

THE LOTUS LAMP

May 30, 2001

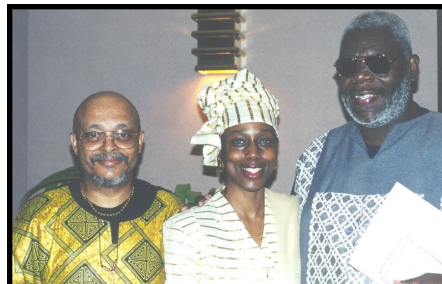
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A Banquet Worthy Of An Award !



State Representative Dwight Evans (*left*) was the keynote speaker for the 14th annual Lotus Academy Achievement Awards Banquet at the First District Plaza. It was a fabulous event that pulsed with love and energy from its start with the pouring of libations to the last of the award presentations to Mothura Joyce for “Teacher of the Year”. There was a real outpouring of parents, students, and Lotus supporters, and all were regal in their African-inspired clothing and décor.

Our “sister school”, A.P.A.S., from Trenton, NJ celebrated the event with us, and received the Community Service Award. There were also representatives from Harambee in attendance. It was a night to remember, and one in which all of us showed off the best of Lotus.



“If a man would be severe towards himself and generous toward others, he would never arouse resentment.”

CONFUCIUS

Board of Advisors Open Meeting

The Lotus Academy Board of Advisors will have its first official meeting on Tuesday, June 12th, from 7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. It will take place at the main building of the school, and is open to *any* past or present parent, staff member, alumni, or supporter

In addition to installing the first set of officers and announcing the committee chairpersons, there will be information about the mission of the Board and the specific program projects that will be taken on during the 2001-2002 school year.

You may be getting a call from the Marketing/Communication committee as it is putting together information that will make it easier to contact parents to inform them about important events and projects. If you have any questions or are interested in working with the Board, please call the Lotus office.

Black Alliance For Educational Options Membership Meeting

This new organization, B.A.E.O., spearheaded by Rep. Dwight Evans, is dedicated to enhancing all of the school options—charter, private, and parochial—that are available to African Americans. Its purpose is not to demean the public schools, but rather to challenge the “powers that be” by offering real options.

Its first membership meeting is Thursday, June 7th, at 5:30 p.m., and will be at 1617 J.F.K. Blvd., 13th Floor. More information is available for those who are interested in joining or participating.

Re-Admissions For The 2001-2002 School Year

The Lotus Academy is in the final stages of its recruitment drive for the school year that begins in September, 2002. Almost all of our parents who plan to return next year have responded to the requests for re-admission information. However, there are still a few families that we have not heard from.

Calls will be made over the next couple of weeks to communicate with those parents who have not responded to make certain that we do not begin the new school year without including those who plan to be re-admitted but who have not responded yet. Parents should be aware that there are a number of sources of financial aid that are still available, and for which re-admission students are eligible.

Finally, for those Lotus parents whose acceptance for their children in 2001-2002 is “conditional”, the 2001 version of the “Summer Enrichment Program” should serve to solve whatever problem that presently exists. This extremely important summer program begins on Monday, June 25th, and is intended to supplement the academic achievements of those students who are in need of an “enrichment” or “bolstering” of what they have received this school year.

For those parents who have begun the readmissions process, it is very important that the initial deposit be paid before the end of this school year. The initial classroom rosters will be established at the end of this month so that we have an idea as to how many students we can accept by way of new admissions. As you are aware, the initial deposit is the only way that we can reserve a place for your child.

Lotus Parent Partnership

All of the administrative and teaching staff at the Lotus Academy would like to thank those parents who made the Parent Partnership Program an unqualified success this year. The extra help certainly made a real difference, but of even greater value was the presence of parents and grandparents who “rolled up their sleeves” and became a part of the overall effort. You can rest assured that all of this has a definite and positive effect on the children when they see this kind of “team” effort on the part of us adults.

Next year the Parent Partnership Program will be administered under the Board of Advisors, and we hope to do an even better job of getting the necessary information out to parents, and keeping everyone informed about any new developments. We extend our gratitude to Ras Al and Empress Kaya Turner for the time and effort that they put into the program this school year, and look forward to working with them in the 2001-2002 school year.

Our Caribbean Raffle Winners

The Caribbean Raffle drawing was held at the Educational Conference and the winners were announced at the Awards Banquet. First prize was a Bahamas vacation for two for five days, and was won by Ms. Pauline Elliott. Second prize was a set of travel luggage, and was won by Mr. Edward Braxton. Third prize was a 35 mm camera. We would like to congratulate the winners and thank Pam Moss for making it all happen.

The Lotus After-School Clubs Finish The Year

All three of the Lotus “clubs” held their last session this week. The Chess Club had a “hoagie party” on Tuesday as they celebrated the end of a very successful first year. All eleven of those in attendance got the chance to compete one last time. In addition, the Club talked about the different kind of competition and attitude that is demanded of “Eastern” games like chess. Humility and respect for your opponent are not only expected but is demanded of anyone who is a serious player. When all was said and done, the children had a chance to enjoy their food, socialize, and talk about the plans for inter-school competition for next year.

It was the Youth Jazz Band’s turn to close out the year on Wednesday. Though they did not have a party, they got a chance to hear about the plans to have a real jazz band for next year. All of the children will begin in September with band instruments, and they will be instructed again by Mr. Rayburn Wright.

On Thursday, the Investment Club had its pizza party and celebrated the fact that its Sony stock (the club owns eight shares) had appreciated in value *ten percent* in less than six weeks! What started off as a buy worth less than six hundred dollars has grown to an investment that is fast moving toward seven hundred dollars. Even better, each of the Club members will receive a check next week for the increase in value.

There are bigger and better plans for next year as the Investment Club looks to expand its membership and take even greater advantage of the computer laboratory to research its

Year-Round Education Returns To Lotus

The Lotus Academy investigated the very important concept of “Year-Round” education a few years ago as it attempted to stay in the forefront of innovation and excellence in preparing our children for the demands of today’s society. That effort is being re-visited as we explore new ways to improve our academic program.

The goal is to devise a schedule that allows for teachers and students to have time for breaks and vacations that rejuvenate and re-energize. On the other hand, the Lotus Academy takes the position that it makes no sense for the whole educational process to completely shut down for the months of June, July, and August. That idea made perfect sense during the time when children were dismissed from school in the spring for the express purpose of picking fruit, vegetables, or cotton. We are now in a very different era where our students are in direct competition with those around the world whose commitment to excellence easily rivals that of the Lotus Academy.

We will be discussing Year-Round Education throughout the coming school year as we formulate a plan to make it workable and affordable for our parents, but also advantageous for our young people. One important step in this direction is the “Summer Session” that will be held in July and August of 2002. It will be very much an academic-based program with a strong emphasis on computer science and African history. It will include chess, swimming, and nature walks.

Detailed information about this new addition to the Lotus curriculum will be available when we begin the new school year in September. We look forward to sharing it with you.

Lotus Academy Passage Ceremony

The most important event of the Lotus Academy year takes place on Saturday, June 16th, at 1:00 p.m. It is, of course, the much anticipated twenty-seventh annual Passage Ceremony. It is both the symbolic and ritualistic conclusion of the academic and cultural school year where all of the students who are moving up to a different Age-Group are recognized as well as those who are leaving Lotus to go on to high school. All of those who have had the pleasure of experiencing it will attest to the fact that it is moving, colorful, and richly rewarding.

It will take place at the Taulane Auditorium, Germantown Friends School, located at School House Lane and Greene Street. The actual ceremony begins at 1:00 p.m., but all Lotus children must arrive no later than 12:30 p.m. Parents should make certain that they receive their tickets prior to the date of the event as seating is limited. If you have any questions, you should call the office to make the necessary inquiries.

The Lotus Academy Celebrates A Family Day At Nockamixon State Park

Most of you might call it a “picnic” but we prefer to call it “Family Day”. In any case, it is a day of pure fun and fresh air as the Lotus extended family travels to Bucks County to take in outdoor cooking, swimming, boating, bicycling, hiking, and just about anything that it makes sense to do outdoors. Join us on Sunday, June 24th, for an extravaganza of outdoor activities that begin at 12:00 noon. For those who do not have their own transportation, bus service will be available. Details will be provided.

Educational Conference Play



The third annual African-centered Educational Conference was held at Lotus on May 19th and brought together a spirited group of parents who took the time to explore the many aspects of their children's education. The workshops were superb, and covered a wide variety of topics that were timely and useful.

The event concluded with a very entertaining and educational play that was presented by some of the Upper School students (*left*). It was entitled "Born Too Late, Died Too Soon", and it depicted the life and times of Malcolm X. The students did a fantastic job of making all of the characters very real while telling a very good story. Our thanks

Parent Seminar



One of our Lotus parents, Pat Mitchell-Doe (*above*) conducted our last Parent Seminar this week. The topic was "Tolerance", and it centered around the need for us to educate our children to embrace their African roots and not to fall prey to the kind of "tribal" intolerance that makes us treat each other like enemies.

Lotus Returns "Home" To Ghana



The Lotus Academy will be re-trip is not so much a vacation as it turning to Ghana this year with a is a "homecoming". It also coincides with "Panafest" when people contingent of fifteen adults and cides with "Panafest" when people two children. The group is leaving from all over the continent come for Accra on July 29th and coming together to share in the diverse cul- back to Philadelphia on August ture of Africa. We hope to have 8th. As was the case in 1999, the even more travelers for next year.

Our history must speak to this, must speak to how a once independent people became a dependent people.

HAKI R. MADHUBUTI