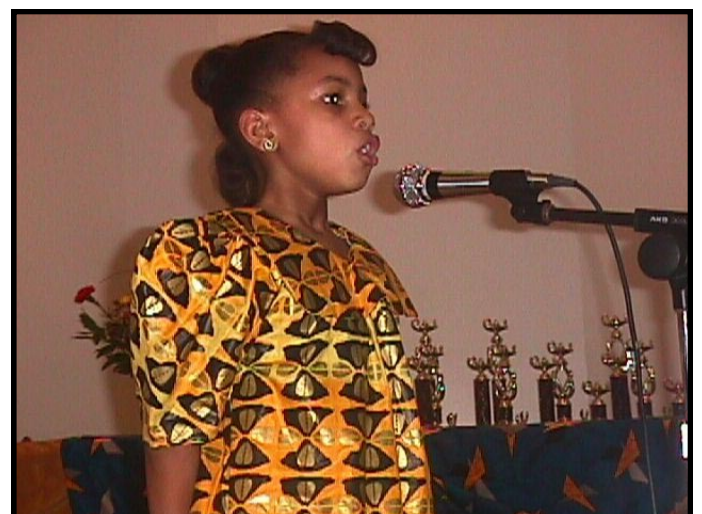
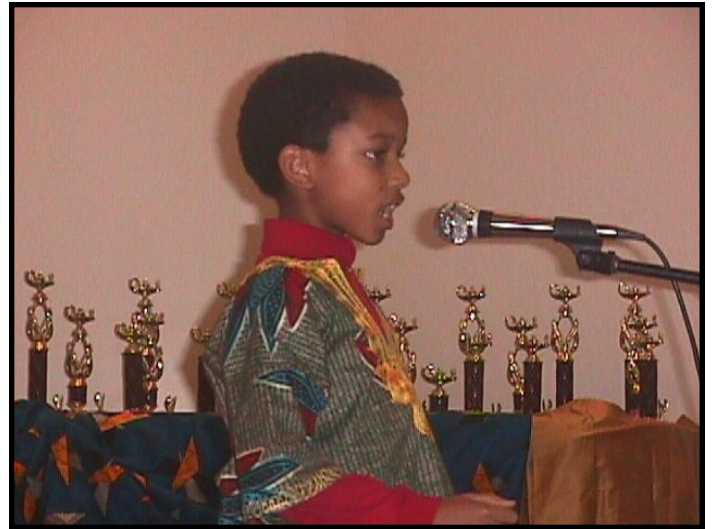


THE LOTUS LAMP

February 29, 2000

Volume 3, Issue 7

Superb Oratorical Contest!



“If we don’t know ourselves, not only are we a puzzle to ourselves; other people are also a puzzle to us as well.”

AMOS N. WILSON

19th Annual Lotus Oratorical Contest Winners, Highlights, and Thanks

This year-2000 edition of the Lotus Academy Oratorical Contest was a tribute to the promise that our children bring to us as we approach the new millennium. It was a day to cherish as they all filled our heads with knowledge and our hearts with hope with their poise, grace, and mastery of the spoken word.

This year's event was accented by the beautiful atmosphere of the auditorium of the Settlement Music School. The standing room only crowd did much to give the air an extra charge of electricity. The master of ceremonies for the event was Earl Brown, jazz radio personality, and he did a fantastic job of spicing up the program and keeping everything moving at an energetic pace. The whole event was videotaped by Abdul Jackson, a producer from New York City at MTV Networks who donated his Sunday afternoon for the occasion. Mothura Badara did his usual fine job taking the still photographs.

As always, the judges for the event were a distinguished group of professionals who took on the very difficult task of sorting out the excellent from the even more excellent. They were Peter Andrews, director of the National Museum of Jazz in Harlem; Pharalyn Dove, professor at Temple University; Dr. Lillian Safisha Gaskins-Green, museum educator at the Balch Institute of Ethnic Studies; Jeffrey Jackson, director of the John F. Kennedy MH/MR Clinic; Elimisha Jaliwa, director of the Academy of the Way; Philip Lord, Esq., community development attorney; Dr. Doreen Loury, an equal education opportunity program director at Beaver College; and Arifah Shaheed, education program specialist for the New Jersey Department of Education.

Special thanks go out to Mothura Evelyn Poe for the *Spoken Word* book, and to Mothuras Marcia and Cynthia for preparing the tasty food for the event.

The student performances at the nineteenth annual Oratorical Contest were as good as any we have seen over the years. It was obvious that the children, parents, and teachers had spent a great deal of time preparing for this occasion. The age group presentations were especially impressive for the teamwork that went into them. Who could forget, for example, the first graders reciting the CIBI pledge in both English and Kiswahili! Mothuras Anna and Amina should be very proud of their work, as should all of the Lotus teachers.

All of the children who participated were contest winners, and made Sunday such a memorable day. Those who were selected by the judges for the prizes are as follows:

The winners in the Lower School Poetry Competition, grades 1-2, were—

- 1st Prize: Sloane Turner
- 2nd Prize: Asaid Falah
- 3rd Prize: Yeshemabet Turner
- 4th Prize: Fatima Burrell-Simpkins

The winners in the Lower School Original Poetry Competition, grades 3-4, were—

- 1st Prize: Tenagne Turner
- 2nd Prize: Daenelle Thorpe
- 3rd Prize: Jasmine Ingram

The winners in the Lower School Poetry Competition, grades 3-4, were —

- 1st Prize: Samantha Scott
- 2nd Prize: Tovya Stephens
- 3rd Prize: Watufani Poe

The winners in the Upper School Original Speech Competition, grades 5-8, were—

- 1st Prize: Jerome Hill
- 2nd Prize: Idris Fullard
- 3rd Prize: Romaine Hill
- 4th Prize: Amiyah Muhammad

The winners in the Upper School Speech Competition, grades 5-8, were—

- 1st Prize: Shadyra Chambers
- 2nd Prize: Idris Fullard
- 3rd Prize: Alston Ross

The winners in the Upper School Original Poetry Competition, grades 5-8, were—

- 1st Prize: Alston Ross
- 2nd Prize: Malika Maddox
- 3rd Prize: Tayarisha Poe

The winners in the Upper School Poetry Competition, grades 5-8, were—

- 1st Prize: Romaine Hill
- 2nd Prize: Ruwhiy Muhammad
- 3rd Prize: Shadyra Chambers

The Oratorical Contest was also our moment to honor one of the great men of our time, the Honorable David P. Richardson, Jr. He was one of our original judges, and always offered his help and guidance to Lotus. Dave was a powerful orator himself, and represented his legislative district and Black people in general with courage and conviction. All those who were present at the Oratorical Contest helped us ensure that though he may be missed, he will never be forgotten.

If you are interested in purchasing a copy of the publication, *Spoken Word* (\$5.00), or a copy of the professionally filmed videocassette of the Oratorical Contest (\$10.00), please call the office to make the necessary arrangements.

Lotus Academy Financial Aid

Parents should take the time to carefully read the insert that explains the overall financial aid program for Lotus for the 2000-2001 school year. The summary information sheet also spells out the key points of each of the four sources of financial aid for parents who are applying for admission or re-admission.

There are some important changes and additions to the whole financial aid picture. For example, there is now a "Kuumba Scholarship" that is available to any Lotus student that is nominated by his or her classroom teacher. These scholarships will be awarded to a select number of students who demonstrate exemplary character development, creativity, and citizenship. Students who receive these awards represent the core values of the Lotus Academy.

The "Community Scholarship" program has been revised, and is now available to any student that lives in Philadelphia. It is the only need-based scholarship, and the amount of the award is determined by how much the family needs in order to have the child attend Lotus. Applications for the Community Scholarship are now available at the main office.

Parent Partnership Fellowships are also available to any parent who is willing to share his or her time assisting in the program at Lotus. There are specific dollar amounts for the fellowships that vary according to the amount of time that the parent has committed to for each month. If an application for a fellowship is approved, parents are then interviewed to devise a plan to make the best use of the parent's skills, talents, and time.

Merit Scholarships will continue to be awarded to select students who are nominated by their classroom teachers, and who have at least a 3.5 grade point average. Parents are encouraged to inquire about any of these sources of funds, and to apply as early as possible.

Second Annual Fashion Show

The Lotus Academy will be presenting its second fashion show on Saturday, April 8th, from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. It will feature beautiful clothing and accessories (both contemporary and African-Centered), professional models, and vendors who will offer some quality items at bargain prices. The show will take place at the North American Motor Inn on City Line Avenue in Philadelphia.

The price of a ticket is \$30.00 (\$15.00 for children), and includes a full buffet lunch. A ticket also automatically enters all those who attend in a raffle for some great prizes.

One new feature of this year's show is the addition of our children as models. They will be showing a variety of clothes and styles. Information about participation in the show can be obtained from its coordinator, Julie Wilcher, a Lotus parent who did such a fabulous job last year planning and putting the whole event together.

Youth Jazz Program In Total Harmony

Even though the Youth Jazz Program is little more than a month old, it is obvious that it is an unqualified success. Nearly all of the twenty students who began the program are still there, and are learning music theory and music appreciation as they master their present instrument, the recorder. Even the youngest of the students are impressing everyone with their progress and determination.

Ray Wright and Bill Leslie have been joined by two more instructors as they prepare the children for a "recorder recital" during the month of May, and also get them ready to take up the instrument of their choice in April. Students will be able to choose from a variety of instruments—piano, saxophone, trumpet, flute, drums, guitar, bass—and they will begin to receive individual instruction from accomplished jazz musicians during these spring sessions.

Networking Dinner: Commercial And Cultural Initiatives

The parent body of the Lotus Academy, the Whole Life Institute, Inc., hosted its first monthly networking dinner on February 5th at the Pennsylvania Convention Center. There were some forty people in attendance, and a variety of initiatives were discussed and planned. The participants had an opportunity to meet a variety of entrepreneurs, investors, educators, and professionals in a casual atmosphere that was marked by a strong sense of purpose and commitment.

After a time of informal socializing and a buffet dinner, there were several addresses by those who expounded upon some of the major themes that will be pursued by the Whole Life Institute. The first emphasized the critical need to develop a community of scholars, businesspeople, and educators who will share and convey the information and resources necessary to build both commercial and cultural enterprises. It was explained that this will be accomplished by setting up a series of seminars, workshops, and social events to foster personal and professional development.

Dr. Ahmed Shariff, a Tanzanian scholar, then spoke on the need and opportunities for commercial and cultural advancement that will be facilitated by Africans and African-Americans combining their efforts. He talked about the common problems that exist for us, but he shed a great deal of light on how bridging this gulf will open up whole new worlds.

Fred Scott, the information technology manager at United Way of Philadelphia, talked about the critical role that computers and the internet will play in the growth of our economy and the evolution of our society. He explained how we can and will be a part of this "information explosion", and how we can profit from and contribute to it.

The next dinner is Saturday, March 4th. The membership drive will continue, and work will begin on a number of projects. Lotus will be well represented in these efforts.

The Lotus Academy Teacher Of The Month

Mothura Ebony is our featured teacher this month. Since leaving the “main building” and going to work at the Early Learning Center, she has demonstrated an even greater rapport and vitality with the Shana I and II age group. Ebony is in her element in her new surroundings, as she is in tune with nature and the wide open spaces.



Now that the weather is starting to take a turn for the better, the children can count on a variety of outdoor trips with her and plenty of instruction.

Ebony is also the yoga teacher for the Early Learning Center. She is a serious student of it herself, and has uncovered some books that are directed at young people. This has done much to give the children a sense of self-awareness, and to teach them how to relax and focus.

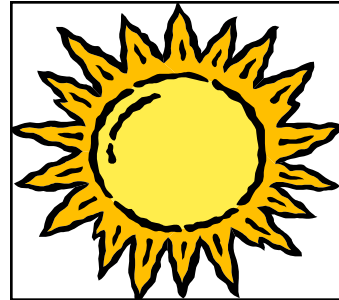
Early Learning Center At Oratorical Contest

Our youngest Lotus students made their debut at our 19th annual Oratorical Contest. Their group presentation made it clear that they too are budding young orators just waiting in the wings to perform.



Monthly Reminders

Early Learning Center



- Mon, Mar 13 – Harriet Tubman Day Observance**
- Wed, Mar 22 – Parent Teacher Conferences**
- Fri, Mar 24 – Seasonal Celebration (Blue)**
- Sat, Apr 1 – Skating Party (4:30 – 7:00 p.m.)**
- Sat, Apr 8 – Lotus Fashion Show (11 am – 4 pm)**

Lower & Upper Schools (Grades K to 8)



- Sat, Mar 4, 11, 18, 25–Youth Jazz Program (11 am)**
- Tue, Mar 7 – Staff Meeting – NOON DISMISSAL**
- Mon, Mar 13 – Harriet Tubman Day Observance**
- Wed, Mar 22 – P/T Conferences – NOON DISMISSAL**
- Fri, Mar 24 – Seasonal Celebration (Blue)**
- Sat, Apr 1 – Skating Party (4:30 – 7:00 p.m.)**
- Sat, Apr 8 – Lotus Fashion Show (11 am - 4 pm)**

“The only thing white people have that Black people need, or should want, is power—and no one holds power forever”

JAMES BALDWIN