

# TOGETHER, WE RESHAPE THE MINDS OF TOMORROW



The Boys, Girls, Adults Community Development Center's fortieth banquet on Nov. 8 was a profound inspiration. It gave the opportunity to highlight a person who has been a continuing inspiration and example for the generation of youngsters and adults in the community.

This year's banquet served as a moment to acknowledge an individual who has put himself on a pedestal for the young and future generations to look up to and follow in his footsteps. The labors and accolades of Mr. Johnny Gage should serve as motivation to conquer the everyday challenges we face now and in the future. He is the epitome of what it means to lead a community where people unite, pursue what is right, and shape a better future for the better good.

Johnny Gage was born and raised in Marvell. He attended and graduated from Marvell High School in 1984. After high school, he moved to Little Rock. Home is a lot of places, including Little Rock, Marvell, and Helena-West Helena. He is a truck driver for Averitt Express, owns and operates the Holloway-Gage Funeral Home in Helena-West Helena as a licensed funeral director, and is president of a nonprofit organization called Marvell Community Empowerment, Inc. He and his wife of twenty-eight years, Phyllis Wilburn-Gage, are the parents of six children.

Gage emphasized the importance of being part of a community, searching for common ground, and working together rather than against each other—a message that might be useful for the state and the nation today. His words were powerful, motivational, and encouraging. He gave meaning to the banquet's theme: "*Together, We Shape the Minds of Tomorrow.*" As an experienced community leader, Mr. Gage makes it clear that the future generation will become the next set of leaders, and with the right guidance, they will be extraordinary.

Overall, the banquet was a threefold occasion for BGACDC: to acknowledge its board of directors, supporters, and community members, to pay tribute to BGACDC's beloved former financial manager, Sister Beverly Jean Arnold-Turner, and to highlight Mr. Gage's presence and the positive influence he has made on his community he calls home. We thank everyone for their support in whatever form it came and look forward to serving everyone in our forty-sixth year.

