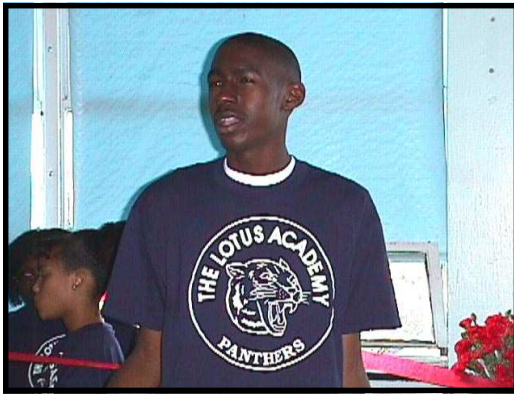


THE LOTUS LAMP

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Vishna Age Group Writing Center



The Vishna Age Group held a ribbon-cutting ceremony last Friday to dedicate a new addition to its classroom—a Writing Center! Even though the physical space occupied by the Writing Center is small, its impact will undoubtedly be large. The environment created by one of many oases of academic excellence here at the Lotus Academy should encourage the writing of essays, poems, narratives, compositions, journals, and other forms of literary expression.

All works created by the students will be used to supplement their individual portfolios. Vishna extends an invitation to visit its class, and to see its many works in progress. Our young writers will benefit from this intensive experience which will surely push them closer to excellence.

Mothura Kweli, Bakari, and Shava Students

On Friday afternoon, the 23rd of October, two of the Marunas from Shava II, Celeste Preston and Heather Weeks, had the opportunity to visit their former teacher, Mothura Kweli Archie-Porter, and the newest addition to the Lotus Academy family, her son, Bakari Imhotep Porter. The students expressed delight in seeing their teacher, and asked her a series of questions pertaining to her new status as a mother. Kweli, with that ever-present strength, calm and dignity, not only answered their questions, but infected them anew with her motherly interest in their lives. Rarely did Kweli's eye leave her son, and we knew that her focus had shifted, at least for the present, from teacher to mother. We left them with peace and blessings and her promise to visit us soon at Lotus Academy. [Story by Mothura Maureen]



“We are Africans not because we are born in Africa, but because Africa is born in us. Look around you and behold us in our greatness. Greatness is an African possibility; you can make it yours.” CHESTER HIGGINS, JR.

Parent Participation At Lotus Academy

Parents were urged in the last issue of the "Lotus Lamp" about returning their Parent Registration Agreements. One of the items covered in the Agreement is an acknowledgment that the parent has agreed, as a condition for having their child enrolled at the Lotus Academy, to comply with the terms of the Parent Partnership Agreement. Every parent is urged to read this Agreement very carefully, as it contains the essence of the understanding between you as a parent and us as an institution.

The Agreement makes it very obvious that the Lotus Academy places a tremendous amount of importance on the role that parents play in building a successful educational institution. It is more than a slogan when we say that without the contributions and input of all of our parents, we simply can not maintain a school like the Lotus Academy. As important as the timely payment of tuition and constructive parent contact with teachers are, they are simply not enough to sustain an institution that is trying to do so much for our children with so little in the way of material resources.

It is hoped that whether you are called upon to put in some time at the school, or to participate in our fundraising efforts, you will appreciate the significance of what you are being asked to do. We can all look forward to the day when we can charge the kind of tuition and build up the kind of cash reserve that removes fund raising and parent volunteering as a necessary part of our program.

However, I think that it is safe to say that we are a long way from there. Moreover, even if we had that kind of money, it would still be extremely beneficial to have our parents show the children that they are a part of their education to the extent that they are willing to extend themselves in ways that they are not obligated.

Special Events Committees

Lotus parents and staff members were asked recently to volunteer their time and talent to ensure that this year's special events would be even more special than usual. Many of you have answered the "call", and returned the questionnaire to indicate your willingness to help us pull what we all know will be a "heavy load". Every person who responded will be contacted during the last week of October for the purpose of setting up organizational meetings, and to begin the work that needs to be done.

Everyone should be cautioned that we have no intention of "meeting ourselves to death". We want to spend your precious time getting the work done, and not getting together simply to gather. In any case, the Lotus Academy would like to thank everyone who has chosen to give a little bit of themselves to be a part of these exciting and essential tasks. We will keep everyone up to date on our progress in future issues of the "Lotus Lamp".

Special Events Committee Members

In addition to the administrative staff, the following parents and teachers have volunteered for the committees listed below. Some of those who have signed on to more than one committee may not be called upon or be able to serve on all of those listed, but we certainly appreciate their enthusiasm and optimism nonetheless. It is almost never too late to join, but the committee members will be getting started before the month is over with those below.

CAPITAL GIVING CAMPAIGN: Hikmah Gardiner, Maria Oliver

LOTUS ACADEMY WEBSITE: Colleen Bynum, Mothura Kim,
Mothura Marcia, Mothura Terri

AFRICAN-CENTERED EDUCATION CONFERENCE: Hikmah Gardiner,
Mothuri Badara, Mothuri Kamau, Mothura Marcia

EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS BANQUET: Hikmah Gardiner,
Sharon Harrison, Mothura Alva, Mothura Anna,
Mothura Marcia, Mothura Pam

CULTURAL TRIPS: Colleen Bynum, Grace Cole, Sharon Harrison,
Maria Oliver

EVENT PROGRAM BOOKS: Michelle Cost, Mothuri Kamau,
Mothura Maureen

FAMILY DAY: Michelle Cost, Sharon Harrison

Please call the office and contact the Director if you have any questions.

The Lotus Academy will be hosting its annual talent show, "Spotlight On Young Artists", on Thursday, November 25th, at 12 noon. If you can come out to support the children, please join us for an entertaining afternoon.

News from the Lotus Age Groups

All of the Age Groups and classrooms are very much into the Lotus program as they move to the mid-point of the first trimester. The program is very much richer this year with so many specialty teachers for each classroom. There are now teachers who move from class to class in the areas of computer science, Kiswahili, French, and Lotus Way. Even more important, "team teaching" is very prevalent, and represents an opportunity for our students to benefit from the teaching styles of other members of the staff. There is a lot of activity at Lotus, and some of the highlights are reported below.

The students of Shana have been taking every opportunity to learn about the world around them. Following an informative trip to the Please Touch Museum, the students continued to follow in the footsteps of Imhotep and explored the environs of Awbury Arboretum. There, they took samples of plants and seeds and observed the animals in their natural habitat. They are looking forward to their November visit to Linvilla Orchards.

Mothura Lizz of Shaish IB reports that her students did very well on their mid-term exams. They are also exploring their toy boxes in pursuit of science. So far they have made cars, pin wheels, sail cars, and wind chimes. Every Friday afternoon, you can find Shaish IB boys and girls searching and creating in the wonderful world of science.

Mothura Kim and Shaish II have been studying the contributions of Benjamin Banneker. They have modeled his inventiveness by making toys out of household goods. They also plan to make their own clocks which will keep accurate time. This is clearly "going for self, Afrikan style" each and every day.

Shaish II has also been graced with the knowledge and love of many

guests, family members, and teachers this month. The Vishna students will be visiting Shaish II to teach a special lesson on "Seasonal Changes", and will be led by Mothura Marcia. The students are also looking forward to watching their planted bulbs in the spring, as well as their walking trip to Awbury Arboretum.

Mothura Pam sends out her proud congratulations to all of the "mwanafunzi" (students) of Shavi I. Mwalima (teacher) Pam is pleased to see and hear how well her students are beginning to speak Kiswahili. They can now count from 1 to 100, greet each other, and hold small conversations in their new language. By the end of the school year we should have many Marunis and Marunas who will be quite fluent in a language that is so important to us as Africans in America.

The article on the first page covers the Shava students and their visit to one of our favorite teachers, Mothura Kweli, who is presently out for this school year on maternity leave. Mothura Maureen and all of the Shava students deserve a "deep bow" for putting into action and enlivening one of our warmest greetings, "Be With Me" - "Forever".

The first page also chronicled the official opening of the Vishna Age Group Writing Center. It is impossible to overemphasize the importance of writing and composition skills for our seventh and eighth grade students. As they move on to high school, the development of this skill will prove to be the most important tool in their intellectual arsenal. There is no doubt that the Vishna Writing Center will play a large and continuing role in developing and sharpening those "tools". We wish them well in this latest endeavor.

CIBI National Conference

The Lower and Upper Schools of the Lotus Academy will be closed both on Thursday and Friday, November 19th-20th for the bi-annual C.I.B.I. National Conference. We realize that this presents a potential difficulty for those parents who are forced to make special arrangements for their children on those days. It was thought that our parents should be informed as to why Lotus views this conference with this degree of importance.

C.I.B.I. is the acronym for Council Of Independent Black Institutions. This is the "umbrella" organization for all of the African Centered schools in this country that survive without aid or assistance from anyone but their parents and community. The organization has always worked very hard to define and clarify the nature and content of our African Centered curriculum, and has created written and other material to guide the member schools.

In addition, C.I.B.I. has done much to ensure that we remain independent in the face of many formidable challenges, which traditionally meant hostile educational environments but now very well may include the advent of charter schools. We all recognize that if we somehow relinquish our independence, we lose first our identity and then our existence.

The Lotus Academy contingent of teachers and administrators will travel by van to Saint Helena, South Carolina to join with those who have made tremendous sacrifices to make schools like the Lotus Academy strong and vibrant. We would like to believe that in addition to learning from this experience, that we also have something to offer the independent school community.

Our goal is to bring back resources and a re-affirmation to the Lotus Academy that will allow us to do our job better. In the end, we are confident that the sacrifices of November 19-20 will be offset by the benefits to all of our children.

Lotus Academy Teacher Of The Month

Mothuri Kamau (below) is our Teacher of the Month. He was featured in the last issue as one of the many new faces at the Lotus Academy who has brought us new vitality and commitment. He has proven to be one



of those teachers who does so much more than he is asked. By the way, Kamau has his Master's Degree in Elementary Education and his Bachelor's in African American Studies, both from Temple University. He is both well qualified and well thought of here.

Lotus Gets Jazzy At Temple University

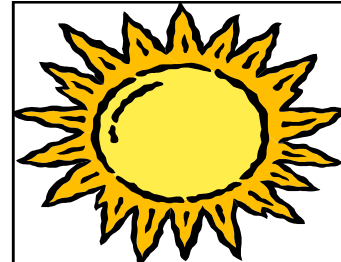
Lotus' Silver Anniversary Celebration got off to a spirited start last Saturday with the Bobbi Humphrey benefit concert at Temple University's Rock Hall. Her beautiful flute was enhanced by a rhythm section that was outstanding. Bobbi made sure that whether your taste leaned towards jazz, rhythm & blues, or "pop", she had you covered with tunes from the likes of Marvin Gaye and Lionel Ritchie, in addition to jazz standards and her own songs.



The concert began with an impressive performance by the Creative and Performing Arts High School Jazz Ensemble. They made it clear that creative music is alive and well, and that our young people are a big part of it.

Monthly Reminders

Early Learning Center (Grades Pre-K to K)



Tue., Nov. 3 – Teachers' Planning Session (ELC OPEN)
Wed., Nov. 11 – Early Learning Center CLOSED
Thu., Nov. 26 – Early Learning Center CLOSED
Fri., Nov. 27 - Early Learning Center CLOSED

Lower & Upper Schools (Grades 1 to 8)



Tue., Nov. 3 - Staff Meeting - NOON DISMISSAL
Thu. & Fri., Nov. 19 & 20 – SCHOOL CLOSED
Wed., Nov. 25 – Spotlight On Young Artists (Noon)
Thu. & Fri., Nov. 26 & 27 – SCHOOL CLOSED
Tue., Dec. 1 – Staff Meeting - NOON DISMISSAL

“The basic tenet of Black consciousness is that the Black man must reject all value systems that seek to make him a foreigner in the country of his birth and reduce his basic human dignity.” STEVEN BIKO