Ernest Green, Pioneer for Racial Integration, Visits Siena

Green Shares His Unprecedented Experiences as One of the “Little Rock Nine”

SILVER SPRING, MD, March 16, 2009 – As part of their study of the Civil Rights movement, Siena students were honored to welcome Ernest Green, one of the nine students who first integrated Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas in 1957 to Siena. Mr. Green shared his remarkable story and answered questions about his experiences.

In 1954, the Supreme Court’s decision in Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas et al., officially ended the practice of segregation in public schools. Three years later, in the relatively moderate town of Little Rock, Arkansas, a number of African-American students were invited to attend Central High School. Nine accepted, including Mr. Green who enrolled as a senior.

Mr. Green told the students that having endured challenges and threats, his idea of the best revenge was to graduate despite the harassment. He attributed much of his success to his supportive family members who never questioned that he was doing the right thing in changing Central High School forever. When he graduated, a surprise visitor attended the ceremony: Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., who was not yet well known in Arkansas. “I’m one of the few people who can say that Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. attended my high school graduation!” said Mr. Green.
Mr. Green went on to a successful career working as part of the administration of President Jimmy Carter and serving on numerous boards, including the NAACP. Mr. Green is currently the Managing Director of Public Finance for Barclays Capital (formerly Lehman Brothers).

About The Siena School

The Siena School is an outstanding private school in Silver Spring, Maryland serving bright, college-bound students with language-based learning differences, such as dyslexia. Siena’s staff and board of advisors include distinguished national, state and local education leaders and professionals. The school serves children in grades 4-11, growing to grade 12 in 2009. Siena’s program is designed for students with mild to moderate learning needs who are experiencing a discrepancy between their academic achievement and intellectual abilities in one or more areas such as reading, writing, oral expression or math. Siena delivers an individualized educational program featuring small class sizes, research-based instructional methodologies, a highly trained staff and an educational environment specifically designed to meet the unique needs of our students. For further information, The Siena School can be contacted at (301) 592-0567 or on the web at www.thesienaschool.org.