Students were guided through a journey of self-knowledge, in which they found out that their ancestors invented math, pioneered science, and discovered the laws underpinning the universe. They learned about the Ancient Egyptians, and their innovations in algebra and geometry. African-American contributions in astronomy, math, and scientific inventions were also studied.

Students were divided into cooperative learning groups, called Nubians and Yoruba, prominent African empires. The Nubian (ancient Ethiopia) empire emerged along the Nile Valley long before ancient Egypt, and gave rise to African and world civilization. The Yoruba were a dominant empire in West Africa (Nigeria), and their religion is still prominent in Brazil and Cuba. We challenged them: “What can you do to honor your ancestors and improve the Black community?”

In this pilot study, 115 students were provided an intensive and interactive learning experience, with the goals of: (1) enhancing learning readiness; (2) increasing math skills proficiency; (3) and increasing science proficiency.

Approximately thirty-five students were recruited for three discrete sessions. Primary program sessions were held during the spring and fall semesters, comprising about four months whereby students received in-depth instruction. Then a one-month summer session took place, where students received condensed instruction; and field trips complemented the classroom learning.

An integral part of the project was providing monthly progress reports to parents. Once math skills were assessed, the staff worked with the students to build self-esteem and increase confidence in their academic capabilities. Parents received a college learning plan to monitor academic progress during high school matriculation.

At the opening ceremony, parents, students, teachers, and partners from the Toyota USA Foundation, CSUN School of Social and Behavioral Sciences, Pan African Studies Dept., CSUN Office of Development, DuBois-Hamer Institute, college students, and newly assembled Project PYRAMID staff gathered to launch this innovative Afrocentric program. Designed to connect students to African cultural heritage—this framework also promoted empowerment. We were treated to an energetic performance by Fantasia, an Inglewood African dance troop. The community audience cheered during a special moment when Tracy Underwood, from the Toyota USA Foundation (and a CSUN alum), re-issued the $130K check Dr. Rehema Gray, Director of Project PYRAMID. Mr. Sirls, principal of Warren Lane welcomed “this first ever” program on behalf of the Inglewood Unified School District. The program ended with a tour of the “circle of learning” stations.
Upon entry into the “circle of learning,” the Nubians and Yoruba groups moved from station to station on a journey into the discovery of self-knowledge. African legacy in math and science was the foundation for the curriculum at each station.

**Achievement Values Training Station** [Know Thyself]

**Activities—** African heritage training & life planning

**Teaching (Math) Station** [Pyramid-Building]

**Activities—** Math problems & internet exercises

**Academic Reinforcement Station** [Know Thyself]

**Activities—** Solar system observation & experiments

**Academic Reinforcement Station** [Reach For the Stars]

**Activities—** Math reasoning through arts & crafts

**Academic Reinforcement Station** [African Marketplace]

**Activities—** African heritage training & life planning

**Academic Reinforcement Station** [African Marketplace]

Immersed in a learning space with vibrant red, black, and green liberation colors, students began their sessions in this culturally aesthetic environment. Each day began with students taking turns as class leaders reciting the mantra “If I believe, I can achieve.” These rituals were designed to counteract problems from eurocentric bias in the history of mathematics, math anxiety and underachievement, scarcity of math/science college majors, and omission about the African origins of math and science. At the end of the program sessions the program staff witnessed student transformation of self-esteem and math skill levels.

**On the Move Across the City… Experiential Learning**

Field trips were an important part of the curriculum and enhanced the academic experience. They brought another aspect to the “circle of learning” for the students. During the summer and fall sessions the students visited:

- **California State University Northridge** (Office of Admissions and the Black House) Summer session students were provided with an in-depth orientation regarding college admissions and toured the campus. African-American CSUN graduate students shared their pre-college and college experiences at the Black House (a facility provided through the Pan African Studies Department). Summer and Fall session students viewed “Taking Flight,” an exhibit of African-American pilots and aeronautics inventions which explored the wonder of flight, and reinforced scientific contributions of African people. Students also enjoyed the **Santa Monica Pier’s** beach amusement park and spectacular ocean view.

- **California Science Center** provided the Summer session students with a glimpse into the math timeline, which was a featured exhibit, noticeably omitted were African mathematicians. This exhibit created a real-life lesson in illustrating the neglect of African contributions. Summer and Fall session students viewed “Taking Flight,” an exhibit of African-American pilots and aeronautics inventions which explored the wonder of flight, and reinforced scientific contributions of African people. Students also enjoyed the array of interactive games and toys, such as the high wire bicycle.

**About the Curriculum**…Curricular lessons, program activities, teaching strategies, and assessment techniques were based on the fusion of affective and cognitive intervention strategies. Affective issues, which included such psycho-social elements as feelings of intimidation by the prospect of learning math were dealt with on an individual and contextual basis. We sought to demystify the experience of acquiring math skills, build a positive self-concept, and instill achievement motivation by study bibliographic lessons of Africans and African-Americans in math and science. In addressing this affective dimension we wanted to deal with feelings of intimidation by the prospect of learning math were dealt with on an individual and contextual basis. We sought to demystify the experience of acquiring math skills, build a positive self-concept, and instill achievement motivation by study bibliographic lessons of Africans and African-Americans in math and science. African roots of mathematics are fundamental, yet neglected in the math curricula at the pre-college and college levels. This omission has influenced educational performance and aspirations of African-American students. A 1990 study by the Children’s Defense Fund revealed that a Black male had 1 in 4,000 chances of receiving a Ph.D. in math/science. Even more glaring was that a Black female had merely 1 in 21,000 chances of attaining this degree!

Administrating this program from the university level exposed middle school students to college professors through personal interaction. By empowering students and parents, we strove to cultivate long-range college preparatory achievement strategies— in order to increase the percentage of African-Americans competitively eligible for higher education and students pursuing math/science careers.
A MESSAGE TO PARENTS & FAMILIES

FROM THE PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE...

Project PYRAMID at Warren Lane

Project PYRAMID was an excellent program at Warren Lane. The program focused on enhancing math and science proficiency. The program used an Afro-centric academic curriculum to enrich students' academic skills while enriching their knowledge of African history. The students of Warren Lane flourished in this program. Parents, teachers, and students were excited about the activities in Project PYRAMID. The students experienced exciting field trips. Visiting California State University, Northridge was an excellent fieldtrip. Students were exposed to role models, and encouraged to plan ahead for a successful future.

Parents were encouraged to participate in all activities as co-teachers and nurturers at home. Student success is greater if support is offered at home and school. Parents, teachers, and students were upset to see the program end at Warren Lane. It was truly an asset to have experienced Project PYRAMID. The students were given a gift of caring, encouraging, teacher/role models in the program. Thank you for providing this program for our students.

Mr. Ugene Hosea-James - Assistant Principal
Mr. Reginald Sirls - Principal

(Continued on page 4)

PROJECT PYRAMID:
A COLLEGE PREPARATORY PROGRAM

Note to parents: Project PYRAMID was an early outreach college preparatory program. All students who received certificates or public recognition for participating in Project PYRAMID may cite this experience as relevant extracurricular credit towards prospective college admissions. Congratulations to all students who participated, and a special commendation to all those that received awards!

COMMUNITY SERVICE
COMMEMORATION TROPHY
Angela Holcomb  Aysia Rowe

SPRING SESSION AWARDS

OVERALL OUTSTANDING STUDENTS
Angela Holcomb  Aysia Rowe

DEDICATION TO EXCELLENCE
Ashley Armstrong  Aysia Rowe
Angela Holcomb  Ashley Shigg

MATH ACHIEVEMENT
Ashley Armstrong  Devoines Green
Perry Davis  Angela Holcomb
Aysia Rowe

HONORABLE MENTION
Alice Bridgewater  Lauren Brown
Shakari Clemons  Shelloney Hilton
Zaakiyah Clemons

What Parents Should Know About the “High School Exit Exam*”
(*The CA State Board of Education will vote to postpone this exam until 2006.)

Q: What is the HSEE?
A: Beginning in 2006 graduating seniors may have to pass it to graduate from high school.

Q: Who will have to take it?
A: All students in the 10th grade were to take it in 2002.

Q: Must students with exceptional needs take it?
A: Yes

Q: How can parents and guardians help their children prepare for it?
A: Here are a few pointers.
- The exam is controversial due to the high failure rate & inadequate preparation.
- Review all school work
- Monitor this debate
- Review HSEE sample test materials

Q: What will the language arts section cover?
A: The test consists of multiple choice and two essay questions.

Q: What about the math?
A: The math section addresses CA standards through Algebra 1. It includes statistics, data analysis and probability, number sense, measurement and geometry, mathematical reasoning, and algebra.

Parents as Partners With The “Partnership Act”
The “Partnership Act” is a California law that allows parents, grandparents, and guardians to take time off from work to participate in your child’s school activities. This law allows you vacation time, personal leave, or compensatory time for your child’s educational needs. You may take off up to 40 hours each year to participate in your child’s school affairs. The employee chooses the options. Then the law instructs families to let their employers know in adequate time. If your employer has 25 or more employees, he/she does not have the right to refuse your request.

Minimally Eligible Requirements
Competitively Eligible Requirements

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“There are a people, now forgotten, who have not been side-struck by the elements of the arts and sciences. A race of men, now ejected from society for their sable skin and frizzled hair, founded on the study of the laws of nature, civil and religious systems which still govern the universe.”

(Count Volney, The Ruins of Empires)