

Judge offers city students an example of success

Governor gives 2nd oath at Dunbar

By Michael Ollove

What several hundred Baltimore students saw yesterday in the Dunbar High School auditorium was Robert M. Bell take the oath of office as a judge on Maryland's highest court, the Court of Appeals. What schoolmates and best friends Octavia Brice and Elissa James saw was a vision of their own futures. **SUN**

Judge Bell is what the two 15-year-old juniors at Lake Clifton High School intend to be: a graduate of Baltimore schools, an alumnus of Harvard Law School, a lawyer, a judge. Seeing him yesterday and listening to his encouragement merely reinforced the ambitions both girls say they have harbored and imagined for years. **SEP. 25 1991**

"Since his dreams can come true," Elissa said, "then so can ours."

That was precisely the message organizers of yesterday's ceremony hoped would be received when they decided to re-enact Judge Bell's swearing-in ceremony before a gathering of students at Dunbar.

Gov. William Donald Schaefer originally administered the oath of

office to Judge Bell at the State House in May. At 47, Judge Bell has now served at every level of the Maryland court system. **SUN**

After that May ceremony, which was attended by family and friends, Baltimore businessman Alan Guille, a friend of both the governor and Judge Bell, told Mr. Schaefer, "You're doing this in the wrong place."

He meant that Judge Bell's life story was an example that should be

shared with those who might be inspired by it, in particular with Baltimore students. Governor Schaefer, a graduate of City College, and Judge Bell, a Dunbar alumnus, agreed, and planning began for yesterday's ceremonies. **SEP. 25 1991**

After introductory speeches, Governor Schaefer again administered the oath to Judge Bell, who then donned the red judicial robe of the Court of Appeals and began a short

address to the students, who came from a variety of Baltimore schools to hear him. **SEP. 25 1991**

He told the students that they must believe in themselves, that they must accept help from others and that they must be grateful for that help when it is offered. He urged



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Governor Schaefer swears in Judge Robert Bell for a second time.

the students not to be conservative in their ambitions.

"The real tragedy is low aim, not failure," he said. "If you reach for the stars and only get the moon, that is not a tragedy." **SUN**

He insisted that students should not see his life story as unique. "I am, rather, one who obtained an opportunity," he said. "I was in the right place at the right time and worked very hard to get there."

Many of the students did not seem to pay attention. Some clowned with each other. A few read. Some closed their eyes and appeared to doze. But others seemed to be suitably impressed. **SEP. 25 1991**

Richard Butler, an eighth-grader from Northeast Middle School, was one. He came to the ceremony in a pinstripe suit and listened attentively, finding in Judge Bell's remarks encouragement for his own desires to learn about computers.

"He started from the bottom and made it to the top," said Richard. "If he can do it, I know I can do it."