



First Ever MS Sportsmanship Banquet Honors 25 Schools *Pilot Program Success: 99% Ejections in '07-'08 NOT from STAR Schools*

Jackson, Miss. -- April 2, 2008 -- An exuberant crowd of students, coaches, school administrators, guest speakers, and legislators attended the first ever Mississippi Sportsmanship Banquet on March 6, 2008, at the Capitol Club in downtown Jackson, Miss.

The 25 schools and 17 school districts represented at the banquet all participated in the *STAR Sportsmanship*[™] Initiative during the 2007-08 school year. The STAR program teaches good sportsmanship qualities such as teamwork and respect, while addressing practical solutions to negative issues such as bullying and substance abuse, all through an engaging and interactive sports video-game learning tool.

Impressively, two brave, young students from Raymond Elementary School, Joseph Moss (2nd grade) and Deonante Frazier (5th grade), took to the podium to tell the crowd how the STAR program helped them learn how to deal with bullies.



Raymond Elementary student Deonante Frazier talks about avoiding bullies.

“Finally -- a program that teaches critical thinking skills that form the basis for improvement in attitudes and behaviors of student-athletes, fans, coaches, and parents. When elementary students get up to speak to a crowd like they did today about how they’ve learned to cope with day-to-day problems like bullying, you know they’ve been impacted, and you know they’ve learned a lesson for life,” said Sen. Videt Charmicael, Senate Education Committee Chairman.

The group of 125 gathered at the banquet to enjoy lunch and celebrate progress of the STAR program in Mississippi. The pilot program was projected in August 2007 to reach 15 schools, but far surpassed expectations by reaching 25 instead. Incredibly, statistics indicate that 99% of high school ejections in Mississippi this school year were from schools NOT participating in the STAR pilot program.

The Sportsmanship Banquet was sponsored and hosted by the Mississippi High School Activities Association (MHSAA) and Learning Through Sports, Inc., the publisher of STAR Sportsmanship. Learning Through Sports Founder and President Brian M. Shulman personally awarded Sportsmanship certificates to the attending schools and districts. Attendees were also given complimentary tickets to the MHSAA/Cellular South State Basketball Championships.

Brian M. Shulman, Founder and President of Learning Through Sports, Inc., awards a Sportsmanship certificate to Albert Hall of Greenwood School District.



State Superintendent of Education Dr. Hank Bounds helped select STAR Sportsmanship as the training tool deliver a message that he feels is important to Mississippi student-athletes, coaches, and parents: “With our emphasis on getting students fit and playing more sports, we need to educate our students proactively about the virtues of sportsmanship,” he said.



Dr. Ennis H. Proctor, Executive Director of the MHSAA, agreed: “Our first priority must be to develop good citizens for the future. We can accomplish that by continuing to emphasize the importance of teaching character and integrity to our students and fans. Already, the STAR program is helping thousands of students in our participating schools become good sports and good citizens,” he said. Dr. Proctor looks forward to implementing the STAR program state-wide next year.

(Picture, left): Dr. Ennis H. Proctor, MHSAA Executive Director, looks forward to implementing STAR state-wide next year.

Don Hinton, STAR Coordinator for Mississippi, thanked State Superintendent Hank Bounds; Executive to the State Superintendent Steve Williams; and Senator Videt Carmichael, Senate Education Committee Chairman, for their support and attendance at the banquet. He also expressed appreciation to the following legislators for being present to support the schools: Rep. Tracy Arinder, Rep. Gary Chism, Rep. Steve Horne, Rep. Sherra Lane, Rep. Kevin McGee, Rep. Greg Snowden, Rep. Gary Staples, Rep. Hank Zuber, and Sen. Hillman Frazier.

The following schools were represented at the banquet: Booneville School District, Olive Branch High School, Cathedral High School, Ocean Springs School District, Chickasaw County School District, Pascagoula School District, Forest School District, Shaw School District, Greenwood School District, Southeast Lauderdale Attendance Center, Hinds County School District, Starkville School District, George County School District, Tupelo School District, Jones County School District, Wayne County School District, and Indianola School District.

About Learning Through Sports:

Learning Through Sports, Inc., is a leading educational publisher of digital game-based learning programs for K-12. The company publishes *Kid's College*®, a math & literacy intervention program that has proven effective in raising test scores for underachieving students, and **STAR**™ *Sportsmanship*, the first interactive sports video game to teach sportsmanship.

About STAR™ Sportsmanship:

Created by a group of education and athletic specialists, the award-winning *STAR Sportsmanship* program is the first online sports video game to teach sportsmanship. Designed to train the brain to Stop and Think before acting on impulse using role-playing exercises and modeling of consequences, STAR includes 7 age-appropriate versions for: Elementary, Middle School, Junior High, High School,

Coaches, Youth Coaches, and Parents. The program has been proven effective in improving student behavior on the field and in classrooms and is gaining nationwide attention. For Success Stories, a preview and more, visit www.learningthroughsports.com/star.html.

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