

Step Up For Students

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Governor Jeb Bush (rear center), Bishop Vaughn McLaughlin (l) with three of the Potter's House Christian Academy students; Ashley Hart, Shemiah Rutledge, and Romanus Bryant.

Jacksonville, FL - Governor Bush and Attorney General Charlie Christ addressed 2,200 parents, students and teachers at a Step Up For Students rally at The Potter's House Christian Fellowship recently. Gathered to thank Jacksonville-area corporations that fund scholarships for low-income students, participants also recognized the academic achievements of scholarship recipients. Duval County, home to more than 1,100 scholarship students and 77 participating schools, was chosen to host the event because of the North Florida community's strong support for school choice.

Governor Jeb Bush told the audience members that he believes that every parent, regardless of their financial situation, should be empowered to find

the best school for the children. "I commend the companies helping these families, and I commend the families themselves for their commitment to education."

Rep. Don Davis and Rep. Jennifer Carroll were also among participants who heard the personal story of Linda Rutledge, whose son Nemiah (17), and daughter Shemiah (15), are H.E.R.O.E.S. (CTC) scholarship recipients. Nemiah, who has special learning needs, was struggling academically in the public school setting. Shemiah, always a strong student, needed a smaller, more attentive social setting than a public school could offer.

The Potter's House, where they are now enrolled, has allowed each of them to excel. Both children volunteer regularly and Shemiah was recently inducted into the National Honor Society.

"I needed a better setting for my children; they both found the attention the need at The Potter's House. And I'm glad I have a H.E.R.O.E.S. scholarship, so I could make that choice for them. My son and daughter are stronger students and better citizens now."