Lifelong Learning Center holds 37th graduation

Speakers discuss road to Maryland diploma

By JAMIE ANFENSON-COMEAU

The month of October isn't generally associated spite the gowns and tassels, the event Thursday evening

ation ceremony, either.

"This graduation cerewith graduations — and de- mony celebrates a special has been many years in the tional Center, held its 37th ma Program (NEDP) ex- Page A9

at North Point High School making," said Lititia Warwas not your typical gradu- ren, instructional specialist at the Lifelong Learning Center.

The center, housed at the and joyous occasion that Robert D. Stethem Educa-

annual Graduation Ceremo- aminations during the 2015ny Thursday to recognize all those who had attained a Maryland State Diploma through successful completion of the General Educa- 37 attended the graduation tional Development (GED) or National External Diplo-

2016 school year.

There were a total of 109 graduates during the previous school year, but only

See LIFELONG

Wednesday, October 26, 2016 Maryland Independent Page A9

LIFELONG

From Page A1

ceremony, along with their families, friends and staff.

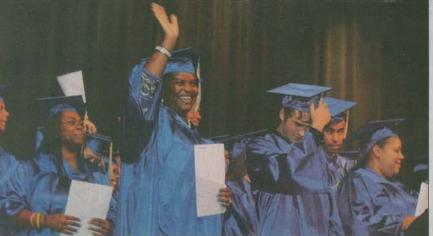
The Charles County Adult Education Program, operated through the Lifelong Learning Center, offers daytime and evening classes for GED and NEDP preparation, as well as English as a second language (ESL), basic skills training, career pathways and citizenship classes, according to its website.

Sen. Thomas "Mac" Middleton {span}(D-Charles) {/span} congratulated students on their accomplishments.

to, this is my very, very favorite, because these students realize they've got to have that degree and that diploma," Middleton said. "For many of you, this is going to be just the first of many steps forward."

Charles County Public Schools Superintendent Kimberly Hill commended students for their accomplishments.

"There's a familiar saying that the road to success is always under construction," Hill said. "Maythe Lifelong Learning Center. To- committed and dedicated per- achieving my goals."



STAFF PHOTOS BY JAMIE ANFENSON-COMEAU

"Of all the graduations that I go Lifelong Learning Center graduates celebrate after receiving their Maryland State Diplomas during commencement ceremonies Thursday evening.

that in order to get ahead in life, night, you are on the right road, the road that led you to continue your education. Work hard, take risks and always expect more from yourselves than you think is possible."

One such graduate was Yao Blah Aimee Aka, the GED graduate speaker. Warren said Aka took three buses to get to the Lifelong Learning Center.

"Aimee came to us in the latbe it was a detour that led you to came in with a storm. She is a

son," Warren said.

Aka, a native of West Africa, said she began attending the classes at the center after leaving an abusive marriage - first to improve her English skills, and later to obtain her GED. Now she is attending the College of Southern Maryland, she said.

"Thanks to my teachers at the Lifelong Learning Center, for always making themter part of 2015 and she just selves available to me," Aka said. "Now I am on my way to

Heather Julian was the NEDP graduate speaker. Julian said she left school and got married at age 18.

"I knew that earning my high school diploma was not only something I wanted to accomplish, but something I needed to do," Julian said.

Julian is now attending the College of Southern Maryland, where she is pursuing a degree in criminal justice.

"You cannot accomplish something if you never try," Julian



Yao Blah Aimee Aka, the GED graduate speaker, spoke about her experiences earning her Maryland state diploma during the Lifelong Learning Center's 37th annual graduation ceremony



Julian, NEDP graduate speaker, spoke of her experiences in earning her Maryland state diploma during the Lifelong Learning Center's 37th annual graduation ceremony Thursday evening.

said. "I encourage everyone to never give up on your dreams, and it's never to late to have a new

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