



PHOTO/CYNTHIA DEAN

Danielle Driver, 8, finishes up her homework at the Give Back Organization.

Giving back to community

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SAT. The center is open Tuesdays and Thursdays from 5 to 9 p.m. at the Adult Learning Center for Saint Augustine's College on New Bern Avenue, across the street from WakeMed Hospital. St. Aug's professor Anthony Grady was instrumental in giving the organization a home on New Bern Avenue.

Jasmine Cannady was in the center's computer lab last week studying for a midterm for her civics and economics class. The Southeast Raleigh High sophomore said the Give Back Organization is very resourceful.

"The people are kind, and they like helping us with our homework," she said. "I also enjoy helping the younger ones with their homework."

After the older students finish their school work, they pitch in and help tutor the younger ones.

"Our philosophy is 'each one teach one,'" Robinson said.

Sandra Cannady brings her daughter and two sons to the center. She said daughter, Danielle Driver, 8, is an academically-gifted student, but

the extra support from the GBO helps her sharpen her learning skills.

"The tutors are excellent, and they really spend time with the students," Cannady said.

When her son needed help with his social studies report, the tutors helped him find information about the topic on the computer and organize it.

"They helped him through the whole process," she said.

The GBO also has fun activities for the children outside of the center. They have also held fund-raisers like car washes and dinner sales. The group will host a car wash and plate sale May 20 and July 8 at the Southgate Shopping Center in southeast Raleigh.

There were no tutorial programs like this available in east Spencer, N.C., where Robinson grew up.

"Kids, they just want someone to be there," he said.

After Robinson was in an almost fatal motorcycle accident in 2001, he had a revelation about what he should do with the rest of his life - help

youth succeed academically. Robinson suffered a bruised heart, two collapsed lungs and a swollen brain.

"I thought, well, I'm still here. He (God) left me here for a reason," he said.

Green graduated from St. Aug's with a degree in computer information systems. He thought Robinson was crazy when he came up with the idea to start the non-profit. "I wanted to know how we were going to eat and where we were going to find these kids," he said laughing.

Green sees the big impact that television, gangs and absent parents are having on today's youth.

"These kids need some role models. If we don't step up to the plate and take control now, it's going to look ugly," he said. "I feel this is my part in giving back. You actually get to see the child develop. It's like watching a flower blossom."

McNeal is the secretary for the organization as well as a volunteer tutor. She's also a proud St. Aug's graduate with a degree in communications.