

On Friday, May 7, in a standing-room-only crowd, 17 of the 19 graduates of the 2010 Parent Leadership Training Institute stepped forward to receive their certificates for having successfully completed the intensive 20-week PLTI program.

The graduates accepted their certificates and congratulations from Alexandria Mayor Bill Euille and the Hon. Joyce Woodson, PLTI Board Chair. Both Euille and Woodson spoke to the graduates and family and friends with Woodson noting that the program has become so well known in the community that the Alexandria City Council chambers may be outgrown for future graduation ceremonies.

Alexandria Public Schools Superintendent Morton Sherman offered congratulations to this graduating class and optimism that their advocacy will have an impact on the next generation. Elaine Zimmerman, a founding leader of the first PLTI program begun at the Connecticut Commission on Children, spoke about the achievement of the Alexandria program and the successful paths of many of the graduates, as did Fay Slotnick, Executive Director of PLTI Alexandria.

Chyrell Bucksell, the democratically-elected Speaker of the Class, gave a polished, forward-reaching speech in which she noted that the Mayor and City Council could expect to hear more from PLTI graduates. Having said that, Bucksell went on to highlight the need for single parents to have childcare during City Council and School Board meetings so that they can advocate more effectively. She received a standing ovation.

Many of the children of PLTI students were recognized during the ceremony for participation in their version of the parents' program, the Children's Leadership Training Institute.

The celebration continued in the Vola Lawson lobby of City Hall, with refreshments and talk of accomplishments and plans all around.

Special thanks to the reception donors: Beth Temple, Pat Miller and Gloria Spottswood for food; Nora Partlow of St. Elmo's for punch; Joy Boddie for cake; Royce for flowers.