

NAACP Encouraging Students Nationwide To Stay in School

The NAACP is on an all-out mission, through its Back to School/Stay In School Program, to increase school attendance and achievement by creating a nationwide awareness among youth of the importance of staying in school. The program currently involves more than 9,500 students nationwide.

Its program draws from a dedicated pool of community volunteers who serve as tutors, adult role models, project coordinators and advisors. These volunteers are recruited from among fraternities, sororities, Elks, Masons, churches, unions, retirees, and other organizations.

Funded by Reader's Digest Foundation and other supporters, the program has developed strategies for keeping youngsters in school. These strategies, executed by local NAACP branches, include targeting potential dropouts and providing individual supportive efforts to help them cope with their school problems.

Parental involvement is emphasized. Parents are made aware of the educational procedures required of their offsprings, and they are encouraged to be constant participants in their youngsters' education.

Other strategies include supportive relationships with tutors and peers, and reward incentives for students demonstrating substantial improvement or perfect attendance records.

NAACP youth councils, ACT-SO participants, and the Youth and College Division also lend a helping hand to the Back To School program to assist in accomplishing its mission.

For example, some NAACP youth councils, in concert with their local branches, hold weekend rap sessions to discuss social or home problems which may have an impact upon at-risk students' school performance. The rap sessions are particularly effective at the NAACP Corona-East Elmhurst New York Branch because they provide an opportunity for students to discuss various issues confronting them and to learn that they are not alone in experiencing their particular problem.

The NAACP Youth Council has received several letters of commendation from community leaders praising

The Reagan Administration Fiscal 1989 Education Budget A Statement by NEA President

Mary Hatwood Futrell

February 18, 1988

WASHINGTON, D.C.—For only the second time in the past eight years, the Reagan Administration has proposed a budget that does not gut education. We shouldn't be surprised. This is an election year. In election years, the Reagan White House "supports" education. In every other year, President Reagan has sought deep cuts in education spending.

But the election year budget for education presented by the Reagan Administration today does children—America's future—no favors.

Never in our history have there been more children living in poverty, many of them homeless. The budget proposed by the White House offers these children precious little.

Never in our history have we faced such stiff competition in the global marketplace. The budget proposed by the White House does practically nothing to help America's schools prepare students for new competitive realities.

The stark reality is this: the federal share of Ameri-

ca's educational expenses has shrunk by one-third since President Reagan took office. You can track that shrinking commitment by looking at specific federal aid to education programs.

The prime example: Chapter 1, the federal compensatory education program for disadvantaged youngsters. The Chapter 1 program today serves 5.7 million children at risk for failure in school, 1.3 million fewer than in 1980. In the United States today, there are 8 million other disadvantaged children who are eligible for but not receiving Chapter 1 support.

In his new book, *The Thirteenth Man*, former Education Secretary Terrel Bell calls on the federal government to invest \$20 billion in Chapter 1 alone. This \$20 billion is about what the Reagan Administration is proposing for all of education!

We at NEA will continue to work for adequate federal support for our nation's schools, colleges, and universities. The nation cannot afford any less.

if they are given a chance. Our thrust and motto has been that there are more students who want to learn than those who don't want to learn. We have our principals involved, and we even have black youth you attend private school networking and referring high achievers to work with our students."

One of the results is that the at-risk student population in Cleveland is steadily decreasing. For example, out of the 1,878 at-risk students participating in the Cleveland Back To School program last year, 622 students attended school 97 percent of the time or more, and 418 had perfect attendance.

In Dade County, Florida, Attorney John Due, the Dade County Back-To-School coordinator, has another success story. The Dade County School board, Due said, was so impressed with the NAACP's program that it is paying overtime for some

teachers to work extra hours after school to give at-risk students the extra teaching instructions they need. There are 13 public schools in Dade County participating in the program.

Through the NAACP Youth and College Division, college students from schools such as Boston University, Albion College in Michigan and Miami Dade County Community College also serve as tutors and help distribute literature about the program.

Since the program started in February 1985, it has grown from ten to 43 school districts. Dr. Wanda Jean Green—who coordinates the Back To School program in Cleveland—has a moving testimony about how the program has motivated students in the Cleveland Public School System to take education seriously. There are 69 public schools in Cleveland participating in the NAACP program.

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it for its work with at-risk students.

And NAACP ACT-SO students—who are high achievers in their local schools—serve as peer role models and tutors, oftentimes providing the camaraderie and personal friendship at-risk students need to increase their school performance.

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MISS NEVADA USA, LAGRACELLA OMRAN, TO COMPETE FOR MISS USA

On Tuesday evening, March 1st, Lagracella Omran, Miss Nevada USA, will compete for the coveted title of Miss USA, as over 200 million viewers worldwide are expected to watch the 37th annual event, live from El Paso, Texas. Lagracella, along with 50 other delegates, will compete for more than \$250,000 in cash and prizes.

Elegantly statuesque, this 19 year old beauty stands 5'8" tall, has black hair and vibrant brown eyes. A graduate of Chaparral High School with a 4.0, she enjoys jazz dancing, swimming, playing computer games and sampling different types of food.

Lagracella was crowned Miss Nevada USA on November 21, 1987, and has since logged thousands of miles across the state, as well as into Texas, California and Mexico. A busy ambassador, spokesperson and celebrity, she maintains much involvement in local charity activities.

For Lagracella, becoming Miss Nevada USA is the fulfillment of only one dream. "Determination is the key to success," she says. "Becoming Miss USA will give me the great opportunity to travel, meet new people throughout the exciting United States, and be a role model for all young people across the country."

By the time the preliminary judging is held on February 27th, Lagracella will have been in El Paso for more than 2½ weeks, rehearsing for the television extravaganza, taping prerecorded dance sequences, filming on site location spots, and attending press parties and celebrity events around the city.

Lagracella aspires to work in the field of Hotel Administration. There's no doubt this determined young woman from Las Vegas can achieve anything she sets out to do.

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