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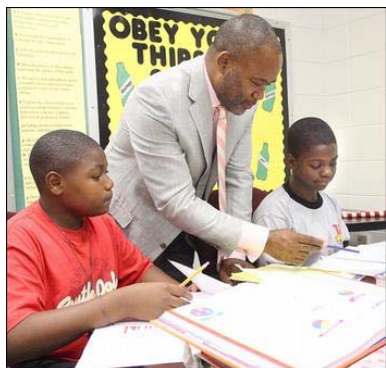
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100 Black Men of Valdosta, Inc., president Roy Copeland makes a scholarship announcement to Valdosta Early College Academy students with Valdosta State University president Dr. Pat Schloss, Valdosta City School superintendent Dr. Mike Cason, VECA principal Ingrid Hall and 100 Black Men treasurer Willie T. Head Jr. Friday at the VECA classroom at VSU.



100 Black Men of Valdosta, Inc., president Roy Copeland helps Valdosta Early College Academy students Jameel Brown, 11, left, and Raequone Williams, 11,

Published August 29, 2008 10:29 pm -

Making the grade

100 Black Men gives scholarships to VECA students

By Johnna Pinholster

VALDOSTA — The 100 Black Men of Valdosta will give \$1,000 scholarships to the top 50 percent of the first graduating class of the Valdosta Early College Academy.

The announcement was made by organization President Roy Copeland to one class of VECA sixth graders on Friday.

“The question for you guys is not ‘Will I go to college?’ It will be ‘Where will I go to college?’” Copeland said.

In addition to the scholarship funds for the first graduating class, all of the classes afterwards will have a chance to compete for three scholarships to attend Valdosta State University.

“The challenge for you is to not only graduate but to go further,” Copeland said.

He also issued a challenge to Valdosta State University President Dr. Patrick Schloss to encourage the university’s foundation to meet or exceed the funds provided by the 100 Black Men of Valdosta.



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following the announcement of scholarships being presented to the top 50 percent of the first graduating class.

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Schloss accepted the challenge on behalf of VSU and Copeland said any amount of money that VSU presented for scholarships his organization would try to beat or match.

“We expect this to grow to a point that we didn’t even imagine,” Copeland said.

He encouraged administrators from the university and Valdosta City Schools to reach out to other organizations and businesses within the community to help achieve these scholarship goals.

“You kids will look back on this man (Roy Copeland) when you are my age and say that was the real Santa Claus,” Schloss said. “People like him do this because they care.”

VECA is a partnership between the Valdosta City School System and VSU. It is currently located on the VSU campus at the Dewar College of Education. In the Fall of 2009, the school will be moved to the old S.L. Mason campus. Each year, two additional classes of 18 sixth graders will be added to the school.



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