

THE LOTUS LAMP

April 30, 1999

Volume 2, Issue 8

A Lotus Fashion Extravaganza



Lotus' first annual Fashion Show was an overwhelming success. The clothes were fabulous, the models were stunning, and the setting at the North American Motor Inn was a delight. The fashion was an intriguing blend of traditional and African, and everything was colorful, stylish, and alive.

The food was a perfect complement to the afternoon. Tasty but light, it did much to add to the festive atmosphere. The energy of the parents, staff, and students in attendance was far in excess of their numbers. That energy was elevated by the door prizes and giveaways that spiced up the event.

Many thanks to Mothuras Maureen and Marcia, and the Wilcher family for a quality event. We look forward to next year's edition of this annual event.

Lotus Academy Science Expo

The Science Expo was very well attended, and all those who saw the quality of the projects appreciated the effort and preparation that went into them. The Expo is especially noteworthy because the projects are done so well without an excessive expenditure of money. Rather, it is the creativity and inspiration that makes them so informative and impressive.

Moreover, each of the projects reflects one of the Seven Principles, and is created with the idea that it can be used to further the aims of African people here and elsewhere. We congratulate the Vishna and Shava students, Mothura Marcia, and all the staff and parents for a job well done.



“If we stand tall, it is because we stand on the backs of those who came before us.
YORUBA PROVERB

African Centered Education Conference

The program for the African Centered Education Conference has now been set, the coordinators and presenters have been confirmed, and all necessary arrangements have been made. All that is needed for this to be a memorable aspect of our 25th Anniversary celebration is your presence and participation.

The conference will take place on Friday (May 21st) and Saturday (May 22nd) at the Lotus Academy. There are six workshops on Friday and nine on Saturday. All of them should be of interest to anyone concerned about education for African children in this country or elsewhere, though Friday's topics are more geared towards educators and those on Saturday will be of particular interest to parents. Judge Carol S. Wells, one of the founders of the Lotus Academy and now a federal judge, will be the keynote speaker on Friday. Dr. Molefi Asante, noted historian and author, will deliver the keynote address on Saturday.

The conference is free, but you must pre-register (by calling the office) in order to get the necessary admission "tickets".

Awards Banquet

The twelfth annual Educational Achievement Awards Banquet is just a few weeks away. By now, everyone must know that it is one of the major events at which the twenty-fifth anniversary will be celebrated, and it will be held at the Pennsylvania Convention Center on Thursday, May 27th, at 6:00 p.m.

This year the program will feature performances and entertainment by Lotus staff and students. We are also inviting past parents, students, and staff to share this very special evening with us. The menu has been finalized, and is sure to please everyone.

We look forward to seeing all of our parents in attendance. We realize that the tickets are expensive, but we only do this on this scale every twenty-five years.

Curriculum Committee

The Curriculum Committee has been meeting to formulate the structure and schedule for all of the classes for next year. There is a wealth of material available to study, and we have been doing our best to digest and incorporate it into the Lotus Academy program.

Most of the critical policy decisions are still under review, but some decisions have already been made. Based upon the present circumstances, we will have a separate Shava I (5th grade) and Shava II (6th grade) class for the first time in the 1999-2000 school year. This will be necessary as a result of the number of students we have, but it is also mandated by the curriculum decisions that are presently being discussed for this Age Group.

Though we are still recruiting and interviewing teachers, and much will depend upon how that process works out, it is our intention to ensure that all students in every grade and Age Group at Lotus have regular classes in both French and Kiswahili. As has been reported previously, the language portion of the curriculum will take on increased importance in future years.

In order to implement the planned curriculum, it will be necessary to have even more "specialty" teachers who have a particular expertise in a particular subject. In addition to French, Kiswahili, and Lotus Way, additional instructors in math and computer science will be necessary. Instruction in computer science will progress to the point where the advanced students will be taught the basics of computer programming and elementary Internet design. All in all, there is much being considered, much being planned, and much to look forward to.

Whole Life Institute Kiswahili Classes

The Lotus Academy will begin a six-week course in introductory Kiswahili and Kiswahili culture on Tuesday, May 18th, at 6:00 p.m. This is a course for adults and is open to any of our parents and staff who would like to learn some basic Kiswahili, and to get an idea of the cultural context for a language that is very close to our roots and which will become a very important part of every child's academic curriculum. This introductory course is being offered at **no charge**, and will run for approximately ninety minutes every Tuesday until June 22nd.

The course will be taught by Lotus' own Dr. Ahmed Shariff who is also a professor of Kiswahili at University of Pennsylvania and Lincoln University. Dr. Shariff will also be teaching an advanced course for adults this fall for those who want to make an effort to master the language.

A registration form will be distributed to all parents, and must be filled out and returned no later than May 14th. Space for this class is definitely limited, and will be filled strictly on a first come – first served basis. Please call the office if you have any questions about registration or the content of the course.

Parents who plan to attend the African Centered Education Conference should call the office to arrange to get their tickets. Though there is no charge, space is limited.

Lotus Age Group Happenings

Mothura Lizz would like to acknowledge all of the time and effort Shaish IB and their parents put into their tie dye experiment. Shaish IB would also like to thank Mothura Marcia for all of her guidance in making the project a success.

Mothura Pamela extends her congratulations to Shavi I on its Science Expo project. She wanted all of the students to know that their work on this made her very proud of them. The, time, effort, energy, and attitude that went into it was commendable. A big "ASANTE SANA" goes out to the parents of Shavi I also. They proved themselves truly cooperative and supportive once again. A special thanks to Mrs. Empress Kaya Turner. Shavi I says to her, "We love you!" She really made our Science Expo project a little extra special. Many thanks to all who were "one with us".

Mothura Terri extends her congratulations to the Vishna students for all their wonderful effort with the Science Expo. She was most impressed with their projects on Ancient Kemet (Egypt) which demonstrated to her how much they have absorbed and understood the lessons during the teachings of Lotus Way. They should be very proud of a job well done.

Mothuri Badara reports that on Monday, April 12th, the Lotus Academy was proudly represented at the High School for the Creative and Performing Arts (CAPA) for a "Partners in Distance Learning" program. "Experiencing the World Through Interactive Long Distance Learning" was the theme under which Mothuri Badara spoke about various African Rituals.

Vishna student Jayme Hopkins recited a poem entitled "Lord, Why Did You Make Me Black?", self-defeating questions based upon wrong interpretations of blackness countered by self-acceptance responses generating better self-images.

Shava was represented by Jasmine Harrington and Marcus Durham. Jasmine recited "Strange", a poem expressing the confusion of an African-American trapped between the affections of her mother Africa and the rejections of her step-father America.

Marcus spoke about the devastating effects of HIV in the black communities, and the alternatives to neutralize its effects.

The students of CAPA High School, as well as their teachers, were very impressed by the brilliant performances of the Lotus students who showed academic excellence and African style behavior.

A productive interaction followed, mainly asking Mothuri Badara about the role and values of African rituals in everyday life. This program was done in collaboration with the Furness Cluster of the Philadelphia School District, Global Education Motivators, Chestnut Hill College, and, of course, our very own Lotus Academy.

All of us at the Lotus Academy would like to thank Mothuri Badara for the work that he has done in this project where twenty-first technology is used to connect our children to the world. This is accomplished primarily by using video conferencing equipment to allow students to make a global connection.

Mothuri Badara has consistently used his international resources and connections to enhance the learning opportunities of Lotus students and to broaden their horizons. He assures us that he has many other avenues for our students to explore as they begin to not only understand, but to live, the concept that we truly do live in a "global village".

Vishna Student At Temple Univ.

The Lotus Academy congratulates one of many fine Vishna students, Jayme Hopkins, for a truly outstanding achievement. Maruna Jayme was recently accepted into the very prestigious "Minority Access to Research Careers" (MARC) program at the Temple University School of Medicine. Jayme will begin her training in the program on June 28th.

The MARC program was established in 1985 as a vehicle for increasing the number of underrepresented "minorities" in the biomedical arena. The goal of MARC, an international program, is to create a cadre of researchers of color with the M.D., Ph.D., or M.D./Ph.D. degrees. MARC is recognized by the National Institutes of Health as its flagship program.

As a long-term program, all trainees begin as 7th, 8th, or 9th grade students, and return each summer through the senior year of college. Lotus is proud of Jayme and recognizes the honor she has bestowed on us by being one of those chosen from so many applicants.

The Lotus/African Exchange Program

All Lotus Academy students will be taking steps over the next few weeks to begin making the connection with our first sister school in Africa, Sunni Madrassa, located in Zanzibar, Tanzania. In their April 15th letter to us, they expressed a great enthusiasm for our linking together in a wide ranging exchange program.

The Sunni Madrassa School began in 1994, and is also an independent, non-profit institution. We are looking forward to working with them, and making this program a huge success. We will keep you posted as the program moves forward.

The Lotus Academy Teacher Of The Month

Mothura Lizz is our Teacher of the Month for this issue. In addition to her creative and lively teaching style, she consistently gives her students a wealth of information and inspiration. Her lessons are an extension of her personality, and her students reflect her well.



In addition, she is increasingly spreading her warmth throughout the school. Hopefully, the distribution of her fruit and muffin treats to the staff by our students will become a regular part of the Lotus tradition. We are sure that she will keep up the good work

Growth and Change At Early Learning Center

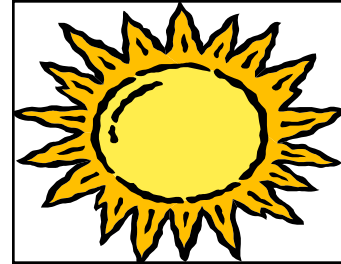
The Early Learning Center moves to a new plateau as the first Lotus administrator, Mothura Serquurr, will assume her duties there on a full-time basis. In addition to her formulating and implementing the curriculum, she will oversee the



training of staff and recruitment of new students. One of the immediate goals is to develop a closer connection between the activities and staff there with what is happening with the students and staff at our main building. There is much to do, but we are confident that she is up to the task.

Monthly Reminders

Early Learning Center



Tue., May 4–Teachers’ Planning Session (ELC OPEN)
Saturday, May 15 – Alumni Basketball Game
Wednesday, May 19 – Malcolm X Observance
Fri-Sat, May 21 & 22 – Education Conference
Thu., May 27– Awards Banquet– NOON DISMISSAL
Monday, May 31 – Early Learning Center CLOSED

Lower & Upper Schools (Grades 1 to 8)



Tue., May 4 – Staff Meeting – NOON DISMISSAL
Saturday, May 15 – Alumni Basketball Game
Wednesday, May 19 – Malcolm X Observance
Fri-Sat, May 21 & 22 – Education Conference
Thu., May 27– Awards Banquet– NOON DISMISSAL
Monday, May 31 – SCHOOL CLOSED

“We must stand tall knowing the power, strength, and wisdom of the ancestors is as close as a breath.”

IYANLA