

Local student takes dream trip to Europe

By Shirley Savage-Hampton
Special to Sentinel-Voice

Shavariette Hawkins is a smart, vibrant, articulate, 16-year-old student at Canyon Springs High School. She is a junior with a B average and recently traveled on a dream trip to Europe with the Leadership and Law Preparatory Academy. The "European Heritage" tour was in conjunction with a nonprofit, international, cultural exchange organization, People to People Student Ambassador Program.

Shavariette was the only African-American in her delegation to make the trip.

It was a 20-hour flight to Europe, with the first stop in England.

"Upon landing in London, England, I could not believe I was really there," said Hawkins. "One of the first places that we visited was the Hampton Court Palace — this is where King Henry once resided. I kept looking around trying to take it all in and realizing that I am the first in my family to have traveled out of the country. The farthest I have ever traveled is to Louisiana. I was

also able to ride the world's largest Ferris wheel, it was called the [Eye]."

Hawkins' dedicated and loving-mom, Angela Hawkins, took on a second job to make this experience a reality for her daughter.

"I am so glad that I was able to provide this trip for her. I had some initial concerns, such as terrorism and her being on a flight for such a long time, but I was able to calm down after speaking with her once she arrived..." her mother said.

During her European excursion, the young student traveled to Paris, France, where shopping for perfume and visiting the Eiffel Tower were the things to do. In Belgium, which is famous for their chocolate and lace, she got to try her hand at making both. While in Switzerland, she noticed how the country was mostly a farming community, and Germany, which she said was her favorite, had the best weather. She stayed with her host-family there.

"The Netherlands were just very green; there was nothing exciting about it," she stated.



Photo special to Sentinel-Voice

Shavariette Hawkins atop the Eiffel Tower in Paris, France.

Shavariette Hawkins, who is a member of the famous Gospel singer Tramaine Hawkins' family, stated that she keeps in contact with her host family's daughter via e-mail.

When asked what differences she noted in European culture versus the U.S. culture, Shavariette stated:

"The Europeans are more laid back, they don't seem to always have someplace to go, [we in the U.S.], on the other hand, always seem to be rushed and looking for the

next thing to do or place to go. I also loved their food. It was much better and fresher than our food here. I also noticed that they were very fashionable. They wore some of the same things that we do here, but they were just worn differently."

She continued, "They seemed to do lots of layering of their clothes: dresses, worn over pants with a colorful top underneath the dress, and lots of colorful jewelry. Their clothing was full of colors. The people just

seemed very happy. I did notice that the French were not particularly nice once they realized we were Americans. I attribute this to the [Iraq] war, which they were not in favor of us [USA] pursuing."

She said that her most memorable experiences were when she milked a cow while visiting Switzerland and being a part of a project called Clean a River. She and the others participated in helping the environmental work project while visiting in Germany.

She recalls that "it was a really gross experience."

The student traveler shared what she learned overall.

"I gained a real sense of independence and understanding beyond my usual boundaries. I also learned how to keep up with my own things. I am looking forward to applying the things that I learned on my trip to my life here in Vegas."

She thanks "God and her family" for making this trip possible.

She added, "I am now able to show more responsibility at home, and I am more

laid back and not always rushing to get somewhere. Now, when my friends call to see if I want to go to the mall or just go someplace, I am okay with just saying no and remaining at home and being content."

After high school, she is looking forward to attending college at either Florida A&M, Grambling, Howard or Clark University. She says that doing well in school gives her many options.

Shavariette Hawkins described herself as an outgoing, family-oriented person, who loves dancing and singing. She would like to apply all that she gains from school, life and her European adventure toward getting a law degree.

Her career preparation is already underway with her participation in the Leadership and Law Academy program at Canyon Springs High School. It provides students with an opportunity to understand the basis behind the American legal system, how to read and discuss the law and how they can become leaders in their local and global communities.

Andrew Young to speak in foundation's lecture series

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The Anthony L. Pollard Foundation presents a lecture by former UN Ambassador Andrew Young at 6 p.m. on Sat., Sept. 22, at Doc Rando Hall at Lee and Thomas Beam Music Center on the University of Nevada, Las Vegas campus.

The guest speaker, famed civil rights activist and former mayor of Atlanta, Young is chairman of Good Works International, an Atlanta-based specialty consulting group providing global-scale strategic services to corporations and governments.

Dr. Anthony Pollard, the foundation's namesake, established it in 1990 primarily to provide scholarships to disadvantaged high school students. Since inception, it has hosted and sponsored a number of education-oriented events locally.

The foundation will have a series of lectures throughout the year. The next speaker is tentatively Dick Gregory, comedian and civil rights activist highly regarded as "a drum major for justice and

equality."

The upcoming featured lecture host, Young, got his early activism training and experience as a top aide to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. during the Civil Rights Movement and serving as vice-president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference.

Young served three terms in the U.S. Congress from the 5th district of Georgia. In 1977, President Jimmy Carter named him Ambassador to the United Nations.

He served two terms as Atlanta's mayor. Young is an ordained minister in the United Church of Christ.

Lecture proceeds support the foundation's local programs.

The foundation has recently opened the Rainbow Dreams Academy, a charter school for grades K-2 initially. The academy was birthed out of an after-school and summer activity program formerly known as The Academy of African-American (See Foundation, Page 3)

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