

not just about the benjamins

Partnership between a largely black high school and the world of finance creates promise for both

BY RICH LORD

When Allen Johnson met Stormy Wolfe, he was a shy high school freshman with an embryonic interest in business. Wolfe was a sales and marketing administrator at the Federal Home Loan Bank of Pittsburgh. Their mission: Think up a marketable product and put together a compelling sales pitch. Their deadline: two hours.

"At first we thought about video games," says Johnson, of Homewood. They abandoned that concept, figuring there are already enough video games. "We were kind of at wit's end," says Wolfe.

The pair's problem stemmed from the Westinghouse High School Business and Finance Academy's curriculum. Unique in this region, the academy teaches high finance to high school students from disadvantaged neighborhoods and puts them in frequent contact with professionals.

This summer, it's placing recent grads and soon-to-be seniors into internships in the financial sector. It's an effort to "retain not only talent, but also a level of diversity in the [financial] community," says Daniel Horgan, youth-program officer for the Three Rivers Workforce Investment Board and an academy advisor.

Westinghouse High, in Homewood, has offered the Business and Finance Academy as a course since 1986, but two years ago the curriculum was markedly revamped. That's when Westinghouse High adopted



