

# Education

• Educator  
• Journalist  
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KEITH O. HILTON

## A MIND IS A MARVELOUS THING TO DEVELOP

That is the slogan and philosophy of **KIDS "R" SMART LEARNING CENTER** out of Las Vegas, Nevada, (702) 647-5712.

In a previous column titled, "Higher Education Begins Early", we listed twenty specific hypotheses suggested by Dr. Reginald Clark from his book, "Family Life and School Achievement: Why Poor Black Children Succeed or Fail".

Amongst his twenty statements were: 1) Students who do well in school have often had early, relatively pleasant, supportive learning experiences at home and in school.

2) Students with a positive view of themselves are better able to realize their capabilities and potentialities.

**KIDS "R" SMART LEARNING CENTER**, is African American owned and operated by Ms. Lolanda Bunch and Mr. Wendell Williams. They enthusiastically and correctly assert that "knowledge is power."

According to Ms. Bunch, "No child is too young to learn, so we believe in creating a rich and educationally stimulating environment.

"We teach African History 365 days of the year, not just during February. We also think that it is important to highlight local people as heroes, as well as national ones."

Creating an Africentric learning environment, and identifying local, national and international people as heroes and heroines for Pan African Children are two key ingredients for empowering children.

Another important ingredient is identifying positive books for Pan African children. When we speak of Pan African, we are speaking of African American, Afro Caribbean, Afro Latino, Continental African, etc.

**POSITIVE IMAGES CHILDREN'S BOOKS**, the mail order

catalogue of Pan African and Multi-Cultural children's books, is one shining example of doing the correct thing with regards to empowering parents and young children.

**POSITIVE IMAGES CHILDREN'S BOOKS** was launched by Ms. Heather Williams, a Jamaican born and Harvard educated attorney. Through her work with abused and neglected children in New York City, and her longstanding association with the Learning Center, a Pan African private school in Queens, New York, she "felt impelled to produce a resource for parents and teachers who believe it is important that children see positive reflections of themselves, their peers and families in their books."

Ms. Williams has over 200 books listed in her catalogue. Most of these books offer written and visual images of children and families in African, American and Caribbean cultures.

The response from parents, teachers and others concerned with the development of self-esteem and cultural pride in young children has been tremendous. For further information contact: Heather A. Williams, **POSITIVE IMAGES CHILDREN'S BOOKS**, 593A Macon Street, Brooklyn, NY 11233, (718) 453-1111.

**YES A MIND IS A MARVELOUS THING TO DEVELOP** (and not a terrible thing to waste)! Please let us know about other similar outstanding Learning Centers, people and projects. **HILTON: HIGHER EDUCATION**, 3139 N. Garey Ave., #101, Pomona, CA 91767.

**HILTON: HIGHER EDUCATION** is designed to dialogue with college and world readers. Education is ongoing and certainly not limited to classroom study. Let's talk. (714) 899-0650.

## SORORITY LAUNCHES AFRICAN ESSAY CONTESTS

To strengthen the understanding of African-American youths of their African heritage and culture, **Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc.**, in cooperation with Africare, has launched a program to encourage young people to conduct relevant research and to write essays. The project entitled, "**The Mwanamugimu Project**", (Wah-nah-moo-gee-moo), is designed to increase the knowledge of African-American youths about their ancestral homeland.

The focus of the pilot project is student essay contests to be sponsored by **Sigma Gamma Rho** graduate chapters. Contests will be undertaken at the local community level with the winning essay writers receiving U.S. savings bonds as well as public recognition. The winning Essayist on a national level will also be honored with an African Diplomatic reception at Africare House in Washington, D.C. Additional project activities include the publishing of top student essays, and the establishment of a data base of in-print literature on African peoples and cultures written for young people.

The project title, "**Mwanamugimu**", is a proverb from Uganda that literally means, from small acorns come mighty oaks. The proverb captures the project's focus on increasing the factual knowledge of African-American youths so that as adults they will have a strong sense of connectedness to their ancestral roots and cultural heritage.

First year activities in the **Mwanamugimu** project will take place in the northeast region of the United States, and will ex-

pand across the country in subsequent years. Initial support for the project is being provided by **Sigma Gamma Rho** and Africare. Additional funding is being sought from foundations and other private donors.

**Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority's** Grand Basileus, Dr. Katie K. White of Nashville,

Tennessee, believes the **Mwanamugimu** project will have a profound impact on African-American youths. Dr. White says, "encouraging our young people to explore their heritage and their past, will undoubtedly assist in preparing them to better address the challenges of their future."

In addition to the youth essay

contest, **Sigma Gamma Rho** is also cooperating with Africare to provide much needed assistance in Africa.

Through the Sorority's three-year initiative, "Project Africa", chapters have raised thousands of dollars to help finance food grain grinders for women cooperatives on the continent.

## STUDENTS INVITED TO ENTER MADD'S POSTER/ESSAY CONTEST

**Dallas, Tx** — Students across the country are being challenged to combine their creativity with their knowledge about impaired driving in MADD's 1991 Poster/Essay Contest.

The contest, now in its fifth year, is focusing toward a safe and sober future with the theme, "Driving Straight Into the '90's." Students are invited to submit posters and essays in English or Spanish demonstrating this theme.

Aetna Life and Casualty Insurance Company is supporting the 1991 Poster/Essay Contest by serving as the national sponsor. Through the generous grant by Aetna, students will be eligible for more than \$13,000 in savings bonds. These awards will be given during a ceremony and press conference next April in New Orleans, Louisiana, in conjunction with a conference of MADD state leaders. MADD chapters, schools and other organizations are encouraged to conduct local contests and submit their first place entries for national judging. However, individual entries are also welcomed.

All entries must be postmarked and mailed to the MADD National Office by February 1, 1991, for judging.

The contest has enjoyed support from hundreds of schools and youth groups, as well as national organizations such as the Farmers Home Administration (an agency of the U.S. Department of Agriculture), Girls, Inc. (formerly Girls Clubs of America) and the Boys and Girls Clubs of America.

MADD national President, Micky Sadoff said, "Last Year we received about 50,000 entries in the competition. This year MADD hopes to see at least 25 percent more involvement from students around the country who want to show their creative ef-

forts while raising awareness among their peers to the dangers of impaired driving."

MADD has 400 chapters in the United States and affiliates in Canada, Great Britain, Australia and New Zealand. Its mission is to stop drunk driving and to support victims of this violent crime. For more information about the Poster/Essay Contest, contact your local MADD chapter or the Youth Programs Department at the MADD National Office.

Learn & Live!

CLARK COUNTY  
COMMUNITY  
COLLEGE

**NEED HELP  
WITH READING,  
WRITING, MATH,  
& GED—AGE: 16+**

**CONTACT  
A.O.I.P.  
647-2117  
1-4 P.M.**

**Kids R Smart**

LEARNING CENTER

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