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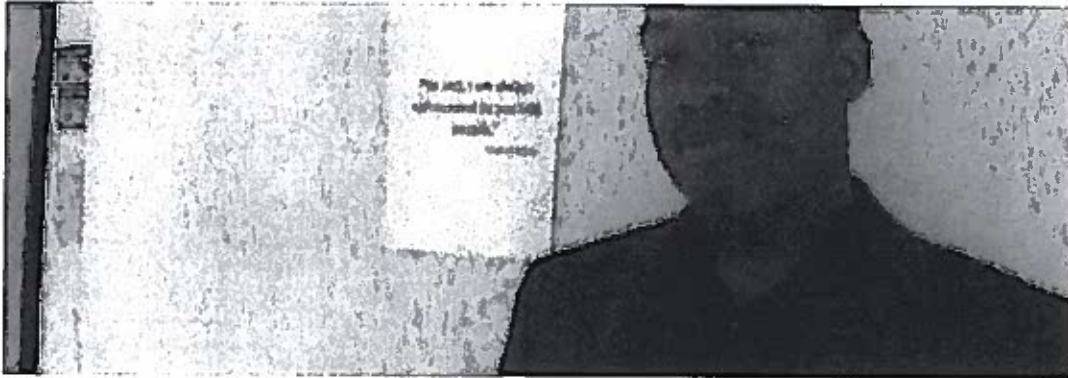
# "I was that one kid teachers secretly did not want in their class."

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Category: Uncategorized By: Liz Dupont-Diehl | Leave a Comment



Today's Initiation and Installation ceremony at East Hartford High School was a great success, with Career Association officers and members sworn in before illustrious EHHS alumni such as U.S. Congressman John Larson, Senator Tim Larson, Richard F. Kehoe, City Council President and State Director for U.S. Senator Richard Blumenthal, and State Representative Jason Rojas. Also present was State Representative Henry Genga, who shared his own experiences as a JAG Specialist at EHHS.



JAG Career Association Presidents John Drew and Marangelys Suarez offered remarks, followed by the elected officials, and Dr. Martin Estey of the Hartford Consortium for Higher Education, JAG's parent program.

John Drew contrasted his high school experience before and after becoming

involved with JAG, which he credited with helping him focus and do better at school and at work.

"I was that one kid teachers secretly did not want in their class," John said. "...JAG is what unlocked that special part of my brain and made me start thinking and realizing that good things aren't going to just come to me. If I want a successful future, the beginning of that road starts now...I used to look at my report card and be happy with Ds because that's what you needed to get credit....I made a huge transition and now give everything my best effort."



# JAG CT Wins Second Place in National Employability Skills

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John Draw, a senior at East Hartford High School, won Second Place in a national employability contest this weekend at the JAG National Student Leadership Academy in Washington, DC.

John is a participant in Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG) CT program, and he travelled to NSLA with four other students from Manchester, New Britain and New Haven. All the students attending took part in extensive Leadership Training sessions, with groups that included other JAG students from around the country, and each



student will be making a presentation to their classmates and school administrators upon their return. Other students attending were Mylaisha Ortiz of New Britain High, Michael Scotchman of the New Britain High School Satellite Careers Academy, Thalia Longo of Manchester High, and Jairo Cis of Hillhouse High School in New Haven. Thalia Longo also competed, in Public Speaking.

The Employability Skills event involved developing a letter of application and a resume for a simulated job opening. Candidates then took part in a simulated interview. Contestants were rated on neatness, spelling and grammar, content and completeness, and personal presentation.



John went an extra mile and also delivered a hand-written thank-you note after his interview.

"JAG has made me realize the definition of hard work," John said.

"It's made me realize that when you put 100 percent effort into everything you do, good outcomes will result... Before I was that one kid in the back of the class who

would do nothing and cause disruptions... JAG is what unlocked that special part of my brain and made me realize that good things aren't going to just come to me. If I want to pursue a successful future, the beginning of that road starts now."



Nov  
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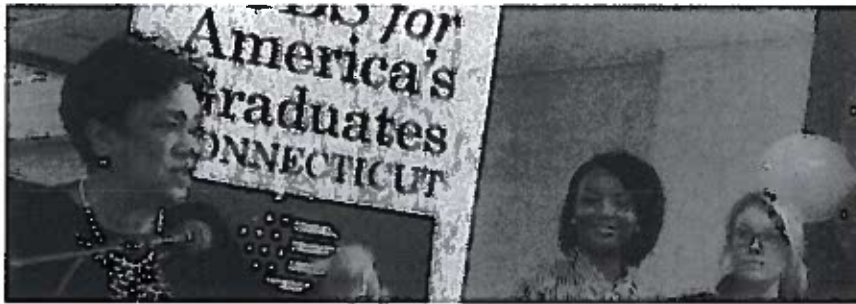
# Mayor, Commissioner, Honor New Haven JAG Students

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New Haven's first Initiation and Installation (I&I) Ceremony was a festive and well-attended event, with Mayor Toni Harp, state of Connecticut Labor Department Commissioner Sharon M. Palmer, Superintendent Garth Harries, Senator Gary Winfield, and many other district and community leaders turning out to recognize JAG's students being formally sworn in to the Career Association.

But student contributions had equal weight, with a riveting musical performance by Ravel Martinez and moving speech by Career Association President Zakeya Herring.

"I know the name can lead to thinking this is just about jobs but this program is so much more than that," Ms. Herring said. "JAG is a way to help people establish and develop values and personalized goals. Its has taught us about professionalism, diversity, leadership, pushes us to want to get involved in future civic and social awareness and community outreach projects."



Mayor Harp led off by thanking Commissioner Palmer for helping bring JAG to Connecticut and to New Haven.

"This is vital to the health of the city," said Mayor Harp. "JAG helps young people understand that good academic attendance leads to good employment, and each job contains

the opportunity for learning and promotion and advancement."

"When I was teaching, I saw a lot of very bright students who had barriers, but who had potential," said Commissioner Palmer. "I wish JAG had been there for them. I believe this program can really change lives. Please remember to use your successes now to support your families and communities. Keep learning, be able to change when needed."



Alderman Carlton Staggers used his keynote address to urge students to focus on academics and to pay attention to relationships. "Be nice to everyone," he said. "You never know who will be sitting in front of you someday, interviewing you for a job!"

# Articulate. Good eye contact. Clarity of thought. Mature.



By [Name] | [Date]



Asked about JAG CT students' performance at our first Career Development Conference, judges had high praise:

"Clear, positive and articulate."

"Listened and considered others' suggestions."

"Excellent first impression, very personable."

These and other detailed comments were shared with students and speakers after the Tuesday event, which drew 150 students and nearly 50 volunteers and observers to Capital Community College in Hartford. The event marked the first time students from all seven JAG CT partner schools came together to compete in the professional skills they are learning, as well as practice their networking skills and learn from a Career Panel and other guest speakers.



"I was absolutely blown away by the stories and struggles behind the speeches the students gave today," said Rep. Jeff Cloutier, one of the Public Speaking Judges.

Students competed in Public Speaking, Employability Skills, Career Planning, Problem Solving and Critical Thinking. Speakers included State of Connecticut Department of Labor Commissioner Scott Jackson, pictured at right; Department of Correction Commissioner Scott Sampson; Capital Community College Pres. Jerril Wilfredo Neves; Senator Gary Whitford; and Sgt. Sean Grant of the Meriden Police Department. Click here for the full agenda for the day. Reps. Mark Tweedie and Henry Geng also served as judges and presented the Outstanding Students awards.



Several JAG CT students were honored for their commitment and accomplishments in demonstrating JAG's values of Accountability, Attitude, Perseverance and Teamwork. Click here for the event program, containing a listing of Outstanding Student bios and for judge and volunteer biographies.

Career Panel member Tina Longo of the New Britain Hospital for Special Care, who spoke about the growing number of health care jobs, said she enjoyed the event and would return.

"It was a pleasure being there," she said. "The best part of it all was the handful of students that came to introduce themselves and asked additional questions. That's the goal: those of you that are here to demonstrate that this program is and will be effective for these students!"

