

FOUNDATION MAY AWARDS CELEBRATION – May 12, 2008

On May 18, the Cumberland County Public Schools Foundation, Inc. celebrated its 7th anniversary at Cumberland Elementary School and the presentation of Awards. Beginning with a welcome from the Foundation's president, Bruce Robinson, followed by dinner and desert, twenty Cumberland County High School graduates, college students and GED graduates received \$25,600 in funds to further their education at colleges, universities, technical schools, and licensure certification programs of their choice. The Scholarship awards have grown from \$3,500 offered in 2002 to almost \$26,000 awarded to this year's recipients. The various Scholarships awarded included the following: David Goodman Memorial Scholarship, George B. Danker Memorial Scholarship, William and Ada Sanderson Family Memorial Scholarship, Bank of America, Cumberland Youth League, Woman's Club of Cumberland, and the Foundation. We are proud to announce new scholarships this year. They are the Joshua I. Smith Memorial Scholarship, the William C. Switzer Memorial Scholarship, the Joel S. Clingelpeel Honorary Scholarship, and the "Call Me Mister" African-American Elementary School Educator Scholarship.

Present at the scholarship awards ceremony were the scholarship recipients, their families or representatives, scholarship donors, the Foundation Board of Directors, and Foundation members. The membership of the Foundation's board and members consists of Cumberland County citizens ranging from school principals, college professors, state and local law enforcement officers, guidance counselors, career and volunteer community service providers, school administrators, teachers, secretaries, school board members, board of supervisors members, and a varied group of retired citizens – all who have the education of Cumberland's children as their main focus.

The Foundation was established and incorporated in May, 2001 under the umbrella of General Colin Powell's initiative - *America's Promise* – the alliance for Youth dedicated to mobilizing people from every sector of American life to build character and competence of our nation's youth by fulfilling five promises: caring adults, safe places, healthy starts, marketable skills, and opportunities to serve. The Foundation adopted the logo of *America's Promise – The Little Red Wagon* – “a symbol of childhood. It could be filled with a child's hopes and dreams or weighed down with their burdens. Millions of American children need the help of caring adults to pull that wagon along.”

To serve Cumberland's youth, the Foundation's purpose is two-fold in an effort to raise educational attainment: Grants and scholarships – to provide funding to students and graduates of Cumberland County Public Schools for college, technical school certificate programs or license programs, as well as to provide scholarship opportunities for GED recipients.

Over the past seven years, the establishment of the Foundation has served as a catalyst to promote projects that would fulfill the Five Promises of America's Promise. To date, the Foundation has raised close to \$200,000, established a scholarship endowment, created new scholarships, and distributed over \$53,000 in Grants to teachers and \$92,150 in Scholarships to graduates of Cumberland County Public Schools as well as included GED recipients through the Luther P. Jackson Adult Education Center in the pool of scholarship applicants.

The president, Bruce Robinson, made the following closing statement: “*This has been a phenomenal year for the Foundation. We have added a few new scholarships such as the Joshua I. Smith Memorial Scholarship in the memory of a beloved child at Cumberland Elementary School student, the Cory Minter Memorial Scholarship in memory of a missed friend at Cumberland High School, and several individually recognized scholarships such as the Joel S.*

Clingenpeel Honorary and the William C. Switzer Memorial Scholarships which highlight a principal and government teacher and a vocational agriculture teacher at Hamilton High School. We graciously accept those family member's efforts who have worked tirelessly with the Foundation to see to it that their family is being represented as they desire. I also would like to thank the Cumberland County Public School System for their leadership and support for the Foundation.

We have an excellent group of students who will be representing their school system this evening, but it would not be possible without the relentless support of a dedicated school superintendent in Dr. Jim Thornton and his staff, a school board determined to elevate every child in the system to their utmost potential with the leadership of Doris Seal, our new board chairman, the academically and personally involved high school teachers who have done a magnificent job teacher our children, as well as the very receptive, unique, and talented students. This began with faculty and staff when these young adults were just five and six years old.

As this set of students go off to a college or university for the first time, or continue their education at their current college or university, or just hang around the house until the parents say "it's time for you to be gainfully employed and contribute positively to your society," which is code for "you gotta get outta here.!", they will remember this night as a culmination of what they have learned from entering elementary school in September of 1996 to the day they are all looking forward to: May 23, 2008, a total of 4,380 days! Good night and good luck!