

## In a Tradition of Excellence

Tara Louise Johnson graduated this June from Beaumont Middle School with a 3.86 G.P.A. The personable 14-year-old demonstrated a commitment to excellence throughout her school years and has been accepted into the "Institute For Science and Math (ISM)" at Grant High School beginning her freshman year (1990-91).

Tara is the oldest of the three daughters of Lula Stroud Johnson, an equally committed single parent. The other girls, Tova, 12 and Kelva, 10, have shown the same dedication to academic excellence—becoming involved in structured extracurricular activities from photography to journalism. If the name "Stroud" sounds familiar, it is because "Kelley D. Stroud", their grandfather, was featured in the "June-Teenth" article in the June 13 edition

Tara Louise Johnson



of this newspaper. If you read that account, you know that these young ladies follow in an illustrious family tradition.

Throughout Tara's middle school years, she consistently received honor grades, awards and numerous certifi-

### A Black American's Inventions of the 1840s Makes Life Sweet for Us All

By Tara Louise Johnson

Norbert Rillieux is the Black man who invented a superior way of refining sugar. His invention made the refining of sugar easier, less dangerous, less expensive and simpler than ever before. Before Rillieux's invention, the refining of sugar was of

poor quality and unhealthy. The job was messy and difficult and dangerous. The fumes were unhealthy. Norbert Rillieux of New Orleans, Louisiana pat-

ented his sugar-making improvement "Evaporating Pan" with the United States Patent Office on December 10, 1846. He had patented his "Vacuum Pan" invention on August 26, 1843. Rillieux's invention has been called "the greatest in the history of chemical engineering...giving the United States' sugar industry worldwide supremacy." Because of racism, Norbert Rillieux has never been recognized for his inventions in any chemistry, physics or technical journals. The basic principle of Rillieux's is used throughout the world today in the making of sugar,

gelatin, condensed milk, soap and glue. Rillieux's methods are also used in recovering waste liquids in factories and distilleries.

Norbert Rillieux also designed a plan to get rid of yellow-fever infested mosquitoes in the sewers of New Orleans. His plan involved draining the sewers. New Orleans' city authorities refused to approve the plan because it had been put together by a black man. Yellow fever was permitted to continue killing the citizens of the city until a similar plan was submitted by whites.

Oregon State winner and sent to the Northwestern Division for further judging. Another luncheon sponsored by the Oregon State Society honoring Tara's winning essay was held in Coos Bay on 24 March. Tara was awarded a State Winner Certificate and Medal from the National Society of the DAR at that time.

Significant excerpts from that prize-winning essay follow:

Our congratulations to a young African American who will go far in providing a role model for the academic excellence Black youth must achieve (Included in Tara Louise

Johnson's bibliography was a book authored by a writer for this newspaper: *Black Inventors of America*, by McKinley Burt).

## SPIDER-MAN TACKLES SCIENCE ILLITERACY AMONG MINORITY STUDENTS

### YOU CAN BE AN ENGINEER!



The Amazing Spider-Man wove a web of wonder for Chicago school children as he unveiled Chaos at the Construction site, a custom comic book featuring the wall crawler and a band of potential minority engineers. Produced by the National Action Council for Minorities in Engineering (NACME) and Marvel Comics, the issue premiered at a special session of NACME's tenth annual conference--FORUM '90.

According to NACME President George Campbell Jr., the comic book targets fifth through seventh graders with engineering career information, strong minority role models and an action-packed story.

"The comic book project rests on NACME's determination to reach young children before they make critical career path decisions," says Dr. Campbell. "Our objective," he adds, "is to convince these students to put themselves on an academic track in the eighth or ninth grades and to replace general math with Algebra I."

The comics will be distributed initially to students in the 15 U.S. cities with the highest minority populations.

As the first recipients of the NACME/Marvel Comic, 100 sixth and seventh graders from four of Chicago's inner-city schools were treated to an afternoon of magic, miracles and wonder in science. Dr. Campbell opened the session by asking the students if there was anyone in the audience interested in a science career. Not one hand was raised.

Dr. Campbell then introduced Earl F. Zwicker, professor of physics at the Illinois Institute of Technology, and David A. Katz, associate professor of chemistry at the Community College of Philadelphia. The professors used bubbles, toys and other everyday items to convey scientific principles.

At the end of the session, Dr. Campbell repeated his question. This time, more than fifty hands shot up in the air, and cries of delight and enthusiasm echoed throughout the audience.

"The point is," Dr. Campbell explained, "the innate curiosity of children makes them natural scientists. It doesn't take a lot to show children that scientists are approachable people, and that science itself is both fascinating and fun."

NACME is a not-for-profit corporation that works to increase the number of African Americans, Hispanics and American Indians who pursue careers in engineering. Basing its strategies on an intensive applied research effort, NACME provides scholarships and grants, develops precollege and university intervention programs and publishes a library of materials that build interest in and access to engineering careers.

With support from more than 170 donors and through partnerships with industry, NACME expands opportunities for minority engineers and eliminates barriers to achievement.

The Amazing Spider-Man is a trademark of Marvel Entertainment Group, Inc.

### WHY CAN'T BLACK JOHNNY READ?

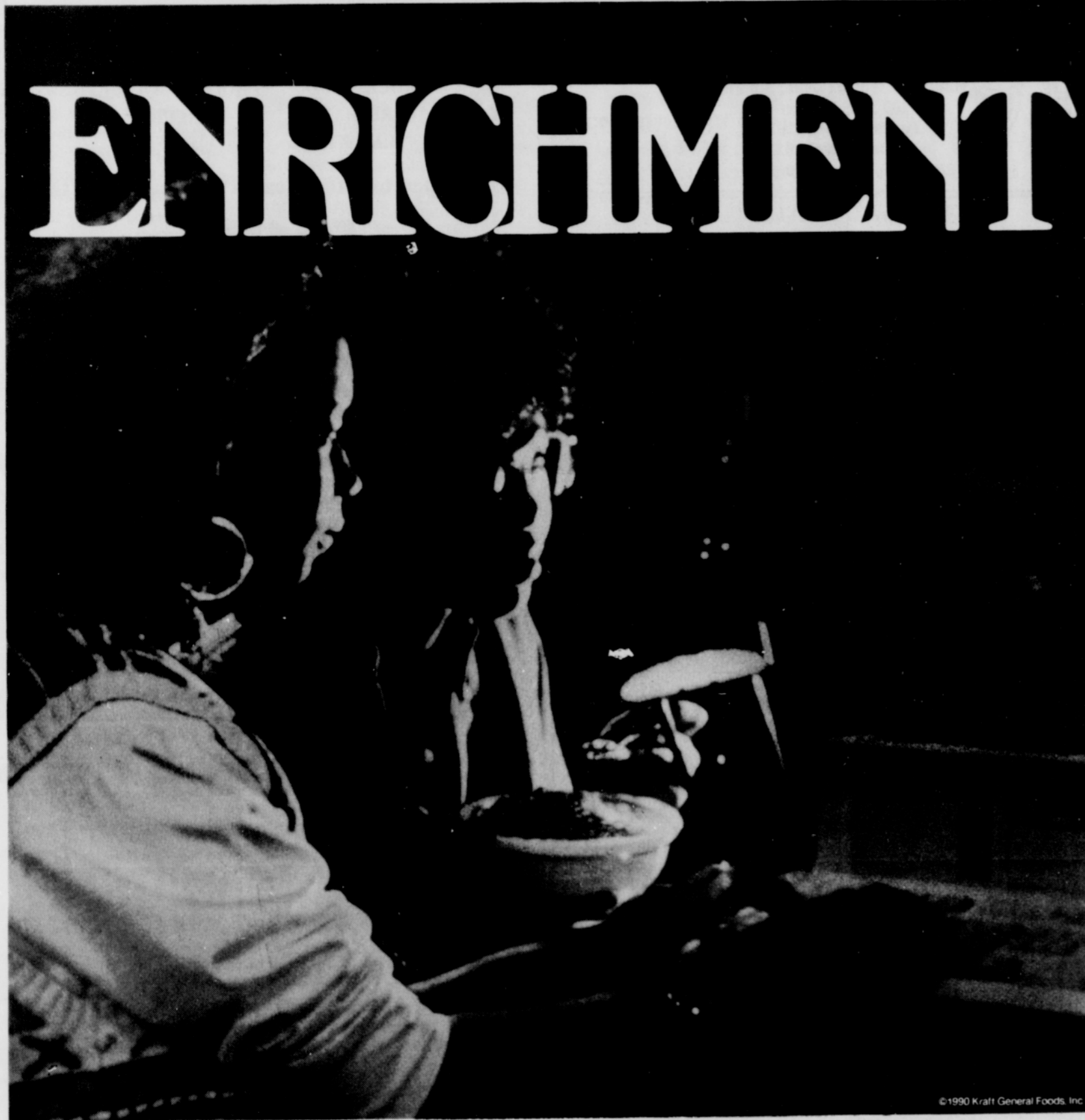
Because Johnny does not see himself as a reader or as an academic; Johnny does not see himself even as intelligent. But Johnny can sure enough dance; Johnny can rap and Johnny can play basketball. In a society that demands answers to the serious problems that face us today, Johnny is out of time.

If Johnny saw himself in the roles that the community requires—doctor, lawyer, engineer, scientist, father—he might grow up to be an asset to society rather than the liability he now represents. And there is plenty for him to see. Hidden under a dense veil of misunderstandings is a wealth of accomplishments that all Boston Public School students should know. The great universities of Africa were teaching advanced sciences, medicine, architecture and mathematics well in advance of the emergence of Greek civilization. It was the African pyramid builders whose knowledge of construction and mathematical sciences has not been decoded to this very day.

In America, Blacks have been responsible for some of the greatest technological advances in her history. The cotton gin alone, invented by a slave, was responsible for the billions of

dollars brought in by King Cotton to finance the further development of the country. The electric light, one of the greatest scientific accomplishments of our time, was invented by a Black man who worked with Thomas Edison. George Washington Carver's experiments brought plastics to the world. The accomplishments of Ida B. Wells, Charles, Drew, Frederick Douglass, Elijah McCoy, Harriet Tubman, Marcus Garvey, Benjamin Banneker, Nat Turner and many others have never been fully explored by the Boston Public School system. The economic contribution of the Black slaves to the growth of America has never been fully appreciated by Blacks or Whites.

Certainly, if our children were taught that they are more than a savage from the jungles of Africa and that they contributed more to America than "zippity doo da," they will feel confident that the higher studies are within their reach they will aspire to more than drugs, guns sports, (sneakers) and dancing. Their potential is being criminally neglected and society is losing. It is time to change our course of study to challenge their powerful minds.



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NOTHING FEELS BETTER than knowing you're improving yourself. Whether you're broadening your mind by satisfying a hunger for knowledge, or strengthening your body by selecting the good, nutritious foods you've always known.

Choosing to attend a Black college means you're striving to improve yourself, too. Because a Black college provides an environment that places no limits on how far you can go. And Black colleges produce 40% of Black college graduates.

So while you're away at school exercising your mind and your body, exercise good judgement by sticking with some of the wholesome foods you were raised on—like the great taste and nutrition of Post Cereals.



General Foods, makers of these and many other family traditions you grew up with, wants to remind you that we've always been there for you... and we're still with you. All the way.

