



# Flying High

*EAGLE winners honored for achievements in literacy*

By Laura Kenney

Tears and laughter were the hallmarks of the 2004 annual EAGLE awards banquet held on January 22 at Atlanta's Sheraton Buckhead Hotel, where adult literacy professionals from around the state gathered to celebrate Exceptional Adult Georgians in Literacy Education.

EAGLE is Georgia's premier adult literacy student recognition program, designed to spotlight educational opportunities available in local communities. The event involves several hundred students advancing through local to state-level competition. At the annual EAGLE banquet, two EAGLEs are named the statewide Student Literacy Ambassador and GED Graduate Literacy Ambassador.

"This is our 11th anniversary," explained Kay Lynn, an adult literacy director who welcomed attendees to the 2004 awards banquet. "It marks a time of renewal and uplift."

Among those celebrated for their uplifting achievements were 2004 Student Literacy Ambassador Simone Younge and 2004 GED Graduate Literacy Ambassador Keith Jones. "We commend you for your courage and dedication," DTAE State Board Chairman Harold Reynolds told Younge and Jones, who were each awarded \$2,004 and a stunning crystal award in the shape of an eagle.

Younge was "thrilled" to be named an EAGLE winner. "I will always be an advocate of the Adult Literacy program," said Younge, who is pursuing an early childhood education degree. "With this program, adults get a second chance to pursue their dreams."

Jones made the celebration of his second chance a family affair, becoming the second in his family to be named GED Graduate Literacy Ambassador and earning the same accolade won by his brother, Cortez Scott, last year. At the banquet, Jones explained how he overcame a world of hurt with help from a Georgia Adult Literacy program.

"I started hanging out with the local crew, making money any way I could," the Syracuse native said about his struggles after his sister was murdered. A move to Georgia put him on the path to success. Now enrolled in Georgia Military College, Jones maintains a 3.5 GPA and plans to transfer to a four-year school and major in business administration.

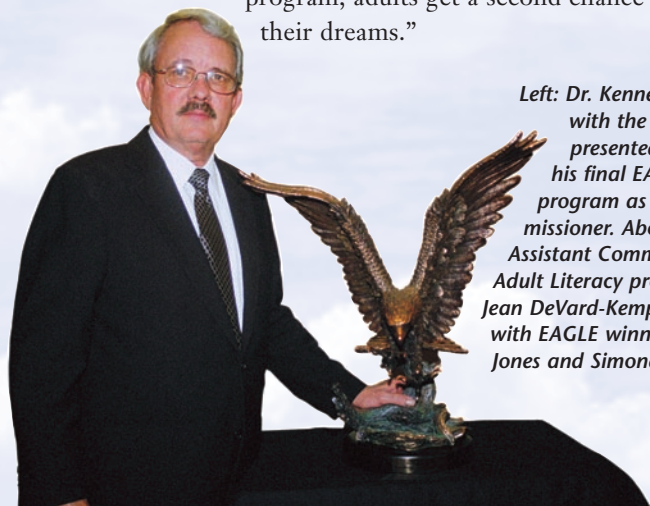
Capping off the evening were stirring tributes, including a video celebrating Dr. Kenneth Breeden's work with the program at his final EAGLE banquet as DTAE commissioner. Calling Dr. Breeden "Georgia's number-one EAGLE always," Dr. Jean DeVard-Kemp, DTAE assistant commissioner, Adult Literacy programs, presented him with a large eagle sculpture.

"What you have done has changed the lives of your families for generations to come," Dr. Breeden told the GED graduates in his farewell EAGLE speech as DTAE commissioner. "There's nothing I'm more proud of than the fact that my name is on a quarter of a million GED diplomas in Georgia." **R**



**"Dr. Breeden and Dr. Jean DeVard-Kemp, the state of Georgia owes you a debt of gratitude."**

*– Harold Reynolds,  
DTAE State  
Board Chairman*



*Left: Dr. Kenneth Breeden with the eagle statue presented to him at his final EAGLE awards program as DTAE commissioner. Above: DTAE Assistant Commissioner of Adult Literacy programs Dr. Jean DeVard-Kemp (center) with EAGLE winners Keith Jones and Simone Younge.*