

GPHS STUDENT & PARENT NEWS

Volume 1, Issue 1
October 31, 2008

GPHS STUDENT LEADERSHIP

Four Gordon Parks High School students were recently selected to serve on the Summit-University and Frogtown's "Leap Forward Youth Advisory Council." Funded by numerous foundations and community organizations, the collaboration promotes academic and social skill development by supporting high quality, community based after-school and summer programming and by mobilizing the community in support of youth.

Brittney Adams, Jermel Edwards, Rachael Rae

collaborative board member and Gordon Parks community outreach coordinator. "In the past, it's always been the adults doing the planning."

The collaboration serves children and youth from ages 5 to 18. "We live in a unique neighborhood," Kelley went on to say. "Many local children desire opportunities to explore their interests and develop their leadership talents." But she stressed that it must be high quality programming.



Gordon Parks High School

great obstacles to get where they are, we count on them to help lead the way for the younger students."

If the People will Lead, the Leaders will follow.

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Special points of interest:

- Reminder: Election Day is November 4, 2008
- Parents are always welcome to visit the school.
- New Quarter begins November 10, 2008

"Many of our students have overcome great obstacles..."
-Kathy Kelley

Oliveraz and Totyanne Wagner were selected for their leadership skills. "This is the first time students will be planning the events and programs," remarked **Kathy Kelley**,

"Research shows that young people may be better off on their own than to be involved with low quality programs. Because many of our students have overcome



THE WRITING CLASS

It is not uncommon to see students still in English class after the dismissal bell has rung. They're not in trouble, they are feverishly working on their novel.

The goal of the Walter Mosley Writing Class is for every student to finish their own novel within a year. The class, taught by veteran educators **Tom Zachary** and **Mike LaBerge**, is so popular that students have been caught sneaking IN from gym class.

The students apprentice themselves as makers of literature to the authors whose work they admire, in this case, Walter Mosley.

Want to read their work? Here are the teasers inside the front cover of their novels:

- This is me, Esmeralda, an immigrant from Mexico who has been living a crazy life. I made my life the way I wanted it to be. After a visit to a health clinic, I wound out that I had been infected with an STD-sexually transmitted disease! Can you imagine that your life could end at any moment because of something you thought would never happen to you? **-Esmeralda Reyes**
- Reggie Johnson—that's me. I'm looking

forward to my senior year in high school just so it can end. Things are going good in my life. I mean, it's the last year of high school; I have the cutest girl around, and most important is my family. They are always there for me when I need them, no matter what. So I thought. What do you do when the closest thing to you falls apart because of you? **-Carlos Pratt**

- Johnny Tran was living the good life. But then, one day he heard knocks and bangs on the door. He opened the door and saw people in blue uniforms,



Students write their own novels.

They searched his house and he was taken into custody for information on a crime committed years ago. "We know what you did in 1983," said the cop sharply. "So, tell us, what did you do?" **-Phong Her**

- Leroy Johnson is a young man living on the Southside of Chicago. He's coming home from school and finds out that the police are at his house. He sees his family crying and wants to know what's going on. He comes to find out his Pops was murdered. He and his family are being very emotional, but as for Leroy, he's seeking revenge. Will he get it or die trying? Find out and see... **-Troy Singer**
- The next issue will highlight the work of **Erin Tungland, Stacy Duncan** and others.

"The book is always better than the movie" remarked Brandon Beck.

RADIO JOURNALISM LIVES AT GORDON PARKS HIGH SCHOOL

By **Paul Creager**

A lot of students at Gordon Parks High School have a gift at storytelling, and each Thursday between 1-2 PM, these skills are being refined during a Radio Journalism course hosted by **Catherine Squires** and **Will Wright** of the University of Minnesota Journalism Department.

Students have grouped up around subject areas of

This project "...gives students a multitude of marketable skills..."

their choice like: Rap and Politics, High School Students and the Military, Illegal Immigration and the Election, and Gender and Politics. Students have learned the skills of working with Zoom H2 digital audio recorders as well as the basics of good interviewing skills.

Besides being fun, this multi-disciplinary project gives students a multitude of marketable skills in audio

editing, communication, story development, and research.

Student **Stephanie Snguan** summed up the experience saying "it gives me a chance to speak my mind and put it out there in the public. Plus, it teaches me more about how other people think about things."

Work-in-progress versions of these student radio projects will be debuted prior to the November 4th election via a GPHS Radio Project website that is currently being designed. Stop by room 2103 on Thursdays at 1PM to check it out.

HOT AIR BALLOONS GO ACADEMIC

Students in **Joel Abdella's** physical science class will soon launch their own hot air balloons in a quest to understand the application of density and fluids. "Hot air balloons are the oldest successful means of human flight (1783), and still have relevance today for our understanding molecular density," remarked Joel.

"Since the heated air inside the envelope has a lower density than the outside cold air, it is lighter and should rise" instructed

senior **Tyricka Johnson**.

"Density is the mass per unit of volume of a material", beamed **Mark Sullivan** as he worked on his balloon plans. "So, if you divide the objects mass by its volume, you get its density. We have already looked at why certain objects float in water and oth-



Toneta Morehead and Derrick Parker work on their plans.

ers don't. Now we'll be looking at air," he went on to say.

Once the students finish their plans and build their airships, they will take them outdoors, launch them and record their results.

AUGUST WILSON'S *FENCES* REACHES OUT

“Fences” a 9th Grade Field Trip
By **Paul Creager**

I’ve taught August Wilson’s “Fences” before, but this was the first time that my classes were able to attend the play in the very theater where Wilson worked for so many years of his life.

The approach my classes had was simple: read a third of the book and then attend the play. Afterward, write about how the play affected you. The results were stunning.

Many students of mine, who rarely write, could hardly confine their feedback to two pages.



Students board bus to August Wilson play.

Here are some anonymous excerpts from the writing I received:

“Like Troy and Cory in the play, my dad and I don’t get along with each other. Unlike Cory, I’m not afraid of my dad anymore.”

“Cory and Lyons get to see their dad whenever they want to. As for me, I can’t just go and see my dad as much as I want.” “One thing I didn’t like about the
(continued below)

“Like Troy and Cory in the play, my dad and I don’t get along with each other...”

book/play was the setting. Fences starts at the house of the main character. I think it wasn’t interesting because the title of the book is called ‘Fences’. I think it would have been better if the setting started

off at the store or something when they were buying fences.” The Penumbra Theatre will feature all the plays of the August Wilson’s “Pittsburgh Cycle” that are meant to feature each decade of the 20th century African

American experience. My classes may attend future

The Penumbra Theatre will feature all the plays of the August Wilson’s “Pittsburgh Cycle”



Lou Bellamy’s vision is that everything is performed as if there were only black people in the audience.

OUR FIRST EDITION

Steve Lindberg, Principal

Welcome to our first school newspaper. Our school was named for an extraordinary man who broke down barriers, created success from the ashes of racism and poverty, and used his craving for education to change the world. Gordon Parks

was a writer, composer, artist, filmmaker and photographer. He used his skills as weapons against the bigotry, poverty, and despair that gripped America a generation ago. This



Creating life-long learners...

neighborhood is literally where this great man lived and grew. Our staff and students are learning from his inspiring story and creating their own weapons “of love, dignity and hard work” to combat the challenges of *our* day.

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Rich Hahnen, Editorial Advisor

The Power of Education



Gordon Parks High School

alternative learning programs

Gordon Parks High School serves high school age students who prefer individual and small group instruction, and a year-round setting.

Gordon Parks High School offers students a flexible schedule that combines both structured classes and supervised study.

Learners attend *Gordon Parks High School* as a full-time student to earn their high school diploma.

Gordon Parks High School students are provided with a wide range of learning opportunities to earn their high school diploma. Our ability to provide a flexible and challenging learning environment makes this program highly desirable for our students.

STUDENT AWARD DAY NOVEMBER 3RD

Election Day may be Tuesday, November 4th, but Gordon Parks students will be winners the day before the big event.

The ceremony will begin during the lunch break where students will be recognized for their superior work.

Teachers will be nominating students for recognition and they will receive certificates for their achievements.

Parents and families of students getting awards will be invited to the ceremony.

Some staff members will conduct a project contest, and the 1st place winner will receive both a gift and a certificate of recognition.

All students will have a chance to win door prizes by participating in a raffle contest. Pre-typed raffle tickets of students names will be given to 4th period

teachers on the awards day. The teachers will give the tickets to the students and they will place them in the raffle box as they enter the auditorium. All winners need to be present to win.



Caption describing picture or graphic.

Help Wanted

Writers, artists, photographers, graphic designers are needed immediately for the next issue of the *GPHS Student and Parent News*. Must be creative, hard working, diligent to details, flexible, able to work long hours, have excellent communication skills, ability to do research, have good interviewing techniques, and the ability to work under time pressures. Pay: nothing. Volunteer with your favorite teacher.