



HIGHER ACHIEVEMENT

Where **talent** meets **opportunity.**

Higher Achievement's proven afterschool program offers 5th-8th grade scholars rigorous academic enrichment, caring mentors, and social-emotional skill-building, resulting in a successful transition from middle school to high school and beyond.



ACADEMIC ENRICHMENT

Higher Achievement's academic enrichment sharpens scholars' reading, critical thinking, writing, and presentation skills, and gives scholars time to complete their homework.



SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL SUPPORT

Discussions, games, and activities grounded in social justice principles promote the development of social-emotional skills. Scholars identify their strengths and build confidence in their abilities.



HIGH SCHOOL READINESS

Scholars work with a mentor weekly to define and pursue their goals, gain awareness of high school, college, and career options, and take steps to access those options.

EVIDENCE-BASED APPROACH

Higher Achievement has been the subject of two randomized controlled trial studies, both demonstrating a statistically significant effect in academics.

Only 2% of nonprofit organizations have undergone RCTs, and, of those, only 10% have positive results.





higherachievement.org/donate



higherachievement.org/volunteer

-JORDAN,
HIGHER ACHIEVEMENT
SCHOLAR



1975 - 1984

FOUNDED IN 1975

50 years ago, Higher Achievement founder Greg Gannon saw greatness in the students in his community. At the same time, he recognized the challenges they faced in accessing opportunities that would advance their dreams.

He believed that all students deserve access to rigorous academic opportunities and support. That belief didn't just remain a dream; it became a transformative reality that has shaped countless lives.

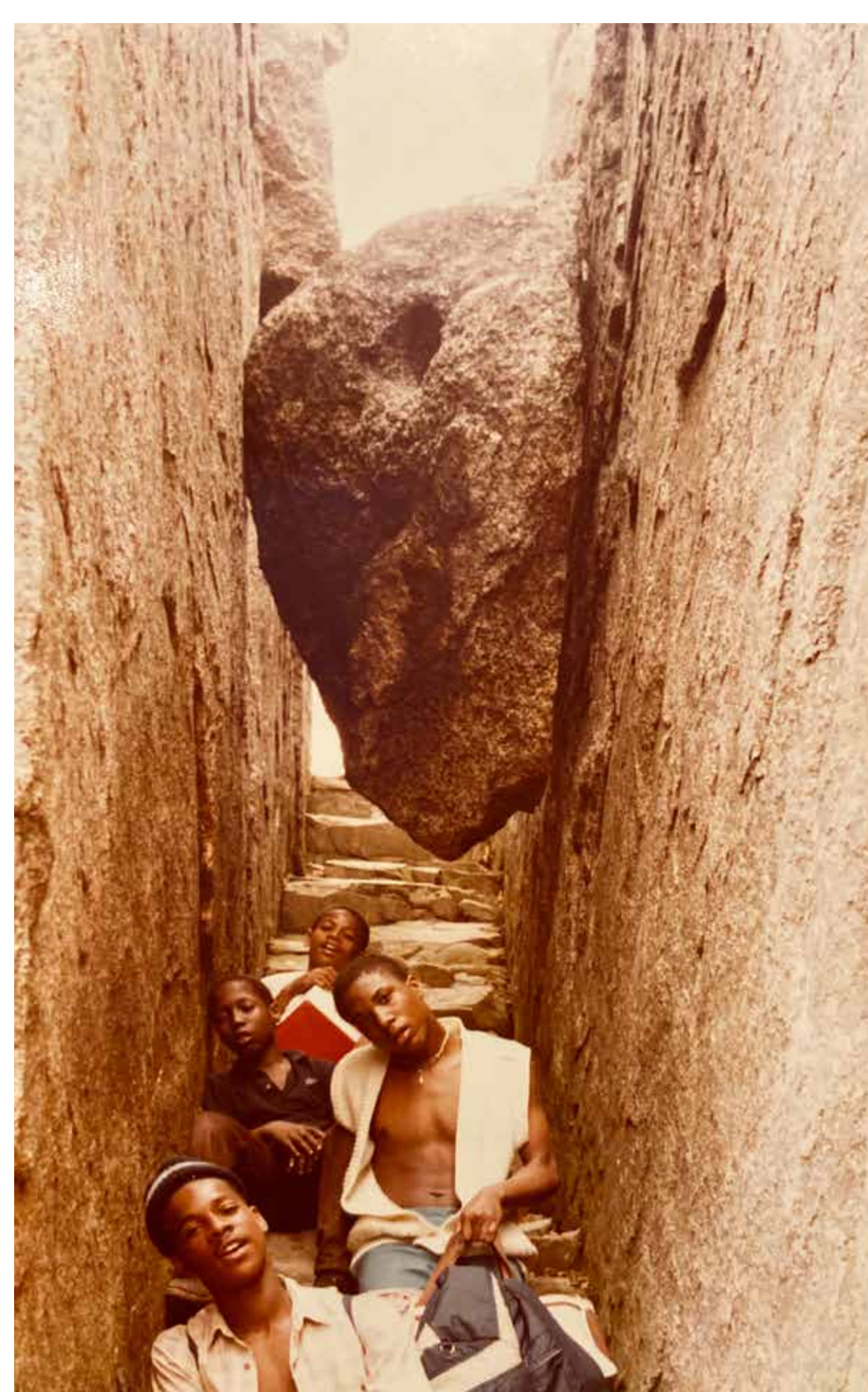
Greg's passion brought together dedicated educators and community leaders to form Higher Achievement—a program that has since become a beacon of opportunity for thousands of middle school students across the DC region, Baltimore, and Richmond.



It's a world of results, not of intentions.

"Our dad was a doer. He was always pushing to the finish line, getting things done. He never liked when one of us said we would "try" to do something. He expected full commitment, and he held himself to the highest standard in that regard; he wasn't afraid to hold others to it as well. He created a culture of doing and of self-sacrifice, of giving of yourself to the maximum extent—not with an air of resentment or of martyrdom—but with a sense of purpose, and moreover, of JOY."

-Katie Gannon, pictured right with her dad, Greg Gannon, and her sisters Colleen, Megan and Margi



FIELD TRIPS

Scholars enjoyed numerous field trips as part of their participation in Higher Achievement, including to the Old Rag trail in Shenandoah National Park, the U.S. Capitol, the National Zoo, and the Washington Post.

VOLUNTEERS

Higher Achievement's mission would not be possible without the tireless support of dedicated volunteers who support scholars' dreams and ambitions.



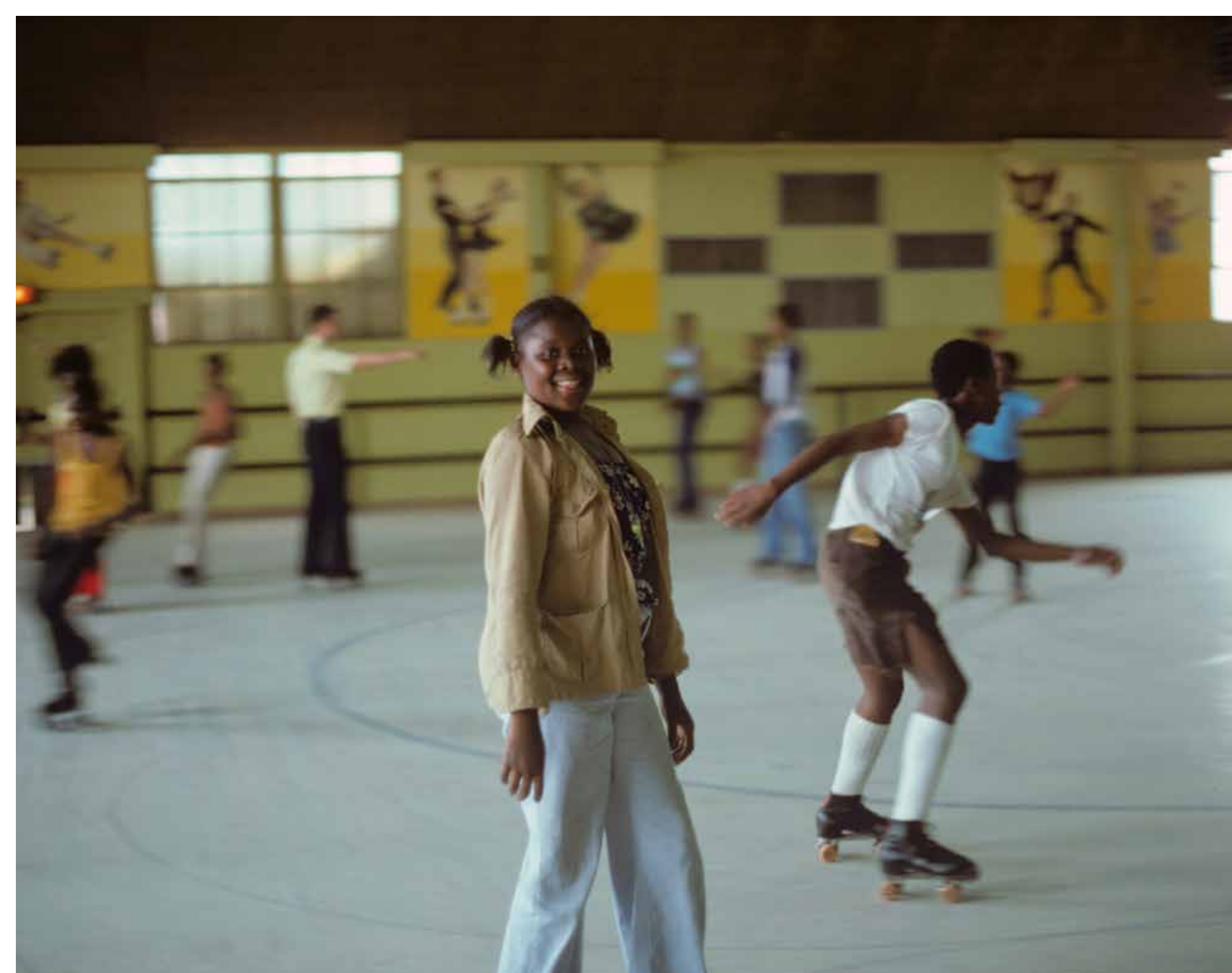
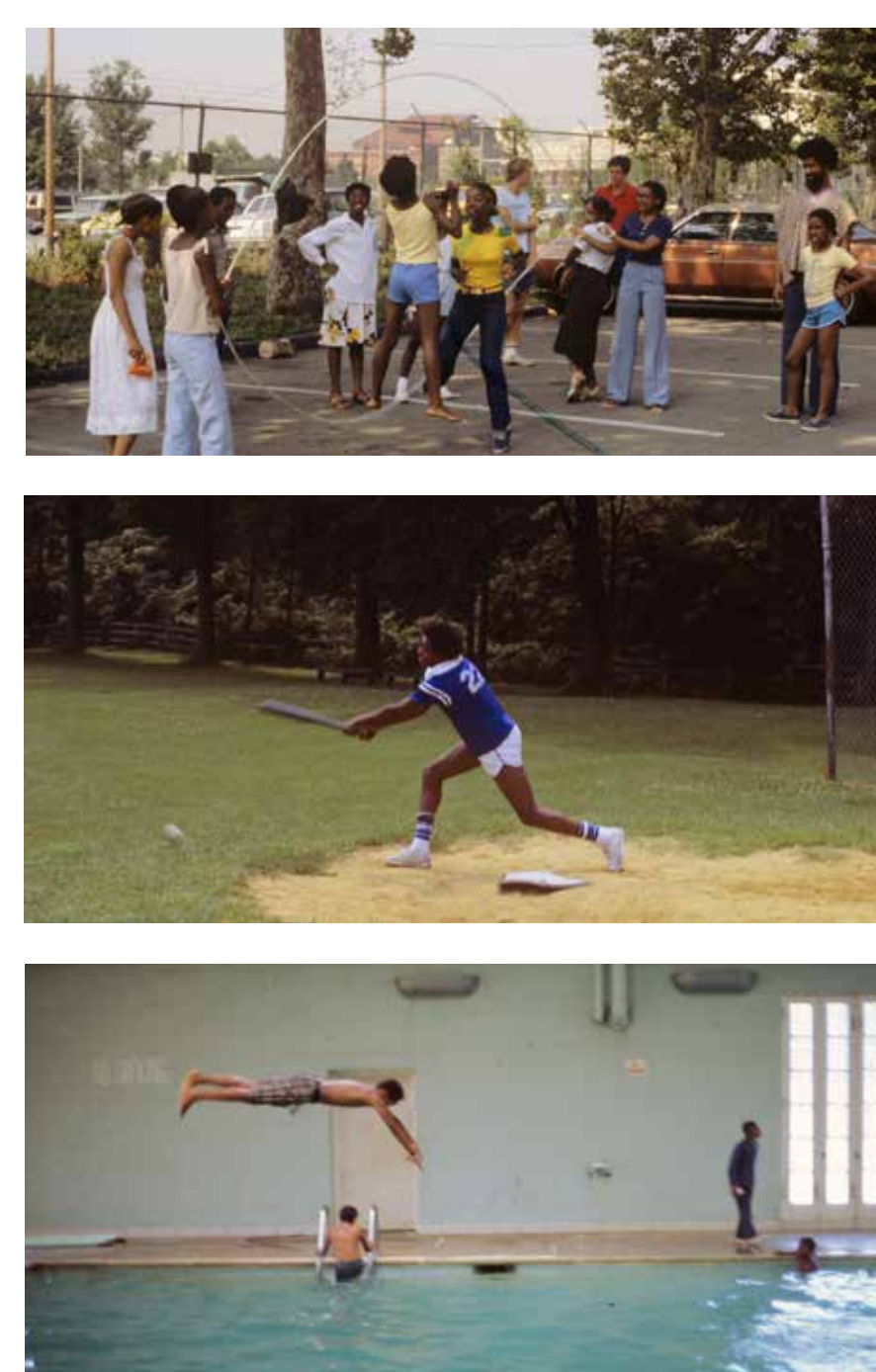
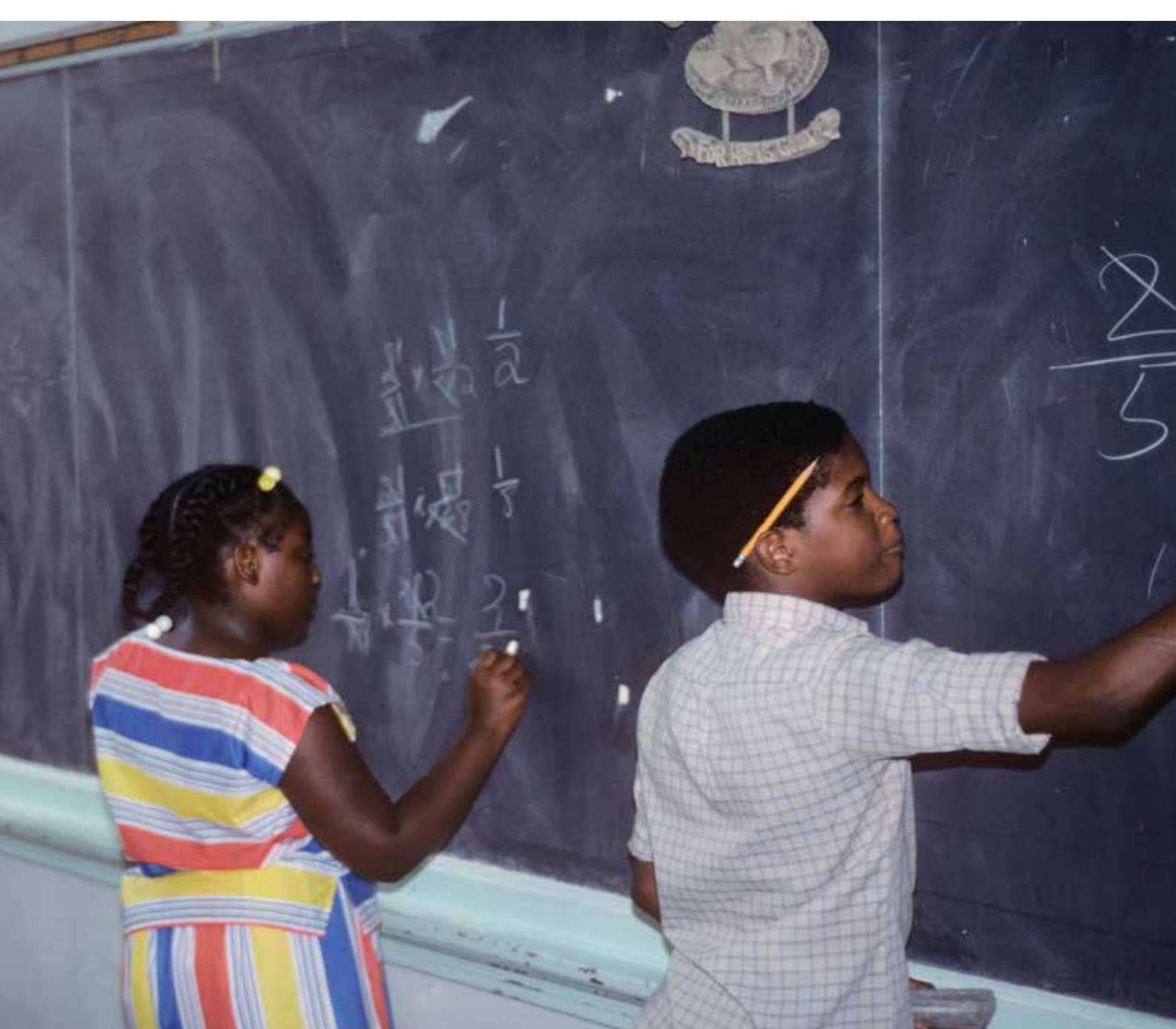
Greg Gannon (bottom) and the first six Jesuit volunteers who worked and taught at HAP (R to L up the stairs): Joe Dempsey, Pete Buzaid, Pat Holmes, Jim Kemple, Dan Cotter, and John Niggemeyer



HAP Summer Center Faculty and Staff - 1980

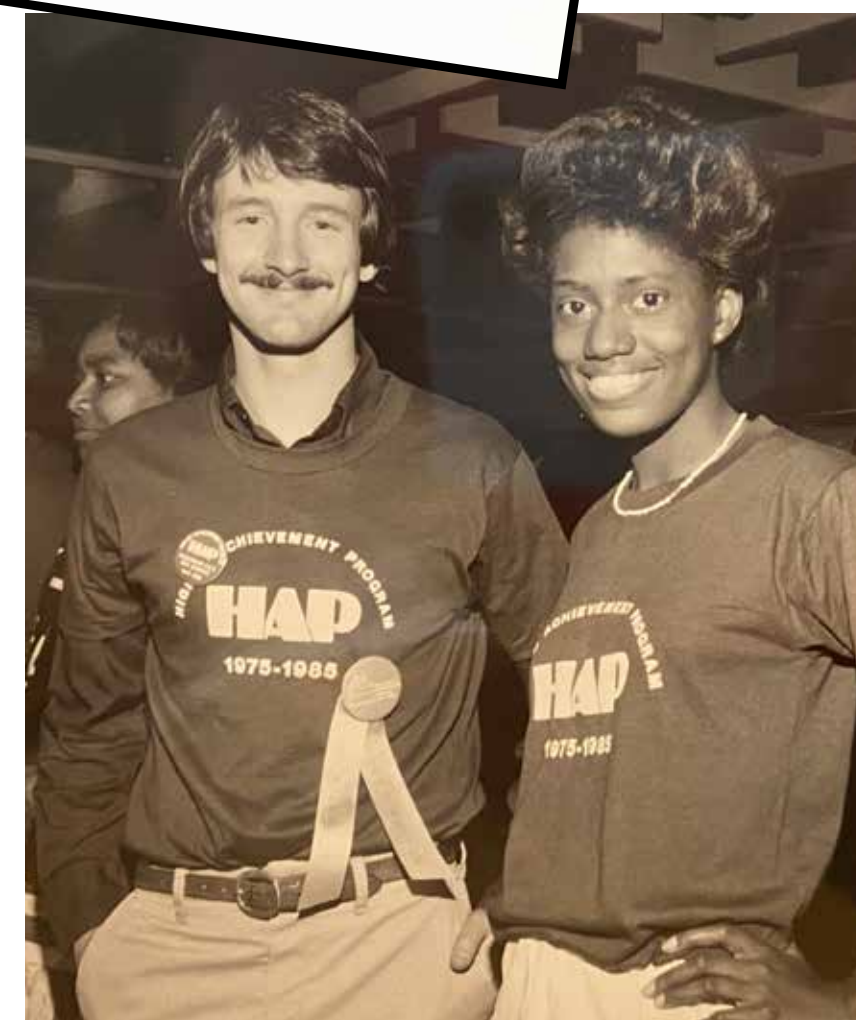
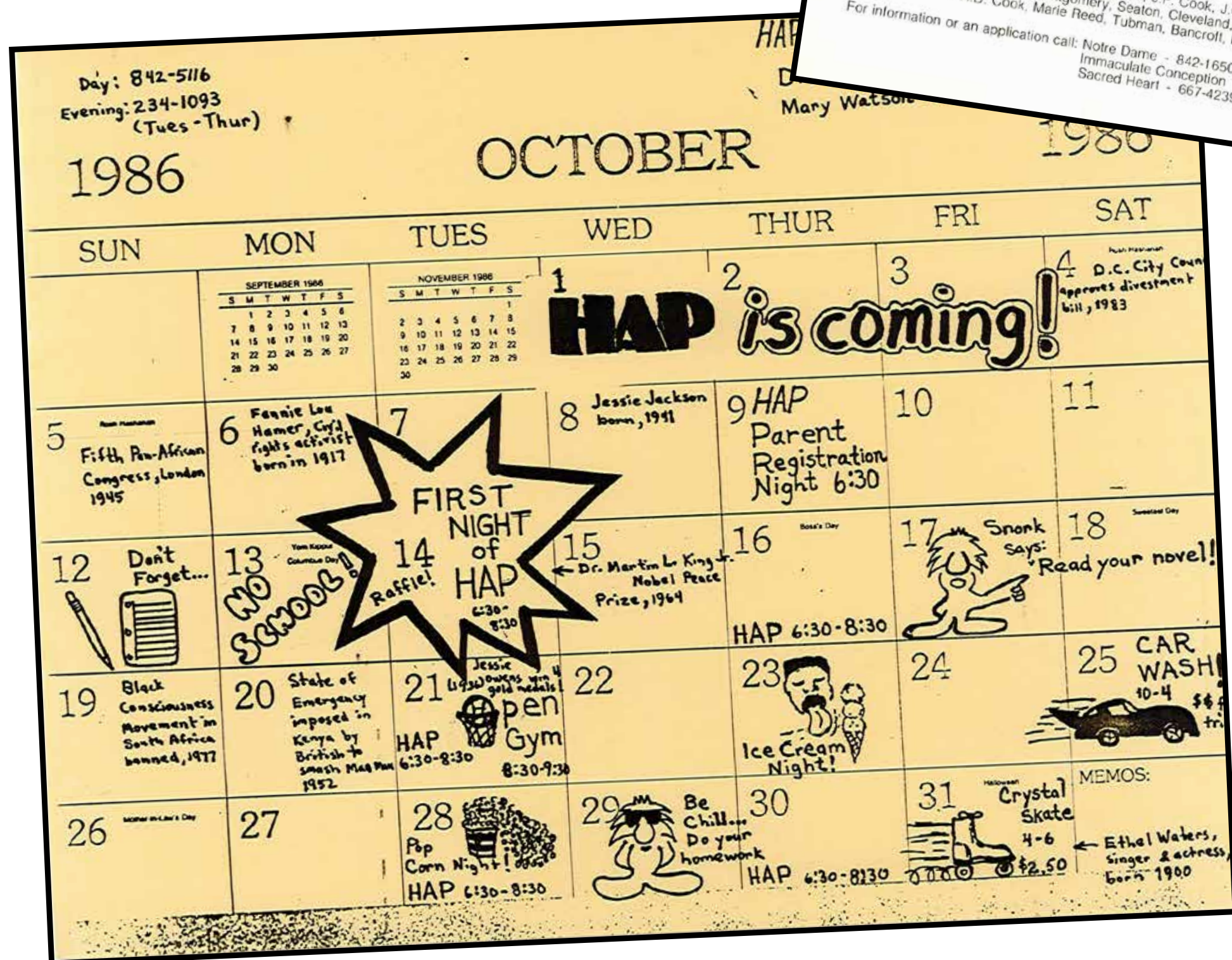
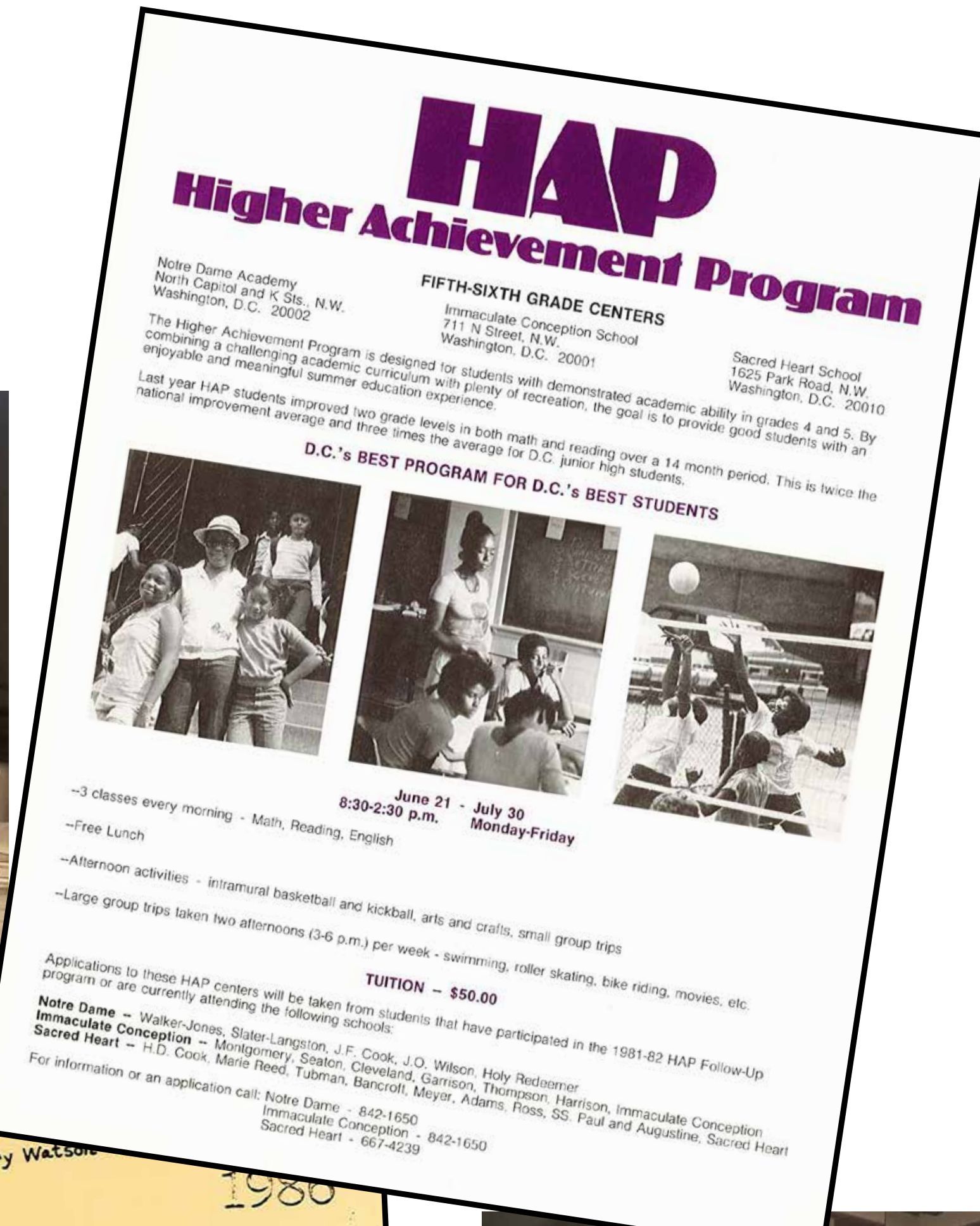
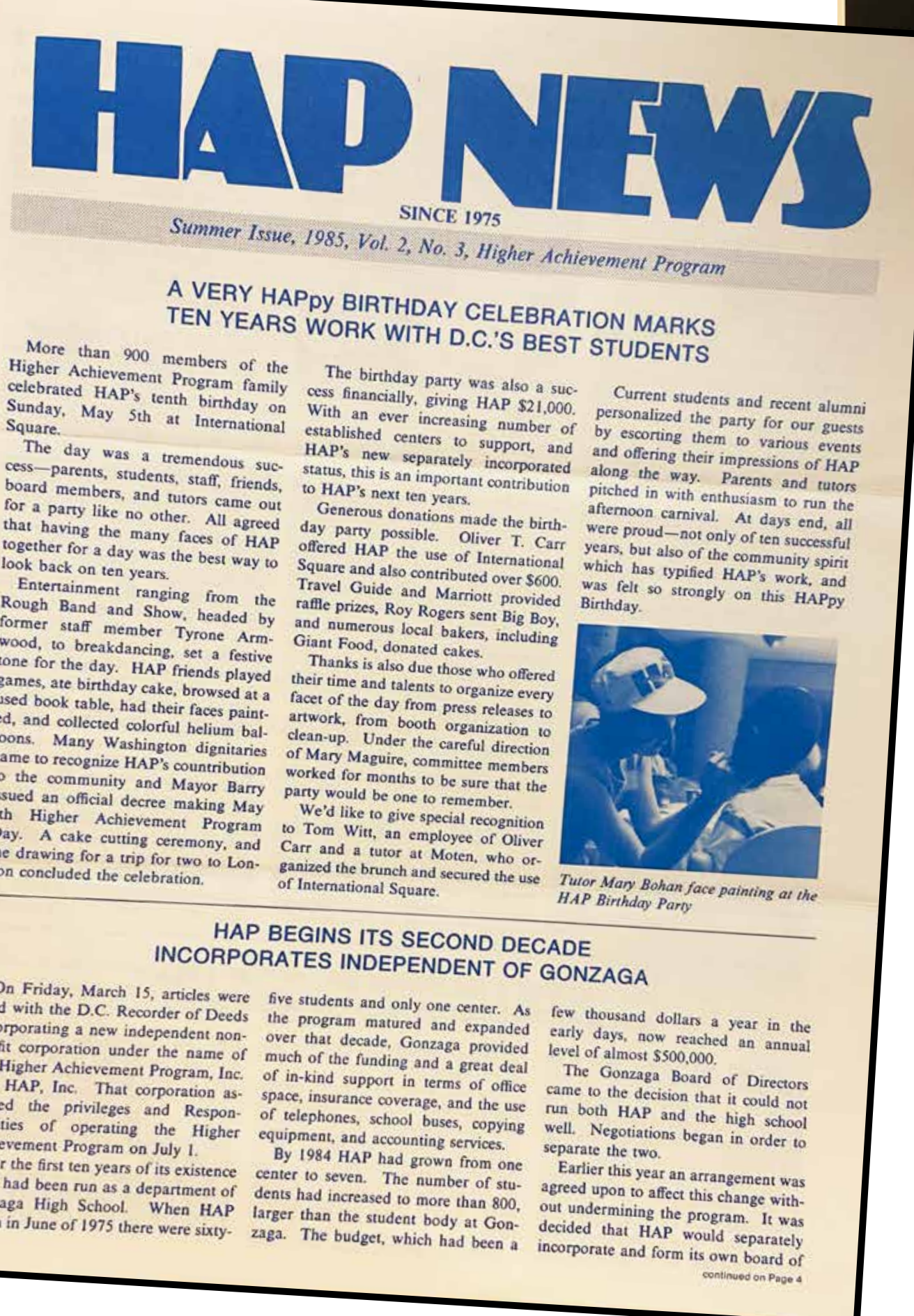


Joe Dempsey tutoring winter / evening program at Gonzaga



1985 - 1994

1985
Incorporated as a
501(c)(3)



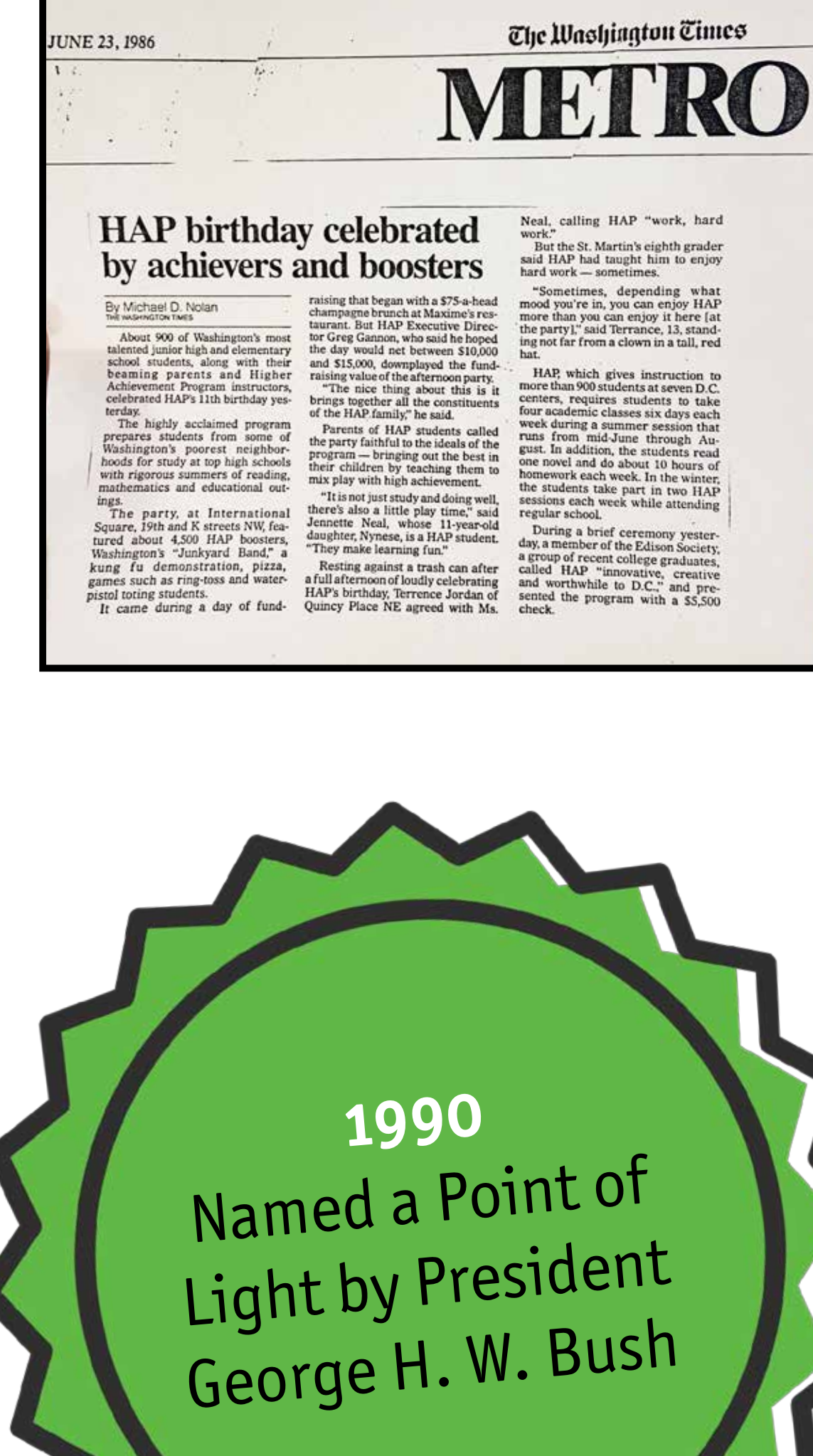
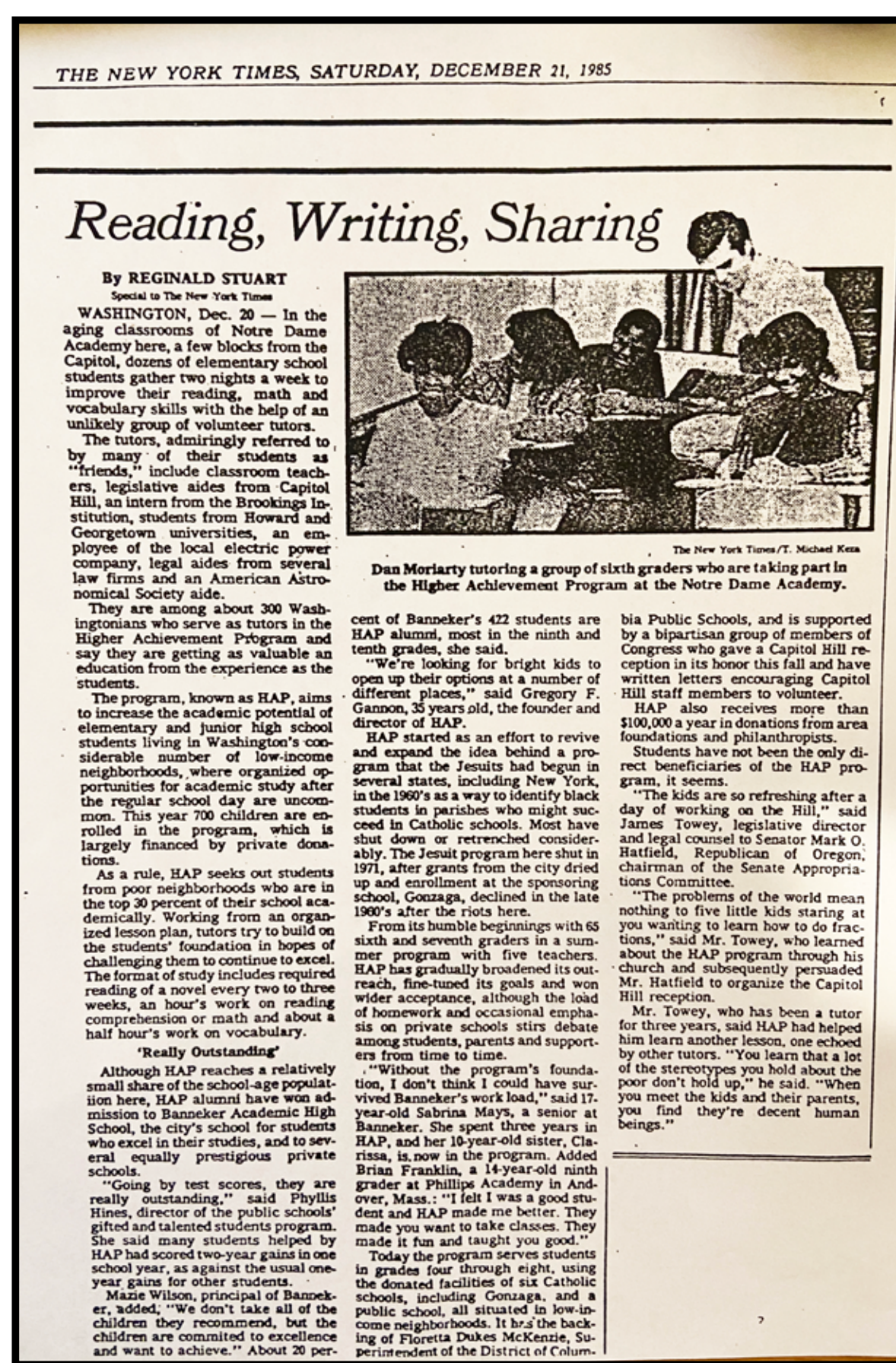
IN THE NEWS

The New York Times

The Washington Post

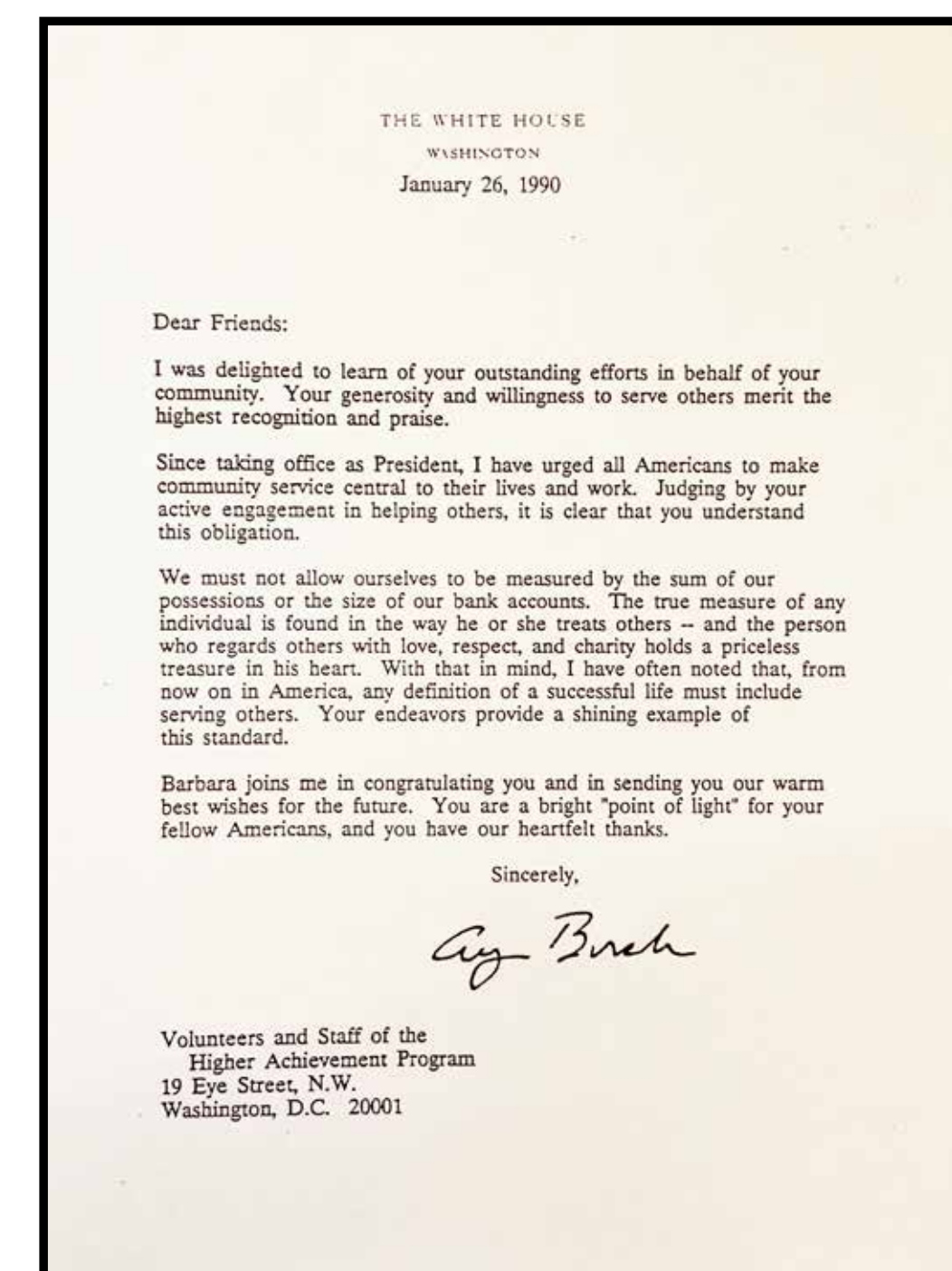
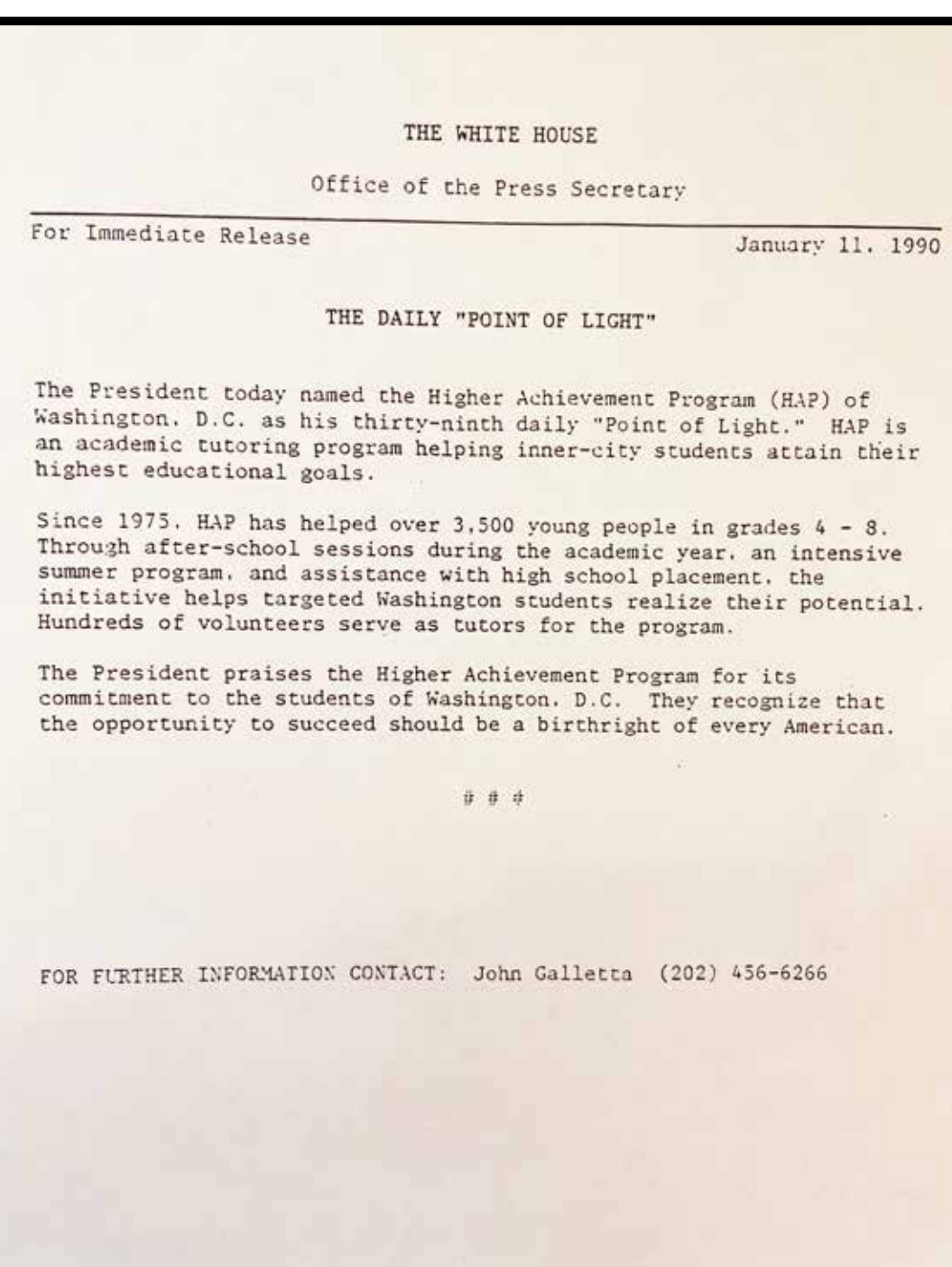
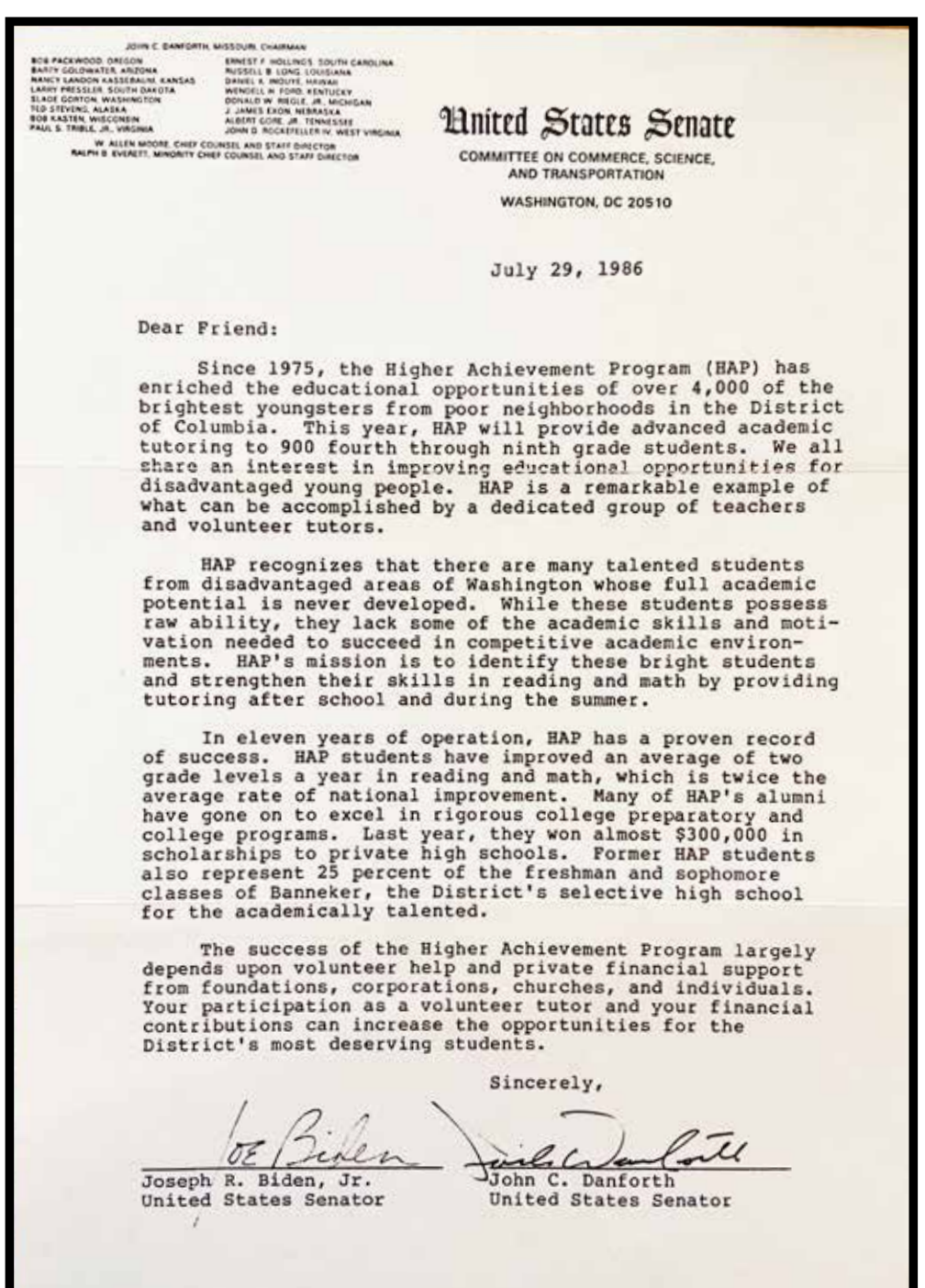
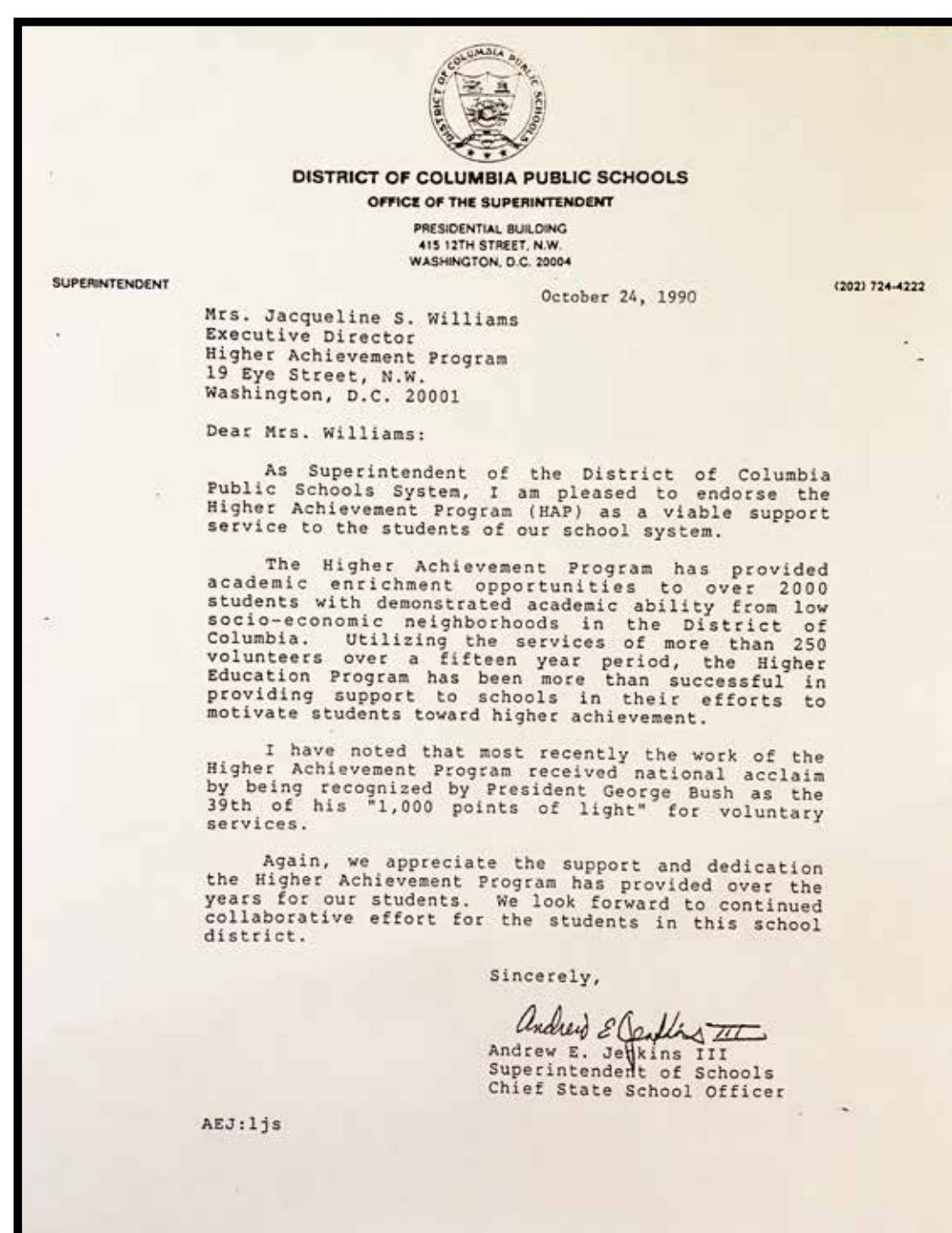
Catholic Standard

The Washington Times



1990
Named a Point of
Light by President
George H. W. Bush

NATIONAL RECOGNITION



POINTS
OF LIGHT

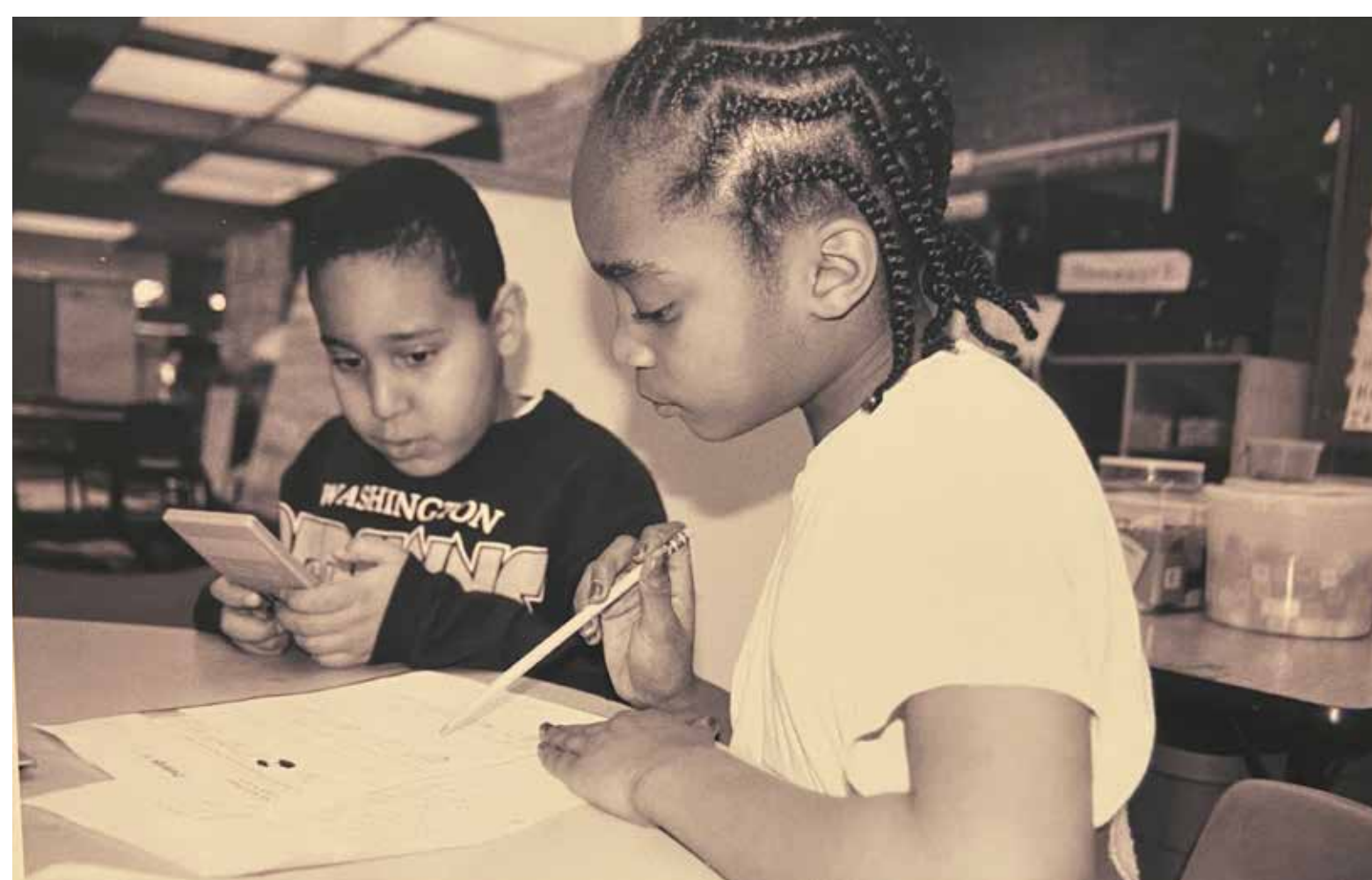
The Points of Light Foundation was created in 1990 as a nonprofit organization in Washington, D.C. to promote the spirit of volunteerism described by U.S. President George H. W. Bush in his 1989 inaugural address, "I have spoken of a thousand points of light, of all the community organizations that are spread like stars throughout the Nation, doing good."

HAP showed me the beauty and strength in all DC communities, the potential in all children, and the necessity of intentional investments to create real opportunity for all.



ED LAZERE, founding Executive Director of the DC Fiscal Policy Institute. Ed began his DC career at Higher Achievement.





HAP students with Jair Lynch 1996 Olympics gymnastic silver medalist



Every morning I bring newspaper into my
 classroom. Each scholar I would pick something in
 the news and share. We had excellent discussion
 the week in Iraq, Racism, blind dates, even if I tho
 would get marked again!

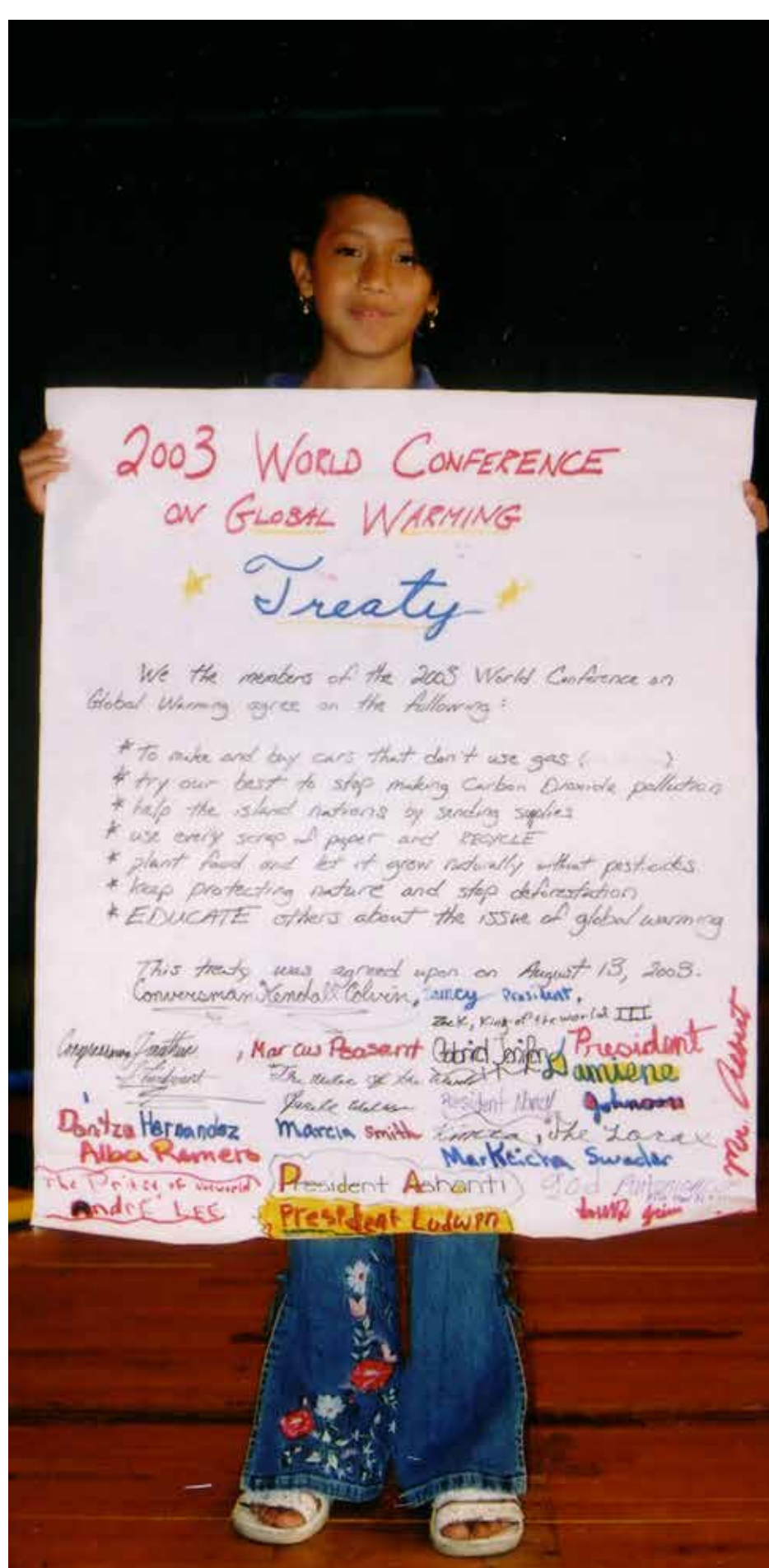
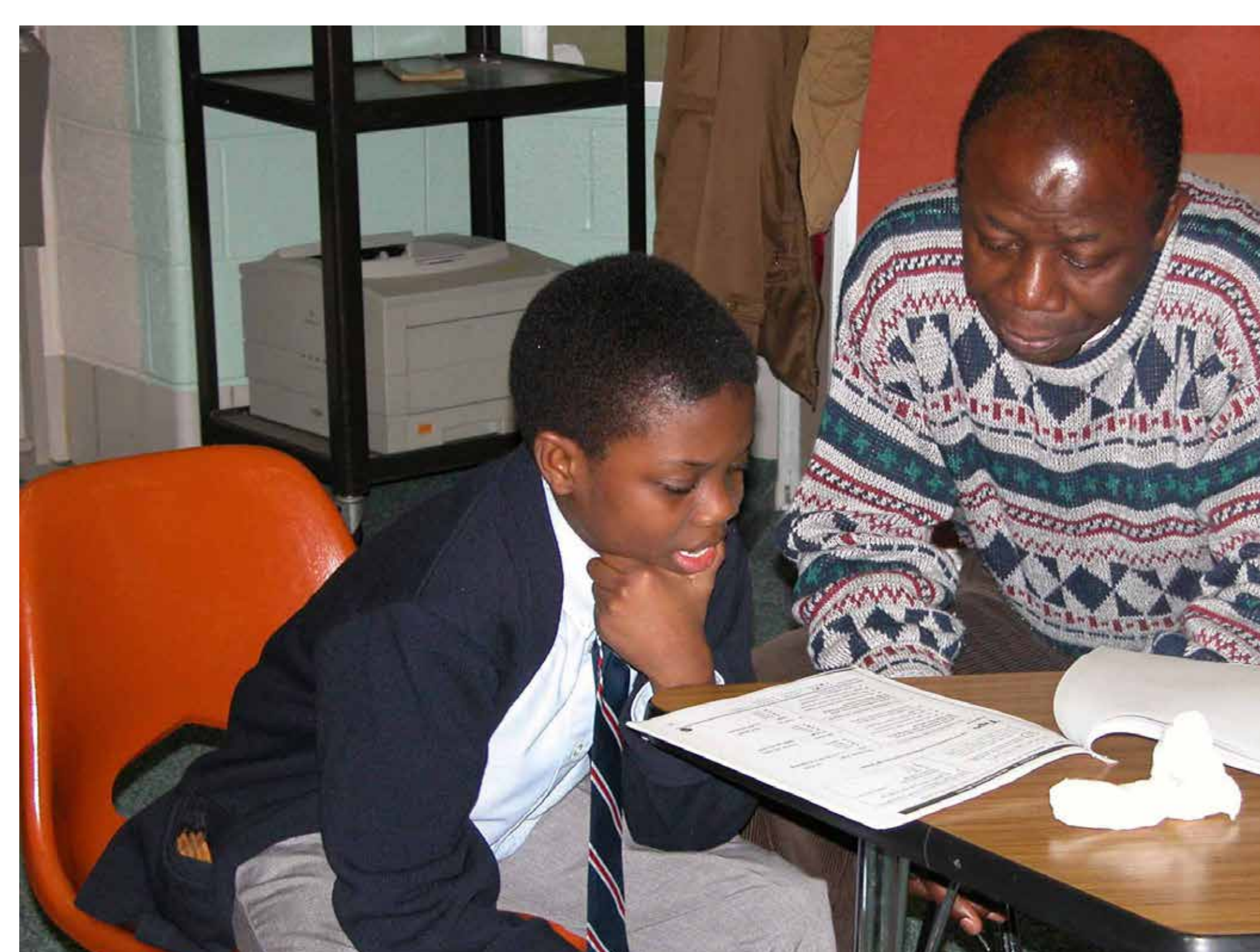
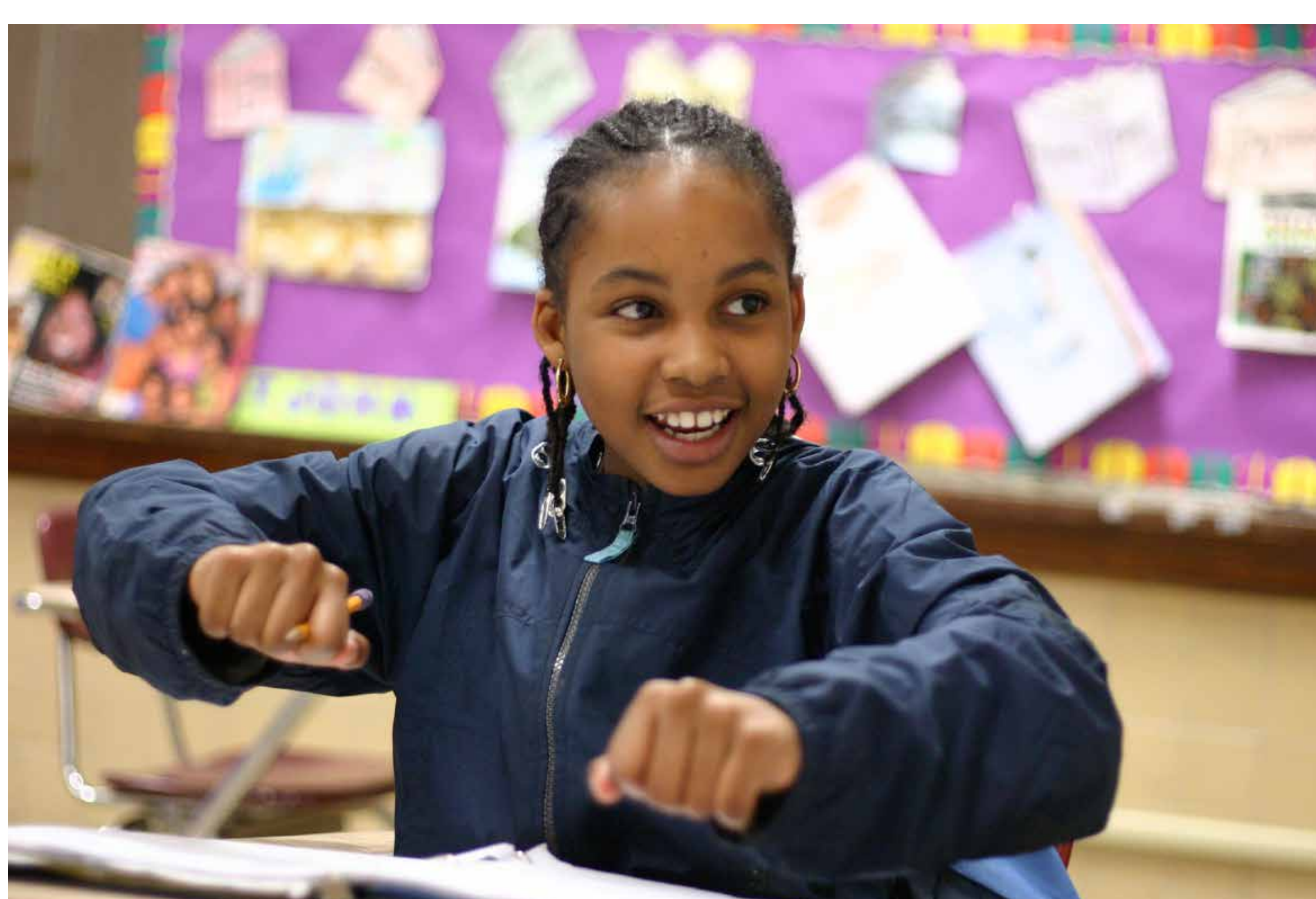
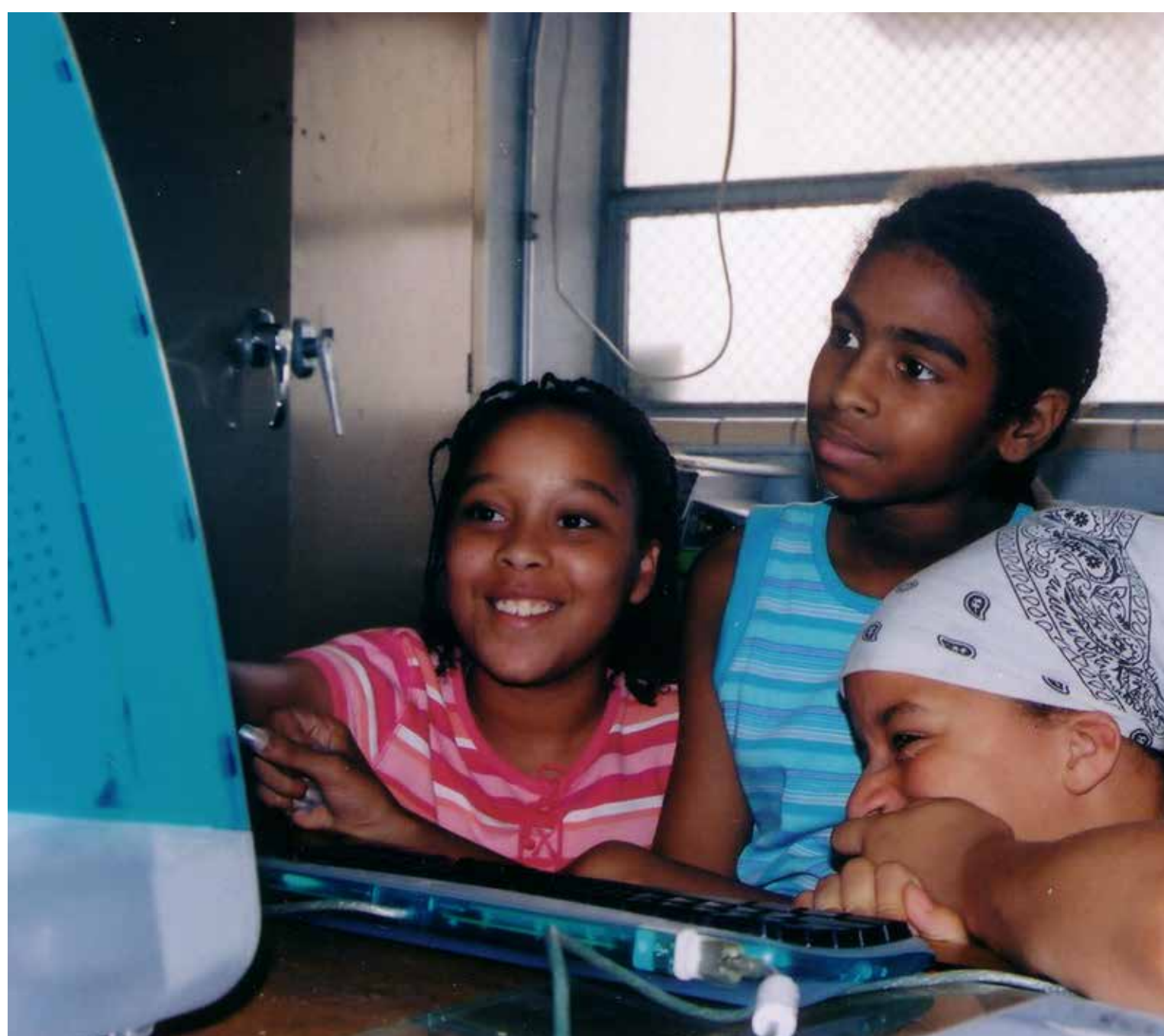
What was most revealing about this experience?

I met some amazing people from my little school
 grades to the outer district. As when I can it sounds
 if they will have a real special place in my
 heart forever.



I have many, many choices.
Through the Higher Achievement Program
I'm hoping to reach one or all of my goals.

Sincerely,
Mary Mattison
Higher Achievement School

[illegible]

2005-2014

2005

Received the Washington Post Excellence in Nonprofit Management Award

Received the NPower/Accenture Award for Nonprofit Innovation in Technology

2006

Launched the first longitudinal, randomized study of an out-of-school time program

Named National Winner of the Excellence in Summer Learning Award, given by Johns Hopkins University

Received Bank of America's Neighborhood Builder's Award

2008

Enterprise Winner for the Catalogue of Philanthropy

Listed in Top Local Charities to Support by Washingtonian Magazine

2009

Opened Achievement Centers in Baltimore, MD

Received the Coming Up Taller Award from First Lady Michelle Obama, presented by the President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities

2011

Opened Achievement Centers in Richmond, VA

Received the MetLife Afterschool Innovator Award

2014

Awarded the Department of Education i3 Grant to fuel expansion

Winner of Impact 100 in Richmond

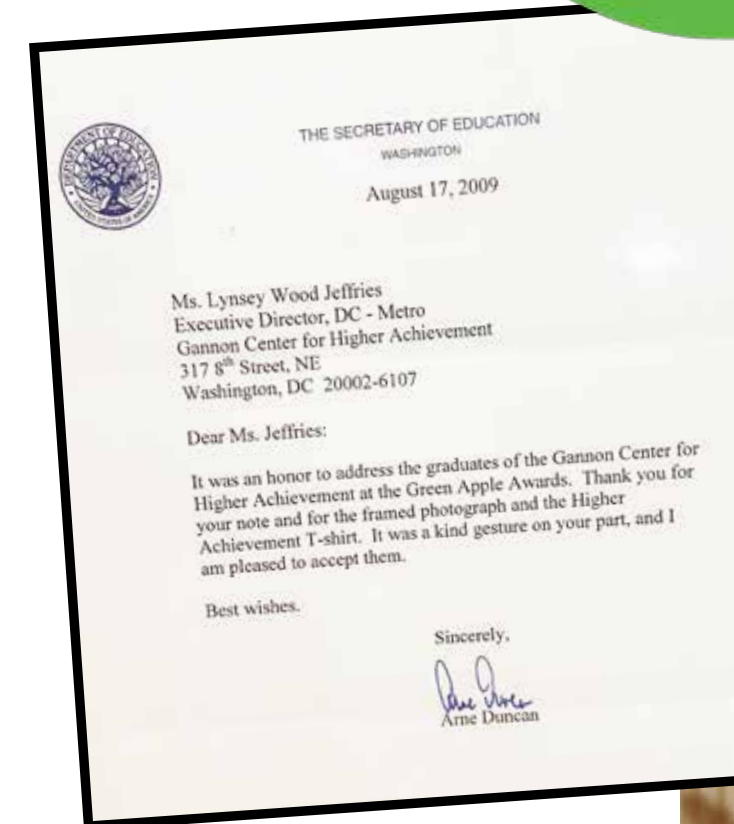


To Wilton Pollard,
With best wishes,



"Higher Achievement is one of the first programs I worked with—and fell in love with—as a young researcher 20 years ago. It helped set the very high standards which I continue to look for in other youth-serving programs I work with—a strong program model, stellar staff, a constant desire to learn and grow, and a respect for, and heartfelt dedication to, the young people it serves."

DR. CARLA HERRERA,
lead researcher for MDRC's
randomized control trial study of
Higher Achievement



White House visit, 2013



High school placement fair

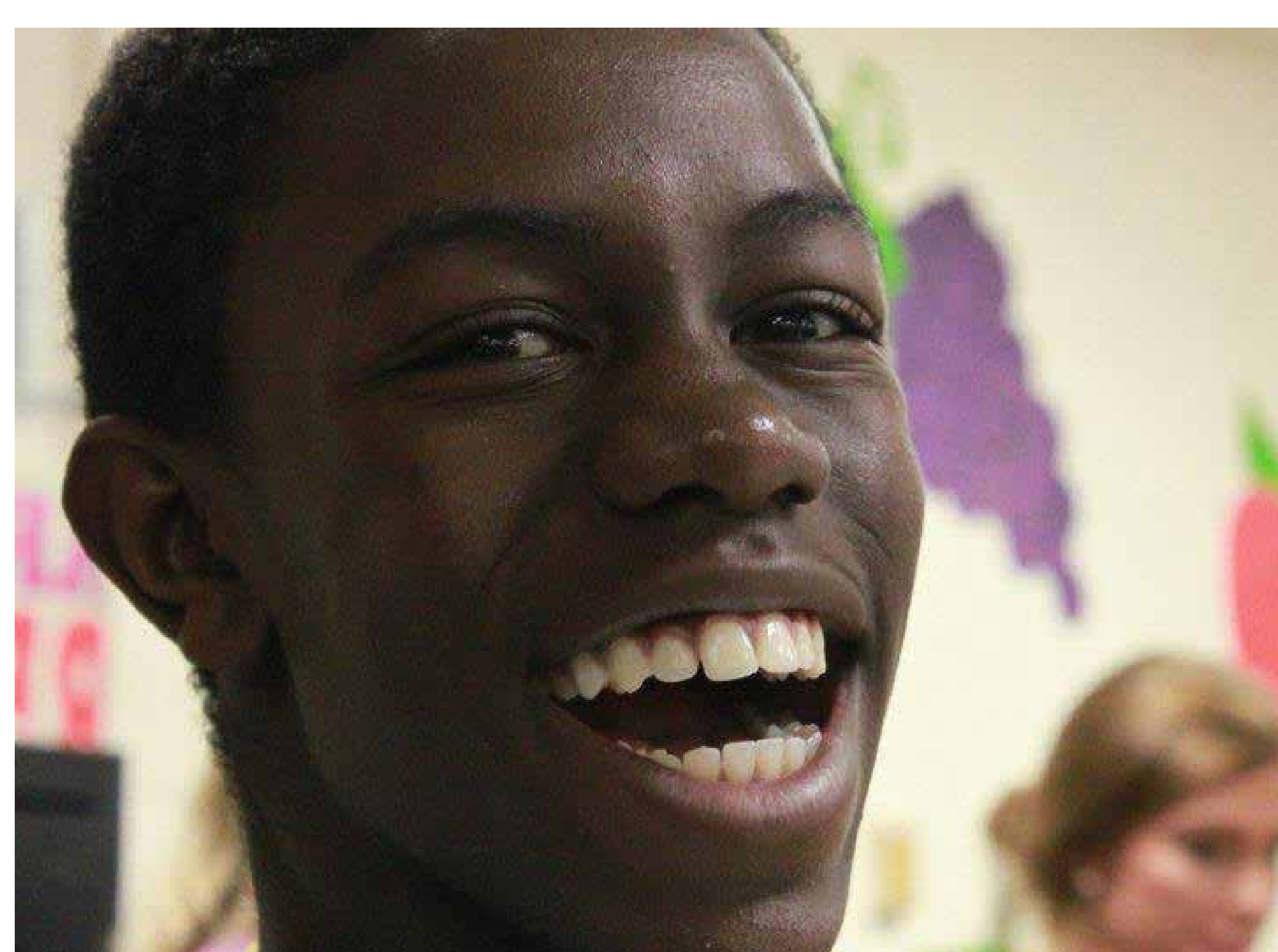


Scholar science fair



BUILDING CONFIDENCE

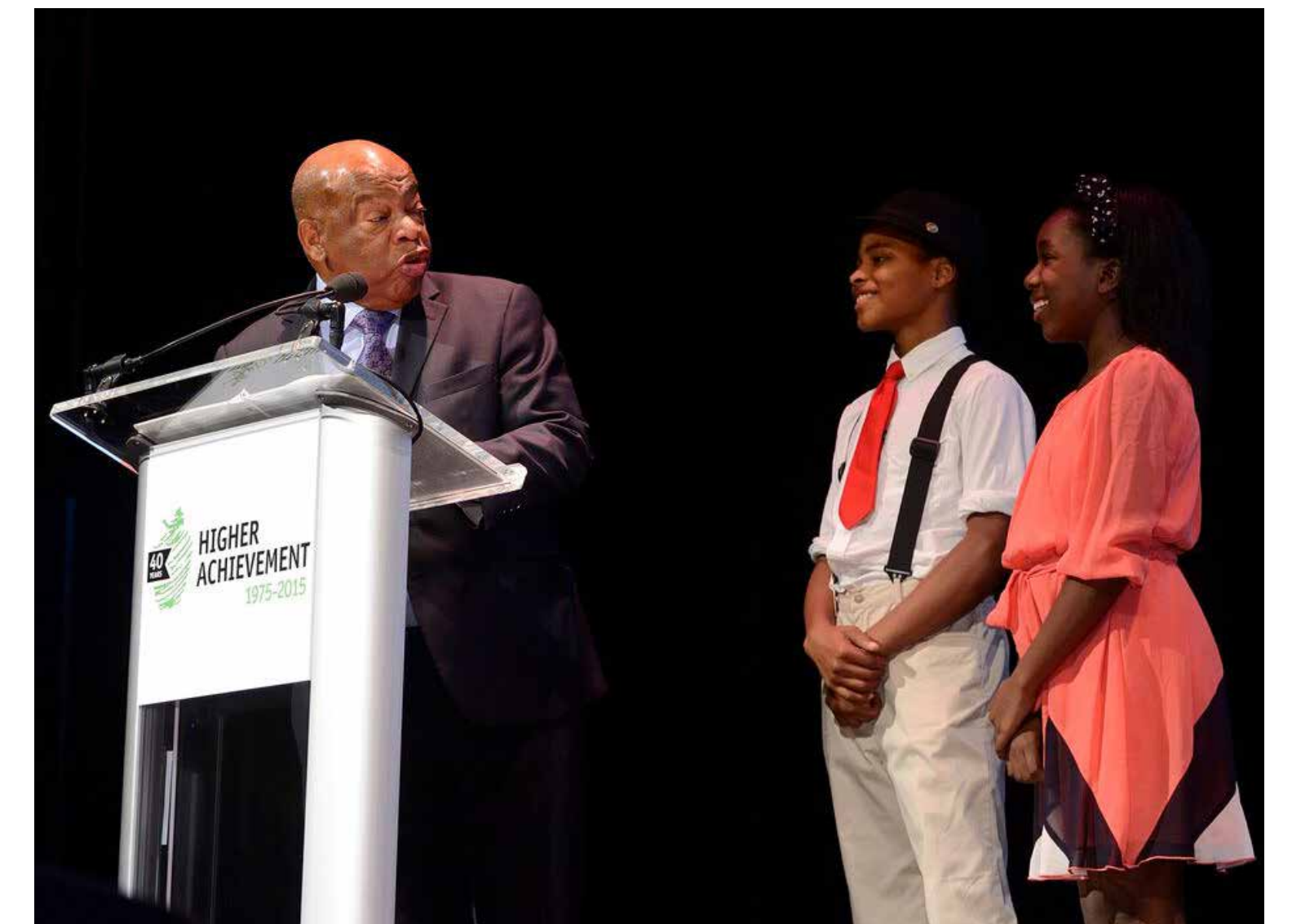
Scholars built confidence and academic skills through friendly annual competitions, including Olympics of the Mind, Love Out Loud poetry performances, and Geo Challenges.



2015 - 2025

2015

Recognized as an Outstanding Mentoring Program by the Virginia Mentoring Partnership
Received the Raise DC Data Spotlight Award



Rep. John Lewis with Going Places scholar emcees in 2015

2016

Opened Brookland Achievement Center within the DC Metro affiliate
Opened two new Achievement Centers in Richmond
Won “Excellence in Nonprofit Management” Award from the Center for Nonprofit Advancement



L: Brookland Achievement Center ribbon cutting with DC Councilmember McDuffie, a Higher Achievement alumnus R: Greenbelt Achievement Center ribbon cutting

2019

Opened a new Achievement Center in Prince George’s County, MD, within the DC Metro affiliate
Featured in the Aspen Institute Social, Emotional, and Academic Development Commission

2020

MDRC published a second randomized controlled trial (RCT) study of Higher Achievement once again demonstrating statistically significant results.
Provided individualized academic enrichment during the COVID-19 pandemic through virtual programming.



“[Higher Achievement’s] impact on our school community has been significant. From bringing in guest speakers and lecturers, helping students through the high school application process, giving them interview skills, to hosting high school fairs. It’s really been a one stop shop for families, and I can’t imagine that we would be able to do the work to the degree and the scale that we’ve been able to do it without Higher Achievement’s help.”

PRINCIPAL KERRY RICHARDSON,
Brookland Middle School

2021

Opened the Highlandtown Achievement Center in Baltimore, MD

2023

Higher Achievement’s RCT studies are accepted to the What Works Clearinghouse

2024

National Student Clearinghouse data shows that Higher Achievement scholars are three times more likely than their peers to graduate from a four-year college



2020 virtual programming

2025

Celebrating 50 years of partnering with middle school students as they pursue their ambitions



“I started as a Higher Achievement scholar at Ward 4, unaware that I would one day return as a Learning Director — striving to be for the scholars what Higher Achievement once was for me. So many of my core memories were created at Higher Achievement; it truly shaped so much of who I am today.”

-NWAMAKA EZIEFULA, Higher Achievement Learning Director and alumna



Winner of the 2015 Higher Achievement Geography Bee



Mock trial at Mayer Brown law firm

