am missing a piece of me. I will also be able to educate my future children on my experience at a HBCU. I feel that it is important for each ethnic group to be exposed to their heritage and culture in order to be prepared for their future.

My transition from Westfield High School to North Carolina A&T State University has been a fulfilling experience. Being here has given me a chance to feel a sense of belonging; being connected to a life time movement with my people. I wouldn't change my experience at A&T for anything in the world. I truly can understand the meaning of the cliché "It's an experience that you just cannot get anywhere else."

### **Student Job Fair**

A student job fair will be held on Tuesday, April 17th from 3:00-6:00p.m. at the Dulles Expo Center in Chantilly. Approximately 75 local employers will be available to meet with students and provide literature about summer, intern, part or full time employment opportunities. The job fair is sponsored by the Dulles Regional Chamber of Commerce and is free!

### **Westfield High PTSA Jennifer Campbell, President**

Westfield High School enthusiastically hosted the 13th Annual Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Festival this past month. Students and adults from diverse backgrounds in the local community commemorated Dr. King's life with wide variety of performances that

delighted all, including members of the FCPS School Board.

Having passed the halfway mark in the school year, students will now be selecting their academic schedules for next year. Please choose courses carefully and seek help from your student's guidance counselor if needed. During recent college tours with my high school junior, it became very clear that colleges are interested in students who take a more rigorous schedule. In order to reach higher academic levels, it is important for students to challenge themselves by taking honors level or Advanced Placement classes. If your student is too intimidated about taking a full load, encourage them to try one of these higher-level classes in a subject that they enjoy. Sometimes it may be fear of the unknown that prevents a child from taking the first step.

Also encourage your student to participate in volunteer activities in the school or community. It is a great way for them to learn more about working with others, while further defining their interests and developing new skills. If your child is a junior or senior with a 3.5 GPA or higher in a particular subject, encourage them to join the honor society affiliated with that subject. It is another way they can show initiative and participate in their community.

## **College Partnership Program is sponsored by Fairfax County Public Schools**

### **What is the Program?**

The College Partnership Program (CPP) began in 1989. It serves approximately 2,000 students in grades 7 through 12 from 52 high and middle schools. The goals and emphasis of the program are to increase the academic achievement of the students as well as increase the number of students, particularly first generation and minority students, who enroll in CPP and succeed in college.

The College Partnership Program includes the following services:

1. Academic Counseling
2. College Orientation
3. **Parent** Involvement
4. Community Involvement

Students are exposed to information and opportunities that allow them to create a vision, set goals and develop strategies that will direct them toward college choices and career opportunities.

### **Expectation**

- Students are expected to maintain a minimum 2.5 GPA in core classes
- Students are expected to attend all CPP activities
- **Parents** are expected to be aware of student CPP activities and monitor their student's attendance and grades

### **Who can participate?**

- Students who may be the first in their family to attend college
- Students who demonstrate ability to complete college work, but may need motivation to sustain interest
- Students who show potential for high academic achievement, but have not consistently demonstrated it
- Students who demonstrate leadership in school activities

### **Who Benefits?**

Everyone! The College Partnership Program's multi-dimensional approach to educational opportunities benefits not only the students who participate but everyone who serves as a partner. Since 1989, a large percentage of graduating CPP students has enrolled in college.

### **Who are the Partners?**

**Public schools** in Fairfax County have a staff member to manage student activities at each of the 25 high schools and 26 middle schools, monitor enrollment and courses required for college entrance and provide support and activities that further the program goals.

**Colleges and universities** provide a variety of activities, including campus

visits to increase student's and Parents' knowledge of college program. They also offer admission to students who meet or exceed entrance requirements.

**Business and industry**, in cooperation with the Fairfax County Public Schools Education Foundation, Inc. provide volunteers who encourage and support student achievement through shadowing experiences, field trips to business sites and motivational programs.

**Parents and community** provide enrichment activities to help students develop appreciation for the school curriculum and its use in the business world. The Parent Advisory Council raises money to provide scholarships for seniors and an incentive program for all other grade levels.

For more information you can contact College Partnership Program – 571-423-4410

Dawn Dickerson and Tammi Butler are the CPP Managers at Westfield High School

## **Psi Alpha Alpha Chapter of the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc Scholarship**

Psi Alpha Alpha Chapter of the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. scholarship program has offered students scholarships for many years. If you are a high school, college-bound senior who lives in the Northern Virginia area or Prince George County, Maryland you could be eligible. For application information contact; Sheldon Schanck at (703) 505-7038 (cell) or e-mail at schanck15que@yahooo.com. The deadline for this year's applications March 23, 2007, so act today!

## IT'S THE MAC ATTACK

- Have you seen your child's grades for the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter?
- Have you contacted your child's teacher in the last grading period?
- When was the last time you sat down and talked to your child about the importance of education and its value?

*Did you know that if your child completes college with a degree in Math or Computer Science, that their starting salary would be at least \$80,000? That's the value of education.*

**Be pro-active  
THINK ABOUT IT!**

## Are You Participating in BITS?

**It's Not to Late**

BITS has just completed another quarter of the school year. If you need help ITS NOT TOO LATE; come to BITS. BITS offers FREE tutoring 3 to 4 Saturdays a month for all subjects. Carol Jasper, BITS Coordinator is looking for an assistant. If you are interested in this wonderful fulfilling opportunity please contact Tim Thomas.

Stop by any sub-school or just come on Saturday to get your forms; YOU can start IMMEDIATELY upon receipt of paperwork. Registration for BITS can also be done online @ [http://www.fcps.edu/WestfieldHS/guidance/bits/bits\\_info.htm](http://www.fcps.edu/WestfieldHS/guidance/bits/bits_info.htm) or see your counselor. For additional information, please contact Carol Jasper, BITS carol.jasper@fcps.edu or call 703 488-6363 ext 7167.

## MAC Fact

**Definition: a historical insight about a person of color or an event concerning persons of color designed to help shape and uplift pride in the heritage of our minority youth**

## February Black History Month

### Ten Important Supreme Court Decisions in Black History

#### **Dred Scott v. Sandford (1857)**

Decreed a slave was his master's property and African Americans were not citizens; struck down the Missouri Compromise as unconstitutional.

#### **Civil Rights Cases (1883)**

A number of cases are addressed under this Supreme Court decision. Decided that the Civil Rights Act of 1875 (the last federal civil rights legislation until the Civil Rights Act of 1957) was unconstitutional. Allowed private sector segregation.

#### **Plessy v. Ferguson (1896)**

The Court stated that segregation was legal and constitutional as long as "facilities were equal"—the famous "separate but equal" segregation policy.

#### **Powell v. Alabama (1932)**

The Supreme Court overturned the "Scottsboro Boys" convictions and guaranteed counsel in state and federal courts.

#### **Shelley v. Kraemer (1948)**

The justices ruled that a court may not constitutionally enforce a "restrictive covenant" which prevents people of certain race from owning or occupying property.

#### **Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka (1954)**

Reversed Plessy v. Ferguson "separate but equal" ruling. "[S]egregation [in public education] is a denial of the equal protection of the laws."

#### **Heart of Atlanta Motel, Inc. v. United States (1964)**

This case challenged the constitutionality of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The court ruled that the motel had no right "to select its guests as it sees fit, free from governmental regulation."

#### **Loving v. Virginia (1967)**

This decision ruled that the prohibition on interracial marriage was unconstitutional. Sixteen states that still banned interracial marriage at the time were forced to revise their laws.

#### **Regents of the University of California v. Bakke (1978)**

The decision stated that affirmative action was unfair if it lead to reverse discrimination.

#### **Grutter v. Bollinger (2003)**

The decision upheld affirmative action's constitutionality in education, as long it employed a "highly individualized, holistic review of each applicant's file" and did not consider race as a factor in a "mechanical way."

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Do you have a question, or an issue you would like us to write about? Would you like to submit an article? We want to hear from you; contact;

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703 793-4947
  - MAC Editor: Celeste Peterson  
703 830-3795
  - BITS Coordinator: Carol Jasper  
703 488-6363 ext 7167
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