

# Arts & ENTERTAINMENT

## Reaching Out to a New Generation

### Smokey Robinson speaks to following your dreams

(AP) — Music legend Smokey Robinson reached out to a new generation of performing artists Friday, telling them they were starting out as he did: "with a love for doing something creative."

Robinson, 72, visited Duke Ellington School of the Arts in Washington, D.C., named for the jazz great whose music Robinson said was the first he heard in his life because it was always playing in his Detroit home.

With students standing nearby, Robinson said any of them could follow him as a singing sensation, because "everybody starts with a love for doing something creative."

"If you see somebody and they are 15 and you say 'Oh, there's a new artist.' No, they've been doing it since they were 6. Everybody starts with that love, so of course, some of these kids will do that," Robinson said.

Robinson said he started singing the day he was born "according to



Singer Smokey Robinson speaks to students Friday at the Duke Ellington School of the Arts in Washington, D.C.

my mom." He sang in various bands in high school, including The Miracles. Just after high school, he connected with Berry Gordy, with whom he would later form the Motown label. The label's first hit was Robinson's "Shop Around."

He went on to make hits such as "Cruisin'," "You've Really Gotta Hold On Me," "Tracks of My Tears" and "Tears of A Clown."

"I thank God for my life because as a baby when I was 3 and 4 and 5-years-old, I wanted to be a singer, but I grew up in the 'hood in Detroit and I didn't know if that was possible, so I am living my wildest childhood dream right now," he said.

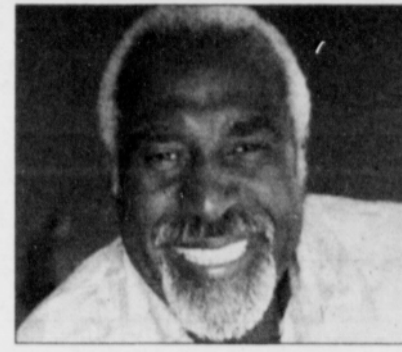
Cornelius Williams, 17, was one of a handful of students who performed a song while Robinson waited to enter the news confer-

ence. He said he belongs to the school's show choir, which has a "Smokey Robinson/Miracles-kind of group."

"I feel like he definitely is an inspiration to me to keep doing what I'm doing, to keep learning," Williams said.

Students shrieked and cheered when Robinson appeared onstage, and the enthusiasm didn't die down when he lectured them to make sure they didn't neglect their other studies for their art or give in to peer pressure.

Robinson said he grew up in a house of 11 kids and was raised by his sister after his mother died. Some of his close friends were "gangsters," he said. But he said he refused to join them, when they asked him to help rob a gas station.



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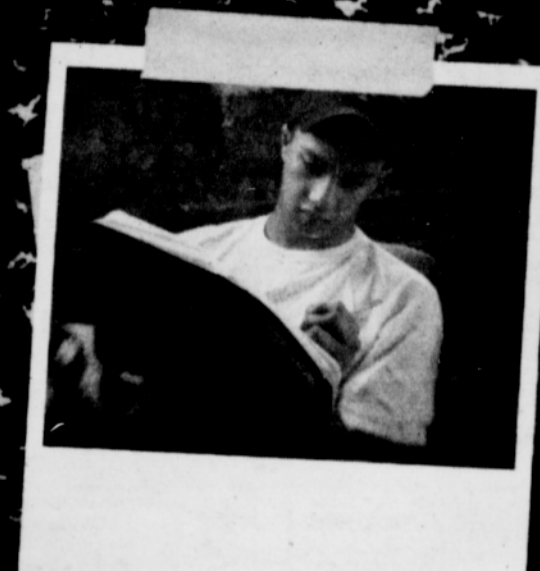
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