

# High School Students Participate in the Fourth Annual State Bar Diversity Pipeline

by Marian Cover Dockery

**S**ixteen local high school students convened at Atlanta's John Marshall Law School for nine days beginning May 31 to participate in the Pipeline Program. This program presents a unique opportunity for diverse students to prepare for college and ultimately law school.

Greater Atlanta Adventist Academy valedictorian Danielle Hayes is the first Pipeline student to attend four years of the program. When asked about the program, she said:

"When I think of all the Program has done for me, I am utterly speechless. I have been afforded opportunities that I would have never thought of in my wildest dreams."

Other students shared their impressions of the Pipeline Program:

- "Being a part of this program has been an amazing experience. I have been able to network with people who I never would have had the opportunity to meet. I am sure the writing classes that we had will allow me to do better on the SAT." —Henderson Johnson II
- "I must say, this program was so much more fun than I thought it would be, and I still learned so many new things. All of this exposure to law firms and different places and people was amazing." —Daryl G. Mitchell



Photos by Marian Cover Dockery

(Left to right) High School Pipeline writing and oratorical competition winners for 2011: Danielle Hayes, 1st place; Henderson Johnson II, 2nd place; and Daryl Mitchell, 3rd place.

- "When I first came here, I was shy and didn't talk that much. Now, I am more comfortable talking in front of people and I'm a better person because of it. I can now make friends easily and I have come out of my shell." —Terrence McKenzie

- “Besides the grammar skills, I was able to obtain lifelong skills in the areas of effective writing and public communication.” –Gabrielle Richie
- “Pipeline has always been the most memorable memories of the summer for me.” –Diana Xu

Three Atlanta teachers, Keelah Jackson of Hapeville Middle School, Nikki Seales, a former teacher at Skank and Lumumba Seegars, a member of the Teach for America Corps at Benjamin E. Mays High School, taught students an intense curriculum of grammar and writing.

Attorneys from Atlanta taught daily speech classes and critiqued students. Their presentations covered current events and topics of interest. Classes were taught by: Suzanne Alford, Troy Kubes and Robert “Trey” York, Equifax; Managing Attorney G. Wayne Hillis Jr., Trish Treadwell, Kathleen Curry and Melissa Burton, Parker Hudson Ranier & Dobbs; Andrea Mitchell and Cassandra Williams, Drew Eckl & Farnham; Jodie Taylor, Baker, Donelson, Bearman, Caldwell & Berkowitz; Clyde Mize, Morris Manning & Martin; and Martine Cumbermack, Swift, Currie, McGhee & Hiers; Lumumba Seegars and Pipeline Program founder Marian Cover Dockery, who designed the speech curriculum.

Following a placement test on day one, students boarded a charter bus and traveled to the Bar Center to participate in the Journey Through Justice program, presented by Deborah Craytor. Students participated in a mock trial playing the roles of defense attorney, witnesses, bailiff and jurors.

Troutman Sanders provided breakfast each day for the students. At noon, students traveled to the following GDP members’ law firms and corporations for lunch and mentoring sessions with attorneys who presented on the following topics: *Social Media Etiquette*, hosted by Swift Currie and organized by partner Anandhi Rajan;



*Pipeline students pose after their mentoring session at Morris Manning & Martin. (Front row, left to right) Gabrielle Richie, Sharod McClendon, Rachele Jacques, Alina Xu and Amber Johnson; (second row, left to right) Daryl Mitchell, Maurice Davis, Marcus Davis and Diana Xu; (third row, left to right) Danielle Hayes, Brian Jackson, Eric Pinckney Jr. and Henderson Johnson II; and (back row, left to right) Anthony Brown, Terrence McKenzie and Devan Mikel.*

presenting were partner Valerie Pinkett, Martine Cumbermack and Andrae Reneau; *Selecting the College of Your Choice and Beyond* hosted by Baker Donelson and led by partner Charles Huddleston with Erica Mason, Erin Reeves, Meagan Outzts and Jennifer Ervin; *Law Firm Specialties*, organized by partner Sidney Welch and presented by Frank White, Terrell Gilbert, Jennifer Blackeley, Anuj Desai, Brooke Dickerson, Teri Simmons, Ashley Kelly, Steven Pepper, Althea Broughton, Bill Kitchens and Michael Van Cise of Arnall Golden Gregory; *Dining Room Etiquette*, hosted by Jones Day and coordinated by part-

ner John Walker, with Jennifer Bunting-Gorden, Jennifer Thomas and Hasan Zulfiqar presenting with a special presentation on etiquette given by BellSouth manager Melba Hill; *One-on-One Mentoring* hosted by Alston & Bird and led and organized by partner Angela Payne James and diversity coordinator, Beth Cole, with Chris Lightner, Katherine Wallace, Nadine Evans, Gilly Lalkin Segal, Joann E. Johnston, Brenton Hund, Kyle Healy, Chris Tuten, Kevin Gooch, Liz Broadway, Natosha Reid Rice and summer associates Micah Moon, Erica Harrison, Jason Outlaw, Natosha Reid Rice, Julian Dempewolf and Trey

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Stephens providing mentoring to the students; *Building Good Study Skills*, led by Clyde Mize of Morris Manning & Martin; *Credit 101* organized by Rick Goerss, presented by Bob Zecher; Jennifer Burns and legal assistants Kennetha West-Pullins, Ann Allinson and Shannon Strachan discussed their career choices. Students also participated in an interview workshop organized by Turner Broadcasting System, Inc. (TBS) in-house counsel Ray Whitty. Students were welcomed by Executive Vice President and General Counsel Louise Sams. Additional participating attorneys were Senior Vice President and Associate General Counsels David Vigilante, Regine Zuber, John Cooper; Associate General Counsels Patty Butler, Jennifer Froneberger, Tina Shah; Senior Counsel Segeda Ranjeet; Counsel Mira Koplowsky and the late Philip Walden in addition to Lenee Braxton, Audrey McFarlin, Kendrah Mathews, Arlo Pittman, Jasmin Williams, Kimberley Barrett and Bob Wilder. Students selected a job position and prepared the night before for an interview. During their visit to TBS, students were given feedback on their performance by an attorney or staff member.

Afternoons provided students an opportunity for workshops, visits to other attractions and research time in John Marshall's law library. Claristine Pinckney, human resources professional at Alston &

Bird, conducted a workshop on interviewing skills and resume writing, and Charlotte Combre, partner at McKenna Long, gave a presentation on getting and staying organized.


As part of the program, field trips were taken to various courts. The students visited the Court of Appeals where they were greeted by Hon. Yvette Miller and her staff. Miller greeted each student and explained her responsibilities on the Court of Appeals. Her staff attorneys and the court clerk also presented their job duties to the students. At the Fulton County Superior Court, students met with Hon. Kimberly Esmond Adams following a visit to her courtroom where she sentenced several defendants. Hon. Ural Glanville met with the students in his court and asked each to announce his/her name, grade and career goal. He also shared with the students his diverse career, which included his service as an Army colonel, prior to sitting on the bench.

The nine-day program concluded with the students' annual written and oral competition on "The Americans with Disabilities Act," hosted by Sutherland in the firm's courtroom. James Johnson, Sutherland, and Susan Kolodkin, Tatum, Hillman, Hickerson & Powell, ranked the students' oral and written presentations. An awards ceremony followed lunch. Winners of this year's competition are:

- First Place: Danielle Hayes, rising freshman, Oakwood University
- Second Place: Henderson Johnson II, rising senior, Chamblee Charter High School
- Third Place: Daryl Mitchell, rising freshman, Chapel Hill High School

Each prize recipient received a monetary award and the program granted the only graduating senior and first place winner, Danielle Hayes, a \$500 scholarship for her college education.

The program ended with a party hosted by Kilpatrick Townsend and organized by Diversity Manager Lynda Murray-Blair. The students and their parents enjoyed barbeque, ice cream and cake. Managing partner for the firm's Atlanta office, Vaibhav "Wab" Kadaba, welcomed the teachers, students and their parents.

On behalf of the State Bar of Georgia Diversity Program, we wish Danielle Hayes the best of luck in her college career and continued success to our high school participants. 



**Marian Cover Dockery** is an attorney with a background in employment discrimination and the executive director of the State Bar of Georgia Diversity Program. For more information on the Diversity Program, go to [www.gabar.org/programs](http://www.gabar.org/programs).

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