First Freedom Event
A Treat for Students

By Patty Kruszewski

After two years with Partnership for the Future, Danielle Scott, Greg Morris, Jennifer Sayles and Nakiya Pitts are sold on the program. The Highland Springs H.S. seniors did not need to meet a congressman, or a former U.S. secretary of state, to convince them they are part of something special.

But on Jan. 25, when they were invited to the First Freedom awards as guests of a business sponsor, they got to meet a couple of VIP’s anyway.

Madeleine K. Albright, who was presented that night with the Distinguished Service Award by the Council for America’s First Freedom, met with the students at a reception before the dinner. Getting his picture taken with the former secretary of state is one of the moments Morris will remember for a long time -- along with the ambiance of the “Jefferson Hotel itself and the formality of the night.”

Scott agrees that “dressing up, the aura, and just being there” were highlights, in addition to meeting Albright. But she, Pitts and Sayles thought Congressman Bobby Rush also thought Albright thought it was networking. “[At the Jefferson dinner] I gave out my business card!” she continues, accompanied by nods all around from her friends. “We get free college visits, and fee waivers. And if there’s anything I’ve learned, it’s networking. [At the Jefferson dinner] I gave out my business card!”

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