

HL Neblett Center

* John was in the 4th grade when we met him. He appeared to be a little shy, as he entered the room. His eyes and head were down casted as he walked to his seat. You could see there was a sweetness about him, if you caught his eye a little smile would appear. John's mother and her friend were straight forward with their approach about her son being a part of the new programming that The Neblett Center was introducing to the community, Western Academy at The Neblett (WAN). After the presentation, John's mother signed on the dotted line to place her son in our hands to encourage, empower and educate her young African-American boy to be all he can be.

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* John looked handsome in his WAN uniform, royal blue polo shirt, khaki pants, black belt and black shoes, as he represented the academy in a meeting with Kentucky's Commissioner of Education. He held his head up, smiled and was well-mannered and well-behaved, two of our Well-Principles of the academy. We all were very pleased with all of our scholars who were present.

* Returning to the office, I received a call regarding an incident that happened when our scholars were leaving to return to their schools. John was identified as one of our scholars in the staff bathroom with an illegal substance. Thinking that someone was truly mistaken, it was confirmed that it was John. My heart sank. I thought, "Oh my, we are just getting started and we cannot have this type of conduct in our program." I was reminded by my colleague; as unfortunate it may be; these are the boys we are trying to save. And that is exactly what our Developmental and Academic Achievement Program is designed to do, with our daycare and after-school children, our Western Academy scholars and our recreation center kids. John is one of many facing the challenges of life for a young boy. He is still a scholar in our program and he's doing much better. Our mantra is, "It is easier to build strong children, than it is to repair broken men." Fredrick Douglass, which is for all children attending the H.L. Neblett Community Center.