

Thomas P. Gordon
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NEWS RELEASE

Rose Hill Young Writers Workshop wins national honors for book

County Executive Thomas P. Gordon announced Thursday that the Young Writers Workshop at the Rose Hill Boys & Girls Club's book, "The Story of Dr. Velma," won honorable mention in Scholastic Books' *Kids Are Authors* national competition.

The members of the Rose Hill Young Writers Workshop will receive \$500 in books from Scholastic and a special award for their book based on Dr. Velma Scantlebury, associate director of the Kidney Transplant Program at Christiana Care. Out of more than 1,000 book projects submitted, the Rose Hill Young Writers Workshop team was the only winner from the state of Delaware.

"Isn't it great to hear about what our local children are capable of when given the chance to do something constructive?" Gordon said. "These children are writers now, and I think that's fantastic. I congratulate this dedicated group of youths for their hard work as well as Community Services General Manager Sophia Hanson for providing leadership that these children won't forget."

Councilman Jea Street, whose district includes Rose Hill and advocates regularly for effective educational programs, also extended congratulations to the team.

"I would like to thank everyone involved with this program for a job well done," Street said. "This is a major accomplishment for the participants, their parents, their instructors and all those who made the program possible."

In an effort to expose children to writing, editing, illustrating and the overall collaborative book development process, New Castle County's Department of Community Services established the New Castle County Young Writers Workshop sponsored by the county, M&T Bank and Delaware PAL. Under the supervision of project coordinators, eight teams worked to write and illustrate their own book. The creative process of working in teams provided a natural environment to practice editing, teamwork and communication skills. All students involved earned a sense of pride and accomplishment from completing the team project.

The Boys & Girls Club at Rose Hill was one of the County's eight Young Writers sites. This team's project leader was Sophia Hanson. As Rose Hill was a site last year, most of the team members were returning participants.

Their sophomore book, "Dr. Velma", featured the first African American, female transplant surgeon in the United States. Scantlebury visited the students at Rose Hill as they worked on their book.

The students spent an hour interviewing Scantlebury as part of their research.

"It was really educational to meet and interview a surgeon," team member Jordon Spencer said.

Hanson beamed as she shared the news with County Executive Gordon.

"My students were awesome," Hanson said. "They deserve every bit of this recognition. I'm so proud of them. And I want to thank their parents for allowing their children to experience something that is going to help them for their rest of their lives.

"I want to also thank Sonja Homer, Susan Eggert and Heather Mergenthaler for helping me with this project!" she added.

Please mark your calendar for the May 31 ceremony with Dr. Scantlebury. A press release from New Castle County and Christiana Care with more information will be forthcoming in the near future.

For a photo of the team and the book cover, please [click here](#).