

North Toronto Town Crier

## Drop-outs find ways to learn

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By Kris Scheuer

Lawrence Heights resident James Everette has improved his literacy skills enough to read stories to his three young children.

The 29-year-old was in and out of school but managed to complete grade 10. For the past year he's worked hard with a tutor at Frontier College to upgrade his reading.

He was one of 17 adults who received achievement certificates at the college near Yonge St. and St. Clair Ave. on June 20. Everette also received the Patricia McNeil Award, which recognized his progress and his community involvement.

"My motivation: I have three kids, a six year-old and twin four-year-old girls," said Everette before the ceremony. "I didn't want to look stupid in front of them."

A year ago, he said, he could only read children's books. Now he has read novels such as the V.C. Andrews series including *Flowers in the Attic*.

While he has improved greatly, Everette still needs work on his literacy to be able to complete his general education development course and take the provincial exam, which he hopes to do before he turns 30 in January.

His goal is to become a nurse's aid or paramedic. He's lived in Lawrence Heights his whole life and says that it was a combination of bullying and getting into trouble with the law that led him to drop out of high school.

"Now I am cleaning up my life," he said. "I love this program. I am just trying to better myself." He is not alone.



BY THE BOOK: Frontier College instructor Awale Jama, left, tutors Avi Silver in preparation for his GED exam.

Every weekday morning the Barbara Frum library plays host to three Frontier College literacy and computer skills programs for teens and young adults 16 to 29 living in Lawrence Heights, Neptune and Lutherton Pathway.

One of those classes is the GED program to prepare participants for the provincial exam to get their high school equivalency.

Lawrence Heights resident Avi Silver plans to go into construction management at George Brown College once he completes his program.

“It’s local and free,” said the 19-year-old who has been out of school for four years. “You have to be motivated for it. If I fail, it’s because of me.”