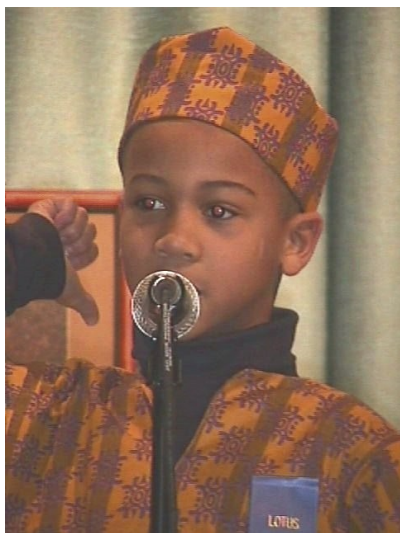


THE LOTUS LAMP

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Keepers Of The Oral Tradition



**"We must stand tall knowing the power, strength, and wisdom of the ancestors is as close as a breath."
IYANLA**

Oratorical Contest

The pictures on the front page of a few of the contestants capture a small slice of a fantastic Sunday afternoon. The 23rd annual Lotus Academy Oratorical Contest was another memorable day for our students and the school. The event was well attended, and the participants were dazzling with their delivery, poise, and command of their content. The group presentations by the various Age-Groups were as impressive as those by the individual competitors.

The pool of judges for the areas of competition was a diverse group of educators and community leaders who had the difficult task of sorting through the levels of excellence in order to pick the first, second, and third place winners for the various competitive categories. As usual, they did a great job and added their own aura of excellence to the event.

One of our previous contestants, Jenne Ayers, who is now a tenth-grade student at Masterman High School was a guest performer. She talked about how her experiences in participating in the Oratorical Contest while at Lotus had prepared her for some of the challenges that she was able to master once she moved on to high school.

For a complete list of all of the winners in all of the categories, please go to our official website at www.lotusacademy.org where you will find that information.

More Lotus Excellence

Tashira Moss, a Vishna II student, recently entered a "Freedom Essay Contest" sponsored by the Johnson House Historic Site, Inc. and the Underground Railroad Station and Museum. Tashira's articulation of the Civil Rights Movement and the impact it had on society won her accolades and commendations at a reception held at the Johnson House this past Sunday, February 22, 2004.

The essay contest, with a slight variation of the topic, was open to all students in Grades K – 12. Tashira was the lone contestant from Lotus Academy and represented us quite well. We are all very proud of her and her latest accomplishment in the academic arena.

Awards Assembly

On January 31st at 9:30 a.m. Lotus held its 1st TRIMESTER AWARDS ASSEMBLY. Our students in grades Shana III through Vishna were recognized for outstanding achievement in the following areas based upon their first trimester accomplishments: Academic Achievement, Character Development, Attendance, Kuumba, Ujima, and Kujichagulia. All parents are invited to attend the next assembly on March 24th at 9:00 a.m.

Educational Technology Weekend

Several members of the Lotus Academy staff spent their weekend in Harrisburg at the Pennsylvania Educational Technology Expo and Conference on February 21st. It featured a long list of workshops that offered innovative and practical information about extending the use of technology to enhance the learning experiences for our children. It also included several workshops that addressed the subject of project based learning, a concept that will become increasingly important in the Lotus Academy curriculum.

The topics were extensive and varies. Some examples were Interactive Whiteboard, Increasing Motivation and Learning Through Technology, Using a Little Inspiration In Your Next Project, The Interactive Classroom, and Electronic Portfolios. The project based learning workshop was entitled "Not Another Project" and explained that it is an invaluable vehicle for instruction, that provides every student an opportunity to construct his or her own knowledge and meaning.

It was time well spent and Mothuras Marcia and Ina, along with Mothuris Kwami and Nmuta are already figuring out how to put

Have you sent in your re-admissions material? If you have not, you need to get it into the office as soon as possible! All present parents who are applying for re-admission for their children will be interviewed by Lotus staff members to get their feedback on this school year, and what they would like to see for the 2004-05 year.

African Centered Fashion Show

As spring draws near, the annual Lotus Academy Fashion Show can not be far behind. It is now set for Saturday, April 3rd, at 1:00 pm. It will be held at North American Motor Inn on City Avenue near Belmont Avenue. Tickets are only \$20 (\$10 for children under twelve) and include a delicious lunch buffet.

What will be different this year is the new group who will be designing and presenting the show—Cachelle Ink Studios, owned and operated by Shoana Clarke, a respected event planner and photographer. The theme this year is “In the Midst of Style”, and this year’s show promises to be a “true fashion experience”.

Auditions have already begun to take place for the professional models, and the Lotus students (and our teachers!) will also be participating. The fashions will represent a variety of styles and looks, for both females and males of all ages. The African-centered theme will not be overlooked as Cachelle Ink plans to have a “mock” wedding (complete with music) take place as a backdrop for real cultural style and elegance. We urge you to get your tickets early, as we have no doubt that this fashion show will sell out very, very quickly.

Lotus Jackets On Sale Now

Our thanks go out to Robin Gonzales and Tracey Ray of the Advisory Council for organizing the effort to bring the first school jackets to the Lotus Academy. These quality jackets will feature the Lotus logo, and can be ordered now through the main office. There is a full range of adult and children’s sizes available.

All children’s jackets are \$40, and a \$20 deposit is necessary to finalize your order. The adult jackets also require a \$20 deposit and the full purchase price is \$45. All profits will benefit the many programs that are administered by the Advisory Council that are so beneficial to Lotus and our student body.

Take advantage of this opportunity to show your school spirit while making a strong fashion statement. Get your orders in as the deadline for placing your deposit is rapidly approaching. If you have any questions, call the main office at 215.438.7500.

Lotus Academy Advisory Council

The Lotus Academy Advisory Council has scheduled its next meeting for Thursday, March 11th, at the usual time of 5:45 pm. Topics to be discussed include the Lotus school jackets, the Spring Clean-Up, the March 13th Skating Party, and other fundraising efforts. Try to get out to the meeting and support your parents’ group.

Lotus ‘Pearl’ Anniversary

The parade of special events continues during this 30th year anniversary celebration (our “Pearl” year!). Mark your calendars for our next three events. The Lotus Academy Student Science Exposition will be held on the evening of April 28th, and will give our students a chance to exhibit their science projects.

Our African-Centered Educational Conference will be held at the Lotus Academy on May 22nd-23rd. It will offer free workshops, seminars, and other activities that will enlighten those who are interested in education rooted in one’s own sense of self.

We are all looking forward to our end-of-the-year bash that we celebrate as the Awards Banquet. Tickets will go on sale next week for this gala event that will take place on May 27th at the Hilton Hotel on City Avenue. You will not want to miss this event!

Lotus Board Of Directors

The next meeting of the Board of Directors of the Lotus Academy is set for Thursday, March 25th, at 5:45 pm at the Lotus Academy. There are a number of ongoing topics that are on our agenda, and we will also be continuing with our plans for the 30th (“pearl”) anniversary. Please E-mail us at board@lotusacademy.org if you would like more information about the Lotus Academy Board of Directors.

Lotus To Be Graced With A Mural



This is an example of their work. It is not the picture that will be on Lotus' wall.

In order to prepare the Morton Street wall for the mural, some minor structural work will be done. This portion of the project is being coordinated by Hank Jackson, our physical plant manager.

The project will be implemented in three stages. During the first stage, Teddy Harris led a series of three workshops with the Vishna (7th & 8th grade) classes to familiarize them with the theme of the project ("Jazz") and to elicit their ideas on its design. Next, several Lotus students were selected to have

their silhouettes incorporated in the mural. A group of 10-15 students will then participate in the actual painting of the mural. The completion date of the project is expected to be early in April of this year.

This mural adds to the contributions that the Lotus Academy has made to the neighboring community through our practicing "Kuumba". A special thanks goes out to both *Tracey Ray* and *Caswell Curtis* of the Lotus Academy Advisory Council for their initiatives and labors in bringing this wonderful project to Lotus.

"The image sees...the image feels...The image acts...And if you want to change a situation, you have to change the image men have of themselves and their situation."

LERONE BENNET, JR.