

# EDUCATION

## CCSN launches first prep high tech computing center

*Special to Sentinel-Voice*

Nevada's first collegiate high-tech computing center on a high school campus broke ground Wednesday, Nov. 12.

The Community College Palo Verde High School High Tech Center in Summerlin will be shared with the Clark County School District on 1.5 acres of land on the new Palo Verde campus. A second CCSN high-tech center at Western High School should also break ground this year.

"This is a Nevada first in educational

enterprise, sharing resources to enhance learning and save tax dollars," said CCSN President Dr. Richard Moore. The Board of Regents, Gov. Bob Miller and the 1997 Legislature supported creation of two \$5 million prototype centers in Southern Nevada after reviewing joint proposals by Moore and Brian Cram, superintendent of the Clark County School District.

"The construction of this center marks the beginning of a new era in partnering between our two public entities," Cram said. "Dr. Moore

and I are committed to meeting the needs of students and members of the community through unique partnerships like this one."

High school students will use 70 percent of the high-tech center during their normal school day, while college students attend evening classes at the center and in the high school complex.

These 33,000 square-foot prototype centers, designed by Tate and Snyder Architects of Henderson, will feature a computer interactive

learning center and four computer labs with over 200 computers, plus 12 academic classrooms. Precision Construction of Las Vegas will build the Palo Verde center. It will open for classes next fall.

"Southern Nevada is America's fastest growing region and a leader in job growth and economic development. These centers and hopefully many more will help fuel educational quality and economic growth for the next quarter century," said Dr. Moore.

## District assists charter school applicants

*Special to Sentinel-Voice*

The Clark County School District moving ahead with establishing charter schools now that legislation allowing their creation has been passed by offering assistance to groups or individuals interested in applying for charter school sponsorship.

Technical assistance is available through the office of Robert McCord, deputy assistant superintendent for educational accountability.

McCord has a variety of resources, including files about charter schools around the country and Internet access to additional information. In addition, McCord is available to respond to questions regarding the charter school law.

Those interested in submitting a charter school application also are invited to leave their name and address with McCord's office so that an application may be sent to them as soon as the packets are available.

The Nevada Department of Education is in the process of

finalizing the state's official charter school application, which is expected to be ready in early 1998.

The district is moving forward with charter schools, even though applications are not yet available, to assist those interested in charter schools with the planning and application process. Research shows that a sufficient planning period is essential to charter school success.

The establishment of charter schools was approved by the Nevada Legislature during the 1997 session. Charter schools are publicly funded but have fewer regulatory controls.

They are part of the public school district but operate under the terms of a charter or contract with a sponsoring agency.

Under the legislation, the district will be allowed up to contract with a sponsoring agency and be allowed up to four charter schools for mainstream students. Up to 21 charter schools are permitted statewide. Unlimited charter schools are allowed for at-risk students.

## Williams College establishes faculty chair honoring poet

*Special to Sentinel-Voice*

WILLIAMSTOWN, MASS. — At a series of events Oct. 24-26, Williams college announced it had established the Sterling A. Brown Professorship to bring to campus distinguished visiting professors who reflect the values and commitments of this 1922 Williams graduate.

"This is a unique moment not just for Williams College and for higher education but for the culture," Cornel West, author of *Race Matters*, said at the black tie gala at Washington's Madison Hotel.

The professorship is supported by a fund of \$1 million raised by the Williams Black Alumni Network and by several of the college's 25th reunion classes.

The first two holders of the chair will be chemist Joseph Francisco of Purdue University and political philosopher Anita Allen of Georgetown University.

Brown's best known volume of poems was *Southern Road* (1932).

Two of Brown's best remembered scholarly books, *The Negro in American Fiction* (1937) and *Negro Poetry and Drama* (1937), made him a founding figure in the field of African-American literary studies, said Wahneema Lubiano, associate professor of literature at Duke University.

Symposium remarks by writer and editor Paula Giddings and Sterling Stuckey, professor of history at the University of California,

Riverside, also focused on Brown's enormous influence as history professor for more than 40 years at Howard University where he affected such students as Kwame Tour and Amire Baraka.

Former students who paid tribute to Brown at the symposium included congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton.

"I am pleased and proud that Williams college has made this Sterling Brown weekend here in Washington, D.C.," she said. "I thank Williams for honoring Sterling Brown and Dunbar High school and for coming to his hometown to do this."

The events' organizers, the Williams black alumni Network and D.C. Regional Association of the Williams College Society of Alumni, launched two community service projects.

On Oct. 24, they held a poetry competition for students at Dunbar High School, Brown's alma mater, named after another great poet, Paul Laurence Dunbar. First Prize of (\$300) went to Christina Martin. Second Prize (\$200) went to Lynette Oliver and third (\$100) to Chaka Okoro.

Anthony Borges and Jessica Perry earned Honorable Mention. Williams alumni are also working with Dunbar faculty and students to develop a site for the school on the World wide Web.

Brown was one of several Dunbar valedictorians of his generation to attend Williams.

Dunbar's most recent valedictorian, Megan C.M. Donovan, is in her first year at Williams.

The festivities closed with an ecumenical service Sunday, Oct. 26, at Howard's Andrew Rankin Memorial Chapel featuring the Williams College gospel Choir and an appreciation of Sterling Brown from poet Lezli Hope, a member of the Williams Class of 1975, and Howard trustee Timothy L. Jenkins.

The first black student at Williams College was Gaius Charles Bolin who arrived on the campus in Williamstown, Mass., in 1885.

The college honored him by establishing in 1955 the Gaius Charles Bolin fellowships, which brings to campus each year two minority graduate students who teach one course and work on finishing their dissertations.

The college's Allison Davis Lecture Residency program brings prominent academics to campus to give public lectures and meet with students.

Brown, Davis, and Logan struggled with being the only black students at the college and they were not even allowed to live in college dorms.

Each, nonetheless, grew to appreciate their time at Williams and particularly the quality of teaching they received.

On a visit to Williams in 1973, Brown discarded the formal speech he had prepared and instead gave a poignant reminiscence entitled "A Son's return: 'O Did'n't He Ramble'" in which he declared, "I learned here to think."

Now nearly one-quarter of the Williams student body are students of color and African Americans play central roles in the college's governance.

## Study: Arts programs improve test scores

*By Robert E. Smith  
Special to Sentinel-Voice*

CHICAGO — Artists, teachers and members of the media recently gathered at the office of Whirlwind, an art-in-education organization focused on improving student language arts and learning skills, to hear the result of a year-long study on how the arts and music can affect education.

Their wait was worth it. The study of Whirlwind's teaching techniques, conducted by 3-D Group, a San Francisco-based consulting group, showed higher reading test scores for fourth-graders enrolled in the new drama-based arts program in Chicago Public Schools.

"The study showed Whirlwind's arts programs are dramatically impacting students' reading skills," said Dale Rose Ph.D., senior consultant with 3-D Group.

"These findings make a profound statement about the potential for arts-based learning in education," Rose said. "They suggest the arts and reading skills are very closely linked."

Taking part in the study were 179 randomly selected students from four Chicago Public Schools.

The Whirlwind program is currently in operation in more than 22 schools citywide. According to the executive director of the program, Karl Androes, Whirlwind hopes to expand its program to reach even more students in years to come.

"The Whirlwind program helps children to facilitate their own learning," said Tom Jackson, one of the artists who has been working with the program for several years. "We use drama to teach reading comprehension."

Advocates for the program say it makes learning more exciting for children. Jackson said it also allows students to work together to solve problems.

As one supporter puts it, "It's problem-solving at its best. The children really seem to get into it."

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