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# Scholars Challenge Bush

## Do not want America to represent torture

(AP) -- President Bush was presented with a letter Monday signed by 50 high school seniors in the Presidential Scholars program urging a halt to "violations of the human rights" of terror suspects held by the United States.

The White House said Bush had not expected the letter but took a moment to read it and talk with a young woman who handed it to him.

"The president enjoyed a visit with the students, accepted the letter and upon reading it let the student know that the United States does not torture and that we value human rights," deputy



President George W. Bush stands in front of high school Presidential Scholars Monday at the White House.

press secretary Dana Perino said.

The students had been invited to the East Room to hear the president speak about his effort to win congressional reauthorization of his education law known as No Child Left Behind.

The handwritten letter said the students "believe we have a responsibility to voice our convictions."

"We do not want America to

represent torture. We urge you to do all in your power to stop violations of the human rights of detainees, to cease illegal renditions, and to apply the Geneva Convention to all detainees, including those designated enemy combatants," the letter said.

The designation as a Presidential Scholar is one of the nation's highest honors for graduating high school students. Each year the program selects one

male and one female student from each state, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Americans living abroad, 15 at-large students, and up to 20 students in the arts on the basis of outstanding scholarship, service, leadership and creativity.

The scholars travel to Washington each June for seminars, lectures and workshops with government officials, elected representatives and others

## Jefferson Leader Named Principal

### Hope rises with Harris no longer 'interim'

BY RAYMOND RENDELMAN THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Cynthia Harris can scratch the "interim" from her title as Jefferson High School's principal. She was named to the official job Tuesday.

Harris worked in the Jefferson/Wilson cluster of schools since her arrival in Portland last summer, and administrators hope she will help gain hundreds of students through the opening of Jefferson's single-sex academies.

"Cynthia Harris cares deeply about Jefferson students and has poured her energy and warmth into



Cynthia Harris

building a strong community at the school and in the neighborhood," departing Superintendent Vicki Phillips said.

After taking the helm from Leon Dudley this spring when he went on emergency medical leave, she has wanted to make the school stronger by focusing on successes rather than controversy.

"I know in my heart that we've started something at this school and with these kids," Harris said, "and I want to finish it."

More than two-dozen Jefferson teachers petitioned for Harris' appointment, citing renewed optimism in the school since she took the position.

"I think she can bring stability to a school that has not had stability over the years by bringing new vision and fresh ideas," says Karanja Crews, a newly hired sixth-grade teacher for the Young Men's Academy.

## Military Sees Few Black Recruits

### Relatives discourage signups

(AP) -- The number of blacks joining the military has plunged by more than one-third since the Afghanistan and Iraq wars began, because of other job prospects and relatives of potential recruits increasingly discourage them from signing up.

According to data obtained by The Associated Press, the decline covers all four military services for active duty recruits, and the drop is even more dramatic when National Guard and Reserve recruiting is included.

The findings reflect the growing unpopularity of the wars, particularly among family members and other adults who exert

influence over high school and college students considering the military as a place to serve their country, further their education or build a career.

Walking past the Army recruiting station in downtown Washington, D.C., this past week, Sean Glover said he has done all he can to talk black relatives out of joining the military.

"I don't think it's a good time. I don't support the government's efforts here and abroad," said Glover, 36.

The message comes as no surprise to the Pentagon where efforts are under way to in-

crease the size of the Army and Marine Corps.

Marine Commandant Gen. James T. Conway agreed that the bloodshed in Iraq — where more than 3,540 U.S. troops have died — is the biggest deterrent for prospective recruits.

According to Pentagon data, there were nearly 51,500 new black recruits for active duty and reserves in 2001. That number fell to less than 32,000 in 2006, a 38 percent decline.

When only active duty troops are counted, the number of black recruits went from more than 31,000 in 2002 to about 23,600 in 2006, almost one-quarter fewer. The decline is particularly stark for the Army.

## Kucinich Coming to Portland

After receiving substantial support from Portland voters during the 2004 elections, presidential candidate Dennis Kucinich will return on Sunday, July 1 for a free speaking

engagement, joining other speakers and musical groups, at Benson High School, 546 N.E. 12th Ave.

Doors open at 7 p.m. with speakers taking the stage at

7:30 p.m. For more information or to volunteer at the rally, email oregon4kucinich08@spiretech.com or call Laird Hastay at 971-226-3605.

## Rally Supports HIV Testing

A rally to encourage HIV/AIDS testing in the African-American Community takes place Wednesday, June 27 at 5 p.m. at the Cascade Campus of Portland Community College in north Portland.

The event, timed to coincide with National HIV Testing Day, continues to break the silence surrounding HIV/AIDS in Portland-area African-American communities and to fight the spread of the

disease through testing and education.

Nationally, AIDS is the number-one cause of death for black adults ages 25 to 44, ahead of heart disease, cancer and homicide.



Dr. Billy R. Flowers

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LATE NIGHT ZYDECO DANCE: Keith Frank, Donna Angelle

**SAT JULY 7**  
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