

HLI Hits The Road  
B Rolanda Williams Baldwin

Early on a humid morning in July 17 sleepy yet excited Higher Learning Institute mentors and students loaded a charter bus headed for a three day, six college campus tour. An important factor in choosing a college is visiting the college to see what it is really like. Interacting with the campus first hand gives a more realistic feel of the campus than just reading a brochure on the school. The first stop was Elizabeth City State University in Elizabeth City, North Carolina. The students visited actual dorm rooms and got to experience college life first hand by eating in the campus cafeteria. That afternoon, we toured Norfolk State University in Norfolk, Virginia. The students were very impressed by a state of the computer lab that is available to all Norfolk State students. That evening after checking into the hotel and eating dinner, we enjoyed a relaxing evening by the pool.

We started bright and early the next morning with a tour of the picturesque Hampton University Campus in Hampton, Virginia. This campus on the waterfront is well known for academic excellence and a rich history. After grabbing lunch in the Student Union, we loaded the bus and headed to Petersburg, Virginia to visit Virginia State University. Although the students were few on campus due to summer school being over, the tour guides painted a lively picture of student life on the campus. That evening we drove to Alexandria, VA, checked into the hotel, ate dinner, and enjoyed an evening of Laser Tag at a local arcade.

The next morning, we fought rush hour traffic into the capital city to visit Howard University. This exposed the student to college life in a major metropolis. We ended the tour that afternoon in Richmond, Virginia at the Virginia Union University, the alma mater of Virginia's first black governor Douglas Wilder and NBA star Charles Barkley.

The tour exposed the students to many of the topics discussed in the Saturday morning sessions and provided a fun trip to liven the summer months. The Williams Memorial Church Family should be proud of our youth, not only for their desire to reach higher heights in academics and their careers, but also because of their desire to live Godly lives. The group was complemented numerous times by strangers on the respectful behavior displayed by the group.

In August, the Higher Learning Institute celebrated the "Back To School" season with a pool party. The next planned activities are a Shadow Day on October 17 and a Parent Workshop in November.