



From the Desk of Andrew D. Gillum
 Mayor Pro Tempore / City Commission, Seat 2



2009 - 1:4

🌀 Builders for Eternity 🌀

You may have your reasons to get involved in the activities that you are currently involved in. Yet, I encourage you to do just a little bit more, give a little bit more of yourself to address the many needs that this community is facing. I have a passion for young people and education, but you may have a different passion. It behooves all of us is to find out what your passion is, tune in to it, figure out where the needs are and do your very best to respond to those needs.

Isn't it strange that princes and kings
 and clowns that caper in sawdust rings,
 and common people like you and like me
 are builders for eternity?

Each is given a bag of tools,
 a shapeless mass, a book of rules.
 And each must make, e're life is flown
 a stumbling block or a stepping stone.

By R. L. Sharpe

What tends to happen is only a few dedicated people decide they want to make a world that is different from the one they see. They pick up the tools, wear the mantle, carry the charge and assert themselves to address those issues as best they can.

One example is the Nims Middle School Digital Harmony program. Two years ago, Nims was the only “F” ranked public school in Leon County with a population 50% of what it was 10 years prior. As a Title I school with low student enrollment, Nims was challenged in every sense of the word. A coalition of community leaders, business owners, and government agencies asked, “What can we do to help Nims Middle School become a higher performing school?”

(Continued next column.)

Dell Computers donated desktop computers. Comcast offered Internet access to the students, the School Board purchased software that focuses on math, reading comprehension and science. Teachers check the child’s progress on-line and adjust in-class curriculum to meet the students’ skill levels. Digital Harmony even won ITFlorida’s 2008 first place award for Excellence in Bridging the Digital Divide. Accomplishments like these, volunteer partners, and innovative leadership of Principal Kay Collins and her staff and faculty moved the school from an “F” to a “C” school. Our ultimate goal is for it to be “A” level.

This is a testament of what we can do when we collectively bring our strengths together to address an issue of concern. Whether it is Nims Middle School, building a home for a needy family, feeding the elderly or homeless – whatever that situation may be you have knowledge and numerous resources that you can contribute to help make a difference.

VOLUNTEER TO BE A MENTOR

The students of R. Frank Nims Middle School located at 723 W. Orange Avenue (850-488-5960) will greatly benefit from having you as a positive role model to aid their learning opportunities. Contact Ms. Betsy McCauley, District Volunteer Specialist with Leon County Schools @ 487-7800 to obtain the volunteer/mentoring application and to register for the required training. Learn more about Leon County Schools Mentoring Program at www.leon.k12.fl.us

- Select orange tab: Community
- Under Community Resources select: Volunteer & Mentor Information
- Select: Mentor Program
- Select: Mentor Program General Questions

Please Note: To be a Leon County School Mentor you MUST attend a training session and be fingerprinted. If you want to attend the training AND get fingerprinted the same day, you should allow 1½ hours to complete the process. There is no cost to the mentor for the fingerprint / background check.

“Serving is Leading”



R. Frank Nims Middle School
www.DigitalHarmonyLeon.com



ADOPT A COMPUTER
You Can Help Make The Difference!

The upcoming school term of 2009-2010 promises to be the biggest and most successful one of the three year Digital Harmony project at Nims Middle School. You can help us meet our goal to continue to provide computers to the students at Nims by “adopting” one or more students and contributing to the purchase of their DH computer and program costs. This costs \$700 per student. Please assist by contributing to Digital Harmony to help one or more students!

HOW CAN I ADOPT A COMPUTER?

Make a contribution and adopt one or more computers online at www.digitalharmonyleon.com. You can also contact my office at 850-891-8503 or the Go Beyond Foundation at 850-894-1752 for more information about Digital Harmony and how you can help.

All contributions go directly to the Digital Harmony program at Nims Middle School to purchase computers.

Though government has an important role to play in meeting the many challenges that remain before us, we are coming to understand that no organization, including government, will fully succeed without the active participation of each of us. Volunteers are vital to enabling this country to live up to the true promise of its heritage. ~ Former President Bill Clinton

Fund Florida’s Future



Although I am not a school board member or a parent of any of the public/private students, I am very concerned about the state of public education. I believe that every child in this country deserves and ought to have the opportunity to learn. Their zip code should not be a determinant of whether or not they have that opportunity. If we give every child the resources to be taught we will see a reduction in the costs of incarceration, mental health, and other byproducts of an undereducated society.

State of Florida legislators need to make funding education a top priority if Florida plans to be competitive in this new 21st Century global economy. We are supposed to be educating the next generation of world leaders. Education costs continue to rise and the budget seems to be creatively balanced on the backs of K-12 and college level students.



Gillum speaking in support of Fund Florida’s Education Rally 3/3/09 at The Capitol

For some students, a 4-year college degree becomes an 8-year degree because they have to work part-time or full-time to pay for their education. Quality faculty and staff are also being relieved of duty. We must spread the pain; the cost of bearing this tough economy cannot be borne solely by the public service organizations and by public universities.

Let’s value education and do whatever we can to expand the opportunities of youth and encourage them to be involved in their community. One of my goals is to form a partnership between state, local governments and civic/community organizations to provide services to local high school youth that promote social responsibility, civic awareness and skills for enhanced communal, family and peer relationships through (1) leadership development, (2) community service involvement, and (3) safe entertainment opportunities. I will keep you posted as the idea evolves.

“Serving is Leading”

We can best achieve the society that we all aspire to see by “playing the role”. There are three traits that I think we must exhibit in order to move forward.

Connect – engage people of diverse ages & backgrounds in the process.

Innovate – resist complacency with past success.

Create – reach beyond your own space.

Following are highlights from some community events where I’ve shared this message.

- **Tallahassee Active Lifelong Leaders (TALL) – Class 2 Graduation Speaker** (March 2009)



Gillum, Kate Tucker and her son Ahmantsiyah-Rahm celebrate her graduation.

- **Access Tallahassee “Access to Issues” Speaker** (February 2009). Young professionals learned about legislative issues affecting the Access Generation while networking with elected officials, business leaders and peers.

Chansidy Daniels wrote, *“I enjoyed speaking with you after the event. I was inspired by your story of running for office. Who knows! I would love to speak more to you regarding your background and get some feedback from you.”*

- **FSU Student Organization Advisory and Review Board (SOAR) Banquet Speaker** (February 2009). SOAR’s works with student organizations to ensure their success through advising and leadership development.

- **Chiles High School – Black History Program Speaker** (February 2009)

A teacher wrote, *“Your speech was a great inspiration to the students and teachers. Is there a particular afternoon that you are available to discuss more about ‘how the great, became great’ or how the ‘up and coming become great’?”*

[\(Continued next column.\)](#)

Highlights of Community Events (continued)

- **Riley Elementary School – Black History Program Speaker** - 3rd through 5th Grades (February 2009). See student notes below.



Gillum @ Pineview Elementary

Dear Mr. Andrew Gillum, Thank you for visiting our school. Every thing you said was right. You told us to be respectful and be good – 3rd grader.

Dear Mr. Gillum, I enjoyed your poem “The Man Who Thinks He Can”. Your poem

inspired me to never give up, because if you give up you would not achieve – 4th Grader.

Dear Mr. Gillum, Thank you for coming to our school. I hope you come back with even a better poem than the first time. Thank you for taking the time off to visit and have fun with us. I really love the poem you recited. It reminded me of a lot of things. Every one in my class loved the poem. Thanks a lot – 4th Grader.

- **We Believe in Youth Day – Keynote Speaker** (December 2008). Program designed for ages 11-16 from the southside of Tallahassee to promote in them a sense of hopefulness, possibility, and belief in a positive future.

Dr. Huberta Jackson-Lowman, Chair & Associate Professor, FAMU Department of Psychology wrote, *“Commissioner Gillum made public service and his role as a Commissioner very understandable and interesting to the children. His kind, compassionate, caring, and down-to-earth demeanor and his honesty about his own humble beginnings made his achievements even more impressive to all of us. We were very gratified by his recognition of the importance of reaching out to youth and his willingness to take the time to talk with them.*

- **Tallahassee-St. Maarten Foundation** – met with St. Maarten delegates regarding strengthening local educational opportunities for St. Maartenian students. (February & March 2009)



Steven Knight, President, Tallahassee-St. Maarten Foundation, Calvin Mardembrough, Head of Study Financing, Sara Wescot-Williams, Head of Government, Arthur Lugisse, Founder, Tallahassee-St. Maarten Foundation and Governmental Liaison.



Sara Wescot-Williams, Head of Government



Commissioner Maria Molanus-Buncamper, St. Maarten Government

🌀 For Your Information 🌀

On-line Tallahassee-Leon County (TLC) Water Atlas website, <http://www.tlc.wateratlas.usf.edu/> provides a digital gateway to help interested citizens, educators, students and professionals access local data and information about local natural water resources.

Home Cooking - Our Jobs, Our Economy, Our Future is a new initiative spearheaded by the Mayor's office to receive citizen input on how to foster local job creation and the economy. Visit talgov.com to share your comments with the Mayor.

Tallahassee Active Lifelong Leaders (TALL)

Become a TALL Senior! TALL offers educational experiences for older adults (age 55 or older) to explore and pursue leadership and civic engagement opportunities. For info or application for Class 3 contact [Hella Spellman](#) at the Tallahassee Senior Center or (850) 891-4007.

🌀 April Calendar Events 🌀

"Subject to Change"

Date	Time	Event
2	2 pm	Comp Plan Workshop
4	11 am	Annual Legislative Brunch
7	8:30 am	6 th Annual Growing with Tallahassee
7	1 pm – 4 pm	Office Appointments
7	4 pm	CC Meeting @ CHC
13	2:30 pm	HHS @ CH
15	10 am	LRTI @ CH
15	1 pm	Special Budget Workshop
18	1 pm – 7 pm	Earth Day Concert & Exhibition @ Bradfordville Blues Club
22	8 am – 3 pm	Office Appointments
22	3 pm	CRA @ CHC
22	4 pm	CC Meeting @ CHC
28	1 pm	Schott Foundation Board
???	8:30 am	Digital Harmony Team @ Nims Middle School

Code:

CC – City Commission

CH– City Hall

CHC – City Hall Chambers

CRA – Community Redevelopment Agency

CRTPA – Capital Region Transportation Planning Agency

HHS – Health & Human Services Target Issue Committee

LRTI – Long Range Target Issue Committee

"Serving is Leading"