

Rap scientist psychs students into furthering their education

By Joseph F. Jalkiewicz
BCT staff writer

BEVERLY — It's hard enough to get kids excited about math and science Monday through Friday, let alone get them "hyped" about those subjects on a Saturday morning.

But the Youth Achievers' Committee succeeded in firing up a group of elementary and high school students at the Beverly School this past weekend, with a little help from such organizations and people as the FBI, Rohm and Haas Corp. and Grand Hank, the rap scientist.

"If you're hyped about school, say 'I'm hyped!'" Grand Hank rapped, with the students yelling back, "I'm hyped!"

"If you're hyped about school, say 'I'm hyped!'"

"I'm hyped!"

Grand Hank — otherwise known as Tyraine Regsdale, a separation scientist with the R.W. Johnson Pharmaceutical Research Institute in Springhouse, Pa. — was among a host of representatives on hand at the Bentley Avenue school to speak to students during the Math and Science Career Awareness Workshop.

Bertha Morgan, a Burlington Township resident who is a member of the Youth Achievers' Committee, said the group sponsors the annual workshop, along with an annual Math and Science Fair, to "stress to students the importance of math and science to success in life."

"Just about every field a student can go into, there is science and math," Mrs. Morgan said as the four-hour workshop drew to a close. "It's very important to know these subjects."

The Youth Achievers' Committee, she said, is a county-wide



BCT photo/Sherry Atlin Bonds
Tyraine Regsdale, a separation scientist with the R.W. Johnson Pharmaceutical Research Institute in Springhouse, Pa., uses rap to motivate students to pursue careers in math or science.

group made up of about 24 people from "all walks of life" whose aim is to guide black and other minority students into careers in the sciences.

Yesterday, representatives from Bristol Myers-Squibb, DuPont, Ran-cocas Hospital, Rohm and Haas, the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection and Energy, the FBI and the Liberty Science Center in Jersey City all gave workshops designed to acquaint students with positions in their organizations that rely heavily on math and science skills.

An FBI investigator, for example, talked about how the bureau uses math and science to track down criminals. A chemist from Rohm and Haas talked about the importance of math in his job.

The estimated 100 students and parents who attended the event were allowed to attend three sessions in the morning and they all

got to watch Grand Hank's entertaining, informative presentation on education at noon.

Set to loud rap music in the school's gymnasium, Grand Hank's 40-minute show had the audience laughing, cheering and dancing in rhythm with Hank and his partner, Bill Kitt.

"To save the nation, we have to stress education," they rapped. "You can work hard now or work hard later. Education makes life better."

The entire workshop received good reviews.

"It was really good," said Chris Sheridan, 13, a sixth-grader at Beverly School, who added that Grand Hank's session was his favorite portion of the day.

"I thought it was excellent," said Tiffany McKinney, 16, a junior at Burlington Township High School.