



METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT OF NASHVILLE AND DAVIDSON COUNTY

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Wednesday, June 25, 2008

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Metro Action to Honor Graduates at Annual GED Graduation Ceremony *Over Half of Graduates Accepted at local colleges or technical schools*

NASHVILLE, Tenn. – Today approximately 40 students adorned in caps and gowns will march across the stage to receive their GED (General Equivalency Diploma) certificate during the 18th Annual Metropolitan Action Commission Adult Education Graduation Ceremony. The event will begin at 11:00 a.m. in the auditorium of the I.T. Creswell Magnet School (3500 John Mallette Drive, 37218).

The Honorable Hazel O’Leary, president of Fisk University and former U.S. Energy Secretary in the cabinet of U.S. President Bill Clinton, will serve as the keynote speaker. Fisk University along with other local colleges has partnered with Metro Action to assist students in pursuing higher education.

In addition to students obtaining their GED, the program also offers a College Preparatory class, which helps with completing the admissions process and covers the cost of application fees and textbook expenditures once they are accepted into college or a technical institution.

Many of the students have plans to pursue a college degree or are gainfully employed. From this graduating class, 22 students are already enrolled or will begin college or a technical school by fall.

“The students have a real sense of honor because of the challenges they had to overcome to make it to this point,” said Cynthia Croom, Executive Director of the Metropolitan Action Commission.

“When I got pregnant in high school I dropped out of school. After the birth of my child I needed a job and could not get one,” said Tamika Wood, Metro Action GED Student.

Wood passed her GED Exam after three attempts and is now employed as a Pharmacy Technician at a local pharmacy company. She is waiting on her acceptance letter from Tennessee State University. She plans to major in Early Childhood Education.

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Timothy Baynham will be inducted into the GED Honor Society along with 10 other graduates during the ceremony today. Honorees must score over 2500 on the GED Exam. Timothy's two sisters graduated from the program last year and his mother is expected to graduate with the GED Class of 2009.

Loum Odwar, a native of Uganda arrived in class every morning as he ended his third shift at work. His trials both in Uganda and upon his arrival to the United States kept him focused on obtaining his GED. He will begin classes at Middle Tennessee State University in the fall.

"We are excited about their transformation. It is an honor to sponsor this event each year so that the families of the graduates and the community can witness their accomplishments," said Croom.

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