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ST. PETERSBURG, FLORIDA

Quantum Students Ace Dr. Mac Williams Awards

BY DR. YVONNE
SCRUGGS-LEFTWICH
SPECIAL TO THE WEEKLY
CHALLENGER

ST. PETERSBURG - For two years running, more than one-third of the 30 high school students who are CCEJ-Quantum Opportunities program participants, called Quantum Associates, have been honored for their high grade point averages at the Annual Dr. Mac J. Williams Academic Excellence Awards program. The eleven Quantum Associates are members of a national Milton S. Eisenhower Foundation and U. S. Justice Department funded afterschool academic and social enrichment program. Known as CCEJ-Quantum in St. Petersburg, it is

operated by the non-profit Center for Community and Economic Justice Corporation and is the only one of seven such national programs located in the state of Florida.

The Dr. Mac J. Williams, Sr. Awards program, created in memory of the iconic educational leader and world ambassador, has been held each fall at the Palladian at St. Petersburg College. This year the program attracted a standing-room only audience. Many parents of the honorees and extended family members were present.

The Quantum Associates who are becoming permanent Dr. Mac J. Williams, scholars are: Dominique Smith, Quanishia Bethune, Antonio Bogans, Jessica Faulk, Roneisha Gibson, Tajon Hinds,



Photographs courtesy of Kelley Collier

Dr. Yvonne Scruggs-Leftwich, center, stands with student displaying a sample of their posters.

Tiana Hinton, Tyrone Darion Johnson, Lauren Lord and Gabrielle Robinson and Dietrick Fowler. These students have maintained at least a 3.0 grade point average over the

high school years, and Dominique Smith has a 4.0 average at Collegiate as well.

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QUANTUM

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In addition to their academic responsibilities, they have designed sets and operated sound and light controls for a number of theatrical productions in the area, including St. Petersburg High School, the St. Petersburg City Theater and the Katherine Hickman Theater in Gulfport. Quantum associate Harold Wilson, a St. Pete High junior, has been inducted into the local chapter of the National Thespians Association.

Christopher Schofield was promoted from Private to Staff Sergeant in the Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps (JROTC) at Gibbs High School. Edwin Gonzalez is one of the "5000 Role Models" members and a founder of a bi-lingual support group called Night of Culture at St. Pete High.

Delilah Vargas this year became a reporter for the St. Pete High newspaper, and William Farmer, also a St. Pete High student, has decided that his considerable mathematical talents will support his college enrollment before he joins the military, his ultimate goal. Associate Lauren Lord was elected to the presidency of her sophomore class and Rashawn McCullum is one of several Quantum members of the pre-college Kappa Alpha Psi fraternity league.

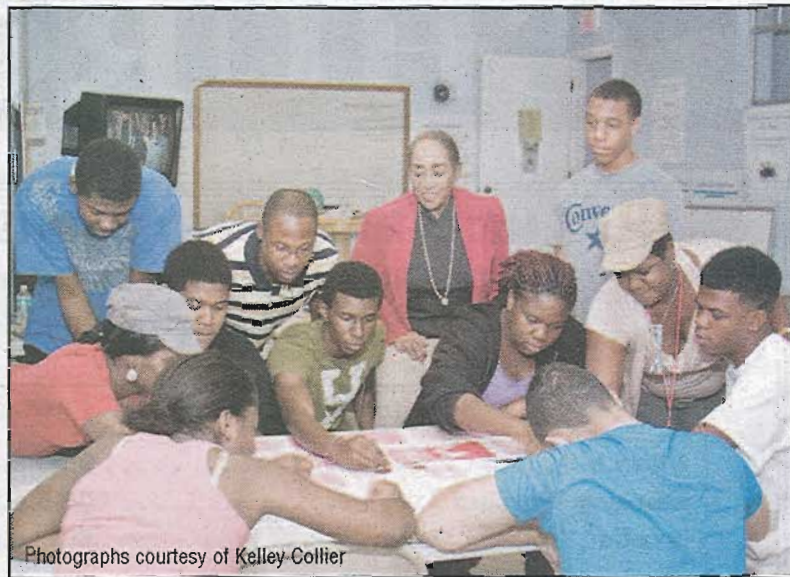
The civic engagement project which they are launching this month shows insight, maturity and thoughtful leadership. CCEJ-

Quantum Associates and staff have designed and begun an anti-bullying, anti-hate project called, "IT'S O.K. 2 B U." Following the creative guidance of the Quantum Coordinator, Ms. Jennifer Hills-Wheeler, the slogan "IT'S O. K. 2 B U" is emblazoned on 3 inch lapel buttons, and captures the sense of fairness, tolerance and positive leadership reflected in the pledge which they are asking their peers at school to sign.

Graphic artist Anthony Munnerlyn, actor Jaylen Johnson, performance artist and composer Khalil Ware, and their other Quantum colleagues, Chynel Lavine, Nicholas Oliveros and Tajon Hinds, have developed an over-sized wall poster to telegraph the impact of the anti-bullying and anti-hate message of the project. The associates plan also to include two Middle Schools in the initiative.

The objectives of the C C E J - Q u a n t u m Opportunities program are to expand the experiences and the academic potential and achievement of the associates through tutoring and mentor-coaching in leadership, critical thinking, civic engagement, healthy eating and law-abiding behaviors, and multi-cultural advancement.

The founders and operators of CCEJ-Quantum in St. Petersburg are Rev. Edward V. Leftwich (Chair/President-Emeritus) and Dr. Yvonne Scruggs-Leftwich, President-CEO and Principle Investigator. See more on the website: www.ccejquantum.org.



Photographs courtesy of Kelley Collier

Students work on making posters



Dr. Yvonne Scruggs-Leftwich, center, stands with student displaying a sample of their posters



Students display a poster while others make lapel buttons that have the slogan "It's OK 2 B U"