

# Kirk Gaddy honored for volunteerism

Even as he works full-time as principal of St. Katharine School in East Baltimore, Dr. Kirk Gaddy makes sure he also carves out a minimum of 25 hours every month for volunteer service in his community.

He is the chair of the board of directors for the Head Start program at St. Francis Xavier, Baltimore; works to help educate inner-city boys; and serves as an active volunteer with the Alpha Phi Alpha fraternity. He's also very involved at his home parish of St. Francis Xavier, Baltimore, where he was a former parish council president.

In recognition of his dedicated volunteerism, Dr. Gaddy was recently named "man of the year" by the National Association of Negro Business and Professional Women's Club. The award was presented June 16 in Reisterstown.

Dr. Gaddy said he enjoys giving back to the community and tries to model that behavior for his students and his three children. His parents got him hooked on giving back, he said.

"It's something they instilled in us very early on," said Dr. Gaddy, recalling how he and his siblings spent many Saturdays cleaning the Baltimore schools they attended at Ss. James and John, St. Wenceslaus and St. Frances Academy.

As a youngster, Dr. Gaddy often helped mow the grass at Redemptorist cemeteries and he later served on his parish's transportation committee, helping nuns get to church.

Dr. Gaddy's parents were so committed to volunteerism at Ss. James and John that an annual volunteerism award is given at the school in their name, he said.

"My mantra is to count your blessings and share those blessings," Dr. Gaddy said. "When you see something to be done, just jump in and get it done."

Dr. Gaddy said he's proud of his students at St. Katharine. During the last school year, all eighth graders were required to perform 15 hours of volunteer service to graduate. Many of them far surpassed the minimum requirement, he said.

"There's a strong tradition in the African-American community of helping make the community better off than how we inherit it," he said. "To whom much is given, much is required."