SPECIAL CLASS GRADUATES

Adults Come Back To Get Education

Louisiana adult education graduates have freely elected to participate in such programs and have successfully completed them through their own determination, Sen. Allen Bares told 1982 graduates recently.

Bares, an active member of the Senate Education Committee, spoke at the Lafayette Parish School Board's Adult and Community Education Program graduation ceremonies.

"With the state of Louisiana spending $1.4 billion annually on elementary and secondary education, with federal aid and additional monies from local school boards, adult students, as well as the rest of us, have a right to make our expectations known to the school and to demand quality in this and every other education program. There's nothing wrong with education that can't be fixed," Bares said.

Lafayette Parish Superintendent of Schools Dr. Wayne Vasher explained to the audience of about 700 that the high school equivalency diploma represents stamina and fortitude on the part of the graduating students, and also much needed encouragement by family members and teachers. Successful completion of the requirements of the adult program results in the kind of confidence needed for assuming a leadership role in the community.

Vasher awarded diplomas to 100 members of the graduating class, which included a husband and wife who will also receive diplomas in carpentry from Lafayette Regional Institute; two mother-daughter pairs; a mother-son team; and two sisters.

Robert Arceneaux, supervisor of the Adult and Community Education program, said that 325 students earned the GED high school equivalency diploma in Lafayette Parish during 1981-82. In addition, some 1,600 students participated in the adult program at various academic levels. Many are attending classes to achieve basic literacy skills, defined by the Census Bureau as the completion of the fifth grade level of education, Arceneaux said. Others are working to overcome academic deficiencies which prevent them from functioning in certain job areas. The program also operates a popular English as a Second Language class.

There are full-time day and night classes housed at the Adult Center on 18th Street, the Lafayette Regional Vocational and Technical Institute and the Martin Luther King Center. Other classes meet at 13 locations throughout the parish. Enrollment in the adult program is free to those 18 or older.