

Ceremony from page A1

parents, who attended with their parents and the school teacher and counselors who nominated them. Three students were selected from Warner, Power and Duncel Middle Schools, Farmington, North Farmington and Harrison High Schools, the Alternative Academy and the Adult Education program.



Pep talk: John Herrington offered words of congratulation and encouragement to the students.

At age 25, Adult Education student Angela Priebe admitted to a little embarrassment at being the oldest Turn Around award winner. But she also expressed a deep sense of pride at having changed her life for the better by going back to get her high school education, which was interrupted by the birth of her daughters Marissa and Alexandria.

I've got two kids. It's time to do something," she said, adding she's getting her education for herself. "It's to show myself I can do it."

She credits her mother, Dawn, and teacher Terry Leland with helping her achieve success. Angela plans to attend Oakland Community College after graduation, and "see where I go from there."

Road to success

Every student at Tuesday's ceremony had a similar success story. Some

overcame very serious personal obstacles, others put more effort into their studies. All improved their attitudes, behaviors and level of achievement - traveling a road to success that keynote speaker John Herrington



STAFF PHOTOS BY BILL DREISLER

Community's pride: Duncel Middle School student Ryan Martino makes his way across the stage, shaking hands with Farmington Hills Mayor Nancy Bates (foreground), Farmington Mayor Jim Mitchell and Board of Education President Cathy Webb.

believes they'll stay on, because of what they've already accomplished.

The much-beloved and frequently honored Harrison High football coach said he knew just how hard it was to change habits and life-styles, because he'd been on countless diets through the years. And he knew the change had to come from within.

"There might have been some outside influence that helped you change, but to make a turn around has to be from you," he said. "It's a very difficult thing to do. You made the decision to get on the road to success. You made it happen."

Herrington related two stories from personal experience, that of a defensive end who was chided by a teammate for not putting in any effort on the field and turned himself around to become a key part of a Harrison victory at the Silverdome during the state championships. The former Hawk is now a successful businessman.

Another player who came to Harrison from Boys' Republic, achieved success with a lot of natural talent and earned a scholarship to the University of Arizona, but then fell in with his

old crowd.

He made a poor decision and landed in jail, losing his scholarship.

"It's very hard to turn yourself around, and sometimes it's easy to fall back," he said. "That's not going to happen to you."

Herrington left students with a quote from the back of his tie, which was adorned with football-playing characters from the Peanuts cartoon series: "I don't want to be a hero, just a credit to my team."

Farmington Schools Superintendent Bob Maxfield, Farmington Public Safety Director Gary Goss and Observer Publisher Susan Rosiek all congratulated students for having the courage to change, each expressing a different view of success. But for Pam and Frank Migliore, who live at opposite ends of Oakland County but came together to watch Matthew walk across that stage, it was defined quite simply.

"He's on his way down the right path, and he's worked hard and accomplished his goals," Pam said. "We're very proud of him, and it's great to see he's as happy and confident and successful as he's been."

House votes to let boards end phone ban

BY MIKE MALOTT
HOMETOWN NEWS SERVICE
mmalott@hometownnews.com

Although state representatives voted to end a five-year ban on cell phones and pagers in schools, the final version was "watered down" enough to make the bill sponsor angry.

Rep. Wayne Kuipers (R-Holland) complained that House Bill 4591 had been changed, to allow the ban to continue in districts where school boards do not want to adopt a policy regulating "personal communication devices," before it was passed Wednesday, Feb. 27. His original draft would have required each district to craft its own policy.

"We were trying to give them local control," he said. "But there are a lot of boards that don't want to deal with the issue. It is easy to hide behind a state policy and say, 'There is nothing we can do about it.' We wanted them to step up and address the issue."

The ban on pagers and cell phones was adopted in 1998 when students in some districts were using them to arrange drug deals. "It's a different day now, a new century," Kuipers said. "Some parents give their children these devices to keep track of them after school and for emergency reasons."

Kuipers expects that school boards will adopt policies banning use of the cell phones in-class or during the regular school day. The current statewide ban would not even allow students to carry cell phones in their backpacks for use after school.

The initial request for an end to the ban came from Clarenceville Schools Superintendent Tom Tatten, who explained parents there wanted their children to have phones so they could call parents to be picked up when after-school activities concluded.

Rep. MaryAnn Middaugh (R-Paw Paw) offered an amendment that would leave the state ban in place unless school boards adopt local policies regarding their use. "The change was spurred by school principals who didn't want the responsibility of creating their own policy in the absence of a state law," according to the House Republican Communications office.

"Local school boards and Parent Teacher Associations are where decisions like cell phone usage ought to be fought," Kuipers said. "I'm disappointed that some school administrators want local control only on their own terms."

More businesses than ever comply with tobacco rules

During the week of Feb. 28, a 15-year-old decoy was used by the Farmington Hills Police Department to check businesses to make sure they are in compliance in regards to tobacco sales to minors.

Under the direction of two detectives, the girl attempted to buy tobacco at 96 Farmington Hills businesses. Seven of the businesses sold to her. According to Farmington Hills Police Chief William Dwyer, this is the lowest percentage of sales since the compliance operations began in 1998. Thirteen businesses were cited last year.

The underage decoy were Marathon, 29240 Ten Mile; Mobil, 29411 Middlebelt; Marathon, 27745 Orchard Lake; Mobil, 33350 Twelve Mile; Sunoco, 29370 12 Mile; Kmart, 30800 Orchard Lake; and 7-Eleven, 29318 Orchard Lake.

All the sellers were issued misdemeanor tickets for the sale of tobacco to a minor less than 18 years of age. The city ordinance requires that sellers verify the photo identification of anyone they believe under the age of 27. The penalty for sale to a minor is 90 days in jail and/or a fine up to \$500.

The seven that sold tobacco to

By Paul R. Pace



Blooming with pride: After the event North Farmington student Amy Gibson carries away her flowers, which were donated by Thrifty Florist, and dad, Stephen Gibson carries her award.

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