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BDPF Newsletter

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Congressman Cummings Was Banquet Speaker

The featured speaker at BDPF's 2005 annual banquet was the Honorable Elijah Cummings. The Congressman from 7th Congressional District of Maryland delivered a powerful message. Calling upon his own public school experiences, he showed how we often unfairly stereotype and track students based on our own prejudices. He shared with the audience the heartache of having been placed in special education because "I talked too much." And then, he emphasized the urgent need for youth to have adults support and encourage them when he related how, over a period of several years, his mother challenged his unfair placement. Although he is now a well-trained attorney, Congressman Cummings' dream of becoming a lawyer would not have come true without his supportive mother. She unflinchingly expressed the belief that her son could overcome the many obstacles he faced.

The Congressman encouraged everyone to be advocates for our children and schools. He praised Dr. Rose Wilder, Superintendent of Clarendon School District One, for her advocacy and her commitment to provide the very best educational opportunities for students in the District.

MAKE PLANS NOW FOR 2006 BANQUET

BDPF's 2006 BANQUET is set for Saturday, June 10, 2006. The Banquet Committee is working to make this the best banquet yet. We guarantee our speaker will bring a helpful and inspiring message. To make the banquet a success, all we need is you.

BDPF needs YOUR support.

Foundation Receives Small Grant from Verizon

The Verizon Foundation has awarded BDPF a small grant to help fund a Community Literacy and Educational Achievement Program. The program addresses the needs of parents for more information about how to be active partners in the educational process, and for frequent reinforcement of this information. These needs were identified by the parents themselves during a Parent Conference. The grant will serve as seed money for BDPF to begin the program. With additional funds, it can help make literacy in a local reality, and help build the self-confidence necessary for community members to effectuate change.

**BDPF IS AN ALL VOLUNTEER PUBLIC CHARITY,
SUPPORTED ENTIRELY BY GIFTS.**

Tutorial/Enrichment Program Has Great Start

The 2005-06 Tutorial/Enrichment Program is off to a great start. Within a short time after this year's session began, more than 40 students were enrolled. The BDPF Center has also become a regular stop on the school bus route. This facilitates participant attendance and, unlike last school year, most enrollees are present at regularly.

The Center is bursting at the seams with students and tutors. During the past summer also, the demand for academic enrichment services strained our resources and facilities and the Center was barely able to accommodate all of the children in the Enrichment Program.



Left: Tutor Luetina Ragin (BDPF Board) and Enrichment Program participants. Right: The BDPF Center on Gov. Richardson Road.

Land Acquired, Building Funds Needed

To better serve the Clarendon County area, BDPF has purchased a small lot where a modest facility will be constructed. This building will house the Foundation and its programs. Our Center is currently and temporarily located in a small building (less than 900 square feet) loaned to us by Mrs. Geneva Finney. BDPF's needs for additional space and for a more permanent arrangement are URGENT. Now that we have acquired land, we must raise money for a building. To make your donation, you may use the enclosed form .

Question: Why Doesn't BDPF Use District One's School Buildings For Its Programs?

Partial answer:

- School District One is cooperative and accommodating but it does have to work within its budget and legal limitations.
- District facilities cannot always be available at the times needed by BDPF programs.
- BDPF would not be able to ensure "on-demand" access to its equipment and materials.
- Custodial services would be legally, financially and logistically complicated, as well as an added expense.
- School Supervisory Personnel would have to be paid.

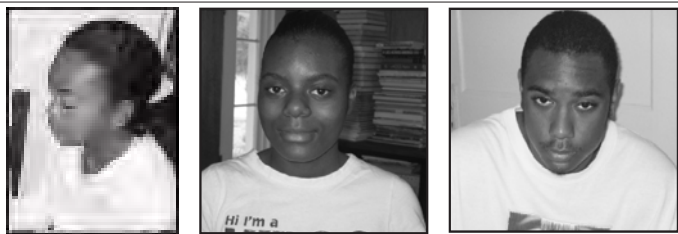
DEEPEST SYMPATHY

Our sympathy and prayers are extended to Volunteer Tutor Ella Johnson on the untimely passing of her husband in August.

Generous Donation Received From Garbee Family

BDPF acknowledges with gratitude a generous gift from the Garbee Family. These funds came not a moment too soon. They have already been used to order much needed equipment for the Tutorial/Enrichment Program.

BDPF Congratulates Its Youth Volunteers



BDPF's Summer Youth Volunteers: Left to Right: Beatrice Brown, Latavia Ragin, Quenton Blanding.

Last summer, BDPF was lucky to have three exceptional youth volunteers. Ranging in age from 11 to 18, these talented individuals were valuable contributors in the summer Tutorial/Enrichment Program.

The youngest volunteer was **Beatrice Brown**, a rising sixth grade student at Alice Drive Middle School in Sumter, SC. Beatrice served as a reading tutor. Her major contribution was giving one-on-one assistance to a girl of her own age.

Latavia Ragin worked with the primary school class, providing individual assistance to students as necessary. Latavia, a twelfth grade student at Scott's Branch High School, was a diligent and dependable worker.

Quenton Blanding graduated in May 2005 from Scott's Branch High School. His primary duty was to provide math assistance to older intermediate school students. Quenton is now enrolled in college. He plans to become a music teacher.

These three young people demonstrated a mature sense of responsibility as they went about their tasks of helping others. We owe them a debt of gratitude.

The BDPF Board of Directors congratulates these three young people for their achievements and their willingness to give back to their community. We wish them well and hope their example will inspire others to become involved in improving the Clarendon County Community.



Scenes from BDPF-sponsored 2005 Summer Science Camp held at Scott's Branch Intermediate School and directed by Dr. Ophelia De Laine Gona. Left to Right: LaNitra Bennett, Iesha James, Dr. Mary Cantey (Volunteer Physician from New Jersey Medical School), B.B. De Laine (BDPF Board) and Bradley Briggs.

"Sew What" Incorporates

Sew What, Limited, is a new co-operative group established as the result of BDPF's efforts. Although our major focus is on education, the organization's mission includes facilitating the economic well-being of community members. Because of this part of our mission, two years ago we submitted a grant proposal to establish a sewing co-operative which would provide jobs for some Clarendon County women. The proposal was not funded, but it did attract the attention of Debbie Turbeville, a Rural Co-operative Specialist at the US Department of Agriculture.

As a result of Ms. Turbeville's interest and nurturing, the idea did not die and the proposed project is becoming a reality. In October, the new business venture was incorporated and named *Sew What, Limited* by the founding members. Unfortunately, before production of goods can actually begin, the women need financial assistance. They must acquire sewing machines and materials, as well as brush up on their sewing skills. Fortunately, representatives from the Small Business Administration are helping the women explore ways of achieving their goal of becoming economically independent.

In view of the interest and persistence these women have already shown, we are confident they will succeed in establishing a viable business industry. Therefore, even though our Center is already bursting at the seams, BDPF has pledged to provide space for the women's sewing lessons and office space for them.

So What?

So, YOU can help make a difference in the lives of the Sew What women and those of the children of Clarendon County by making your donation to the BDPF building fund.

***** BE * A * STAR *****

JOIN * THE * BDPF * SUPPORT * TEAM

Use the enclosed donation card and envelope to send BDPF your critically needed and fully tax deductible gift. All donations are appreciated, no matter how small or how large. Funds are used solely to provide services to citizens of Clarendon County.

PLEASE HELP!