



# SAVES



## STARS Scholarship Recipient Shines



Patrick Volcin, and one of his proud teachers, Ms. Leticia Vega

Starting in January of 2006, the SAVES program initiated the STARS scholarships. An acronym for SAVES Training Assistance for Refugee Students (STARS), the aim of the scholarship is to help our students complete their vocational careers. One of the first students to receive this scholarship is the focus of this issue –Patrick Volcin. While in Miami, Mr. Taddese Fessehaye, a Refugee Services contract monitor, met Mr. Volcin and was most impressed by his class load despite a very busy schedule. Here is Patrick’s story in his own words.

“My name is Patrick Volcin. I am a student at The English Center, where I am studying in the Network Systems Administration program to become a Microsoft Certified Systems Engineer (MCSE).

I came to the U.S. in August 2004. I had to leave my country, Haiti, due to political reasons after being a police officer and a diplomatic security agent for almost nine years. In December of that same year, I joined the SAVES program which covered all my expenses, tuition, books, and class materials

I am planning to finish my MCSE program in December 2006, and I am on the right track to become a Microsoft certified engineer. This is definitely a great opportunity because it enables me to enter a

very competitive world with valuable credentials. This would be the realization of my dreams.”

Patrick impresses those he meets with his mastery of English, enthusiasm, drive and intelligence. According to Mr. Volcin, the importance of education is fundamental in the resettlement process for refugees and asylees. “Here, it’s all about competition. The more educated you are, the better the chances of finding a good job.” His advice for other SAVES students is to continue with their education at all costs. According to Patrick, “I took advantage of every opportunity offered to me. Everything that I gained from SAVES will improve my future.” He is certain that in a year’s time, he will be working for a big company while continuing with his education.

One of the greatest resources of the SAVES program is the amount of individualized attention that every one of our clients receives. At all of our 15 school sites throughout Miami Dade County, we have SAVES contact representatives and counselors who will create an Individual Educational and Employability Plan (IEEP) with the student. It is this personal attention that has made SAVES one of the most successful educational programs in Miami.

Prepared with funds from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services through the Florida Department of Children and Families, Office of Refugee Services.

If you know anyone else who would like to receive future newsletters, please send your request to Jtravieso1@dadeschools.net.

MDCPS  
Miami-Dade County Public Schools