



www.fultonschools.org

News Release

For Immediate Release
May 23, 2019

For More Information Contact
Communications, 470.254.6830
communications@fultonschools.org

Fulton County Schools celebrates amazing people with Teacher and Professionals of the Year Awards

School system's top employees named in surprise ceremonies

Honoring talented and dedicated individuals is one component of Fulton County School's (FCS) commitment to attracting, developing and retaining the best employees and fostering student achievement. As one of four pillars of the 2022 Strategic Plan set forth by the Board of Education, the annual recognition strengthens a culture that celebrates the amazing people who work for the district in all areas.

Over several weeks this spring, FCS announced its top employees – the 2019 Teacher of the Year, Principals of the Year, School Professional of the Year and Support Professional of the Year – at surprise ceremonies.

Special recognition banners and other gifts of appreciation were presented to the honorees by their principal and other school system leaders. Interim FCS Superintendent Dr. Cindy Loe, Chief Academic Officer Cliff Jones, Chief Operations Officer Patrick Burke, and school board members Linda Bryant, President, Kimberly Dove and Linda McCain joined in for the surprise, as well as family members and other special guests for the various celebrations.

Pamela Whitlock of Chattahoochee High School was announced as FCS' Teacher of the Year. **Martina Franklin** of Liberty Point Elementary School was announced as the district's School Professional of the Year, and bus driver **Ed Weiss** was voted Support Professional of the Year.

This year, FCS honored a principal from each of the four learning communities. Each of these employees was chosen for their exemplary work, leadership and excellence in the school community.

The FCS Learning Community Principals of the Year are as follows:

- Northeast (cities of Alpharetta, Chattahoochee Hills, Johns Creek and Roswell) – **Martin Neuhaus**, Barnwell Elementary School
- Northwest (cities of Alpharetta, Milton and Roswell) - **Charles Chester**, Northwestern Middle School
- Central (cities of College Park, East Point, Hapeville and Sandy Springs) – **Scott Hanson**, North Springs Charter High School
- South and Achievement Zone (cities of Atlanta, College Park, Fairburn, Palmetto and Union City) – **LaToya Miley**, A. Philip Randolph Elementary School

The announcements are the result of the school system's efforts to recognize outstanding employees who contribute to the success and mission of the school system. Each year, every school and administrative support building is invited to nominate exceptional employees based on teacher, staff and parent input. These employees are then evaluated a second time through an application/essay review and interview and one finalist is announced from each of Fulton's geographic Learning Communities. Teachers of the Year and Principals of the Year nominees also undergo a school visit to demonstrate their leadership and classroom skills.

These events celebrate the accomplishments of the honorees and all employees of the year who were selected by their local school communities.

2019 Teacher of the Year – Pamela “Pam” Whitlock of Chattahoochee High School

Pam Whitlock knew from a young age that she wanted to be a teacher. “I can remember begging my older brother to play school with me,” she said, “and if that wasn't successful, I would line up my dolls and teach them. However, I have a rather unique path that has led me to teach computer science at Chattahoochee High School.” After college graduation with a degree in Elementary Education and Reading, Ms. Whitlock believed she was going to change the world by teaching all students to read. She began as a first grade and preschool special needs teacher in North Carolina and later moved to Atlanta, where she took a job as a director of a daycare and preschool. After her second child was born, she was a stay-at-home mom for over a decade, which she also refers to as her “temporary hiatus” from teaching.

During that time, she and her husband started a business, an online allowance management system for kids and families. Through that business venture, developed a love for technology and programming but began to miss teaching. At 40 years old, she retooled her career to combine her love of teaching with her new interest in programming and went back to school. She renewed her teaching certificate, earned an additional Business Education certification and received a graduate degree from the Computer Science Endorsement program at Southern Polytechnic State University. Just as she finished, Chattahoochee High School added computer science classes to their Career Technology and Agricultural Education (CTAE) program – a perfect match for her skillset and interests. As a teacher of four children, all who attended Chattahoochee, joining “the Hootch family” was a natural fit.

Since she began teaching, the number of computer science courses at Chattahoochee has doubled. Equally important as the study of computer science is to her are the relationships with students. “My greatest teaching joy has come from former students who, although they may have struggled in my class, went on to college and are pursuing computer science careers. They did not let a test score define a career path for themselves.”

As the 2019 Teacher of the Year, Ms. Whitlock says, “My inspiration for teaching - what fulfills me and gets me out of bed in the morning - is the potential for impacting students beyond the four walls of my classroom. The relationships that we build can last a lifetime and watching a student grow from being nervous and unsure to confident and intellectually curious is simply amazing. As teachers, we can never doubt the impact that we have on all students, even the ones who may not show us their best selves. Find what gives you passion and joy in teaching. Hang on to your passion and joy of being a learner. Combine those two to create an oasis for your students. This will be one in which every child can develop a love of learning, a skillset that will provide opportunities for success throughout their lives and the confidence to trust in their own abilities without regard to existing barriers.”

School Professional of the Year – Martina Franklin of Liberty Point Elementary School

Martina Franklin, Paraprofessional for Special Education, loves what she does and generously shares the credit of her designation as School Professional of the Year with her colleagues. In the four years that she's been at Liberty Point, Ms. Franklin says it has been an amazing journey working with a supportive teaching and administrative team as well as the unique group of students in her care. “I became an educator simply to make a difference in the lives of children,” she says. “Within this short time, I have acquired additional tools and

techniques that ensure my students' academic growth and development. Furthermore I pride myself in assisting and encouraging students to express themselves through performing and visual arts." Ms. Franklin is the co-chair of Liberty Point Fine Arts which consists of dance step, band, art club, yearbook and drama. "It is truly a pleasure to work with Ms. Franklin on a daily basis," said Liberty Point Principal James Payne. "Her hard work and dedication to ensuring that all students reach their full potential make her an irreplaceable staff member!"

Teaching is her passion, and she shares that it requires patience, understanding and enthusiasm as all children are unique and must have a stimulating educational environment where they can grow physically, mentally, emotionally and socially. "My overall goal is to maximize my time as an assistant by providing great instruction and following models from training. Creating a well-rounded learning environment will channel a 21st century mindset and creative thinking.

Support Professional of the Year, Ed Weiss, Bus Driver

Ed Weiss is a longtime transportation veteran of Fulton County Schools. He is known for his relentless dedication to his student riders and Centennial teammates. "I have had the privilege of working with Ed for many years," said Sam Ham, FCS Executive Director of Transportation Services. "He is a born instructor and good bus driver. In early times, he trained new prospective bus drivers and competed in the annual School Bus Roadeo (a mini-Olympics/NASCAR competition where safety and precision driving are the coveted skills), always finishing in the top 10 best school bus roadeo contenders in the district - out of 800 drivers!"

A North Carolina native who transferred to Georgia for work, Mr. Weiss was previously employed by AT&T as an electronics technician as well as a production specialist for Lucent Technologies. He also has experience as an over-the-road (OTR) driver of big trucks before coming to FCS to drive school buses. With that kind of skill, students can really feel safe with Mr. Weiss at the wheel. "I'm very happy about the support professionals being recognized for our contribution to our students' education," Mr. Weiss said. "He believes it will help them become responsible, productive citizens. "I'm humbled and honored to have been chosen to represent this group."

Stuart Berry, transportation north supervisor who has known Mr. Weiss for 11 years, adds, "Ed is always willing to offer guidance or tips for anyone who asks. Whether it is about handling students or how to improve Roadeo performance, Ed is always there with a quiet and determined demeanor to help other drivers. There is nothing Ed won't do if he is asked for help, and he does so with grace and charm."

The Principals of the Year are beloved by their communities and, while each has his/her unique qualities, the theme of personalized learning runs throughout each of their professional philosophies.

Northeast Principal of the Year - Martin Neuhaus, Barnwell Elementary School

"As principal, it is important to me," says Mr. Neuhaus, "that everyone who steps through our front doors – all of our students, staff and parents – are happy and excited to be here! This attitude enables us to meet the challenges of academic excellence in a positive, nurturing and fun environment." Neuhaus believes that relationships are the top priority and those within the school will determine the amount of learning that occurs.

Mr. Neuhaus has served as principal at Barnwell for three and a half years. Having a long history with FCS, he served in various positions. Originally a teacher at Findley Oaks Elementary School, he moved up the ranks as an administrative intern shadowing principals at four FCS schools for six months before becoming a summer school principal at North Springs and the Assistant Principal at Shakerag Elementary School for 14 years. "I hope to build and work with collaborative teams that empower teachers and students to continuously improve," he said. "Our vision at Barnwell is to be a joyful community of engaged and empowered learners."

Northwest Principal of the Year - Charles Chester, Northwestern Middle School

“My mission is to fertilize and cultivate the soil where all students can maximize growth,” says Charles Chester, who has served as Northwestern’s principal for four years, since 2015. From 2008-2012, he went from a math teacher to an administrative assistant at Woodland Middle School, and then served as an Assistant Principal at Alpharetta High School from 2012-2015. Going forward, Chester envisions redefining success by growth and providing all students with the opportunities to experience growth. “This opens a pathway for all students to feel valued and to experience success.”

Central Principal of the Year – Scott Hanson, North Springs Charter High School

North Springs Principal Scott Hanson believes that all students just need the right environment and an opportunity to experiment and grow. “My vision going forward is to continue creating a school where all students can learn,” he says. “Where teachers are valued as professionals, our core beliefs encompass a positive school atmosphere, meaningful collaboration, purposeful coaching and mentoring, and a sense of community, we become known as “The North Springs Way.” Mr. Hanson is finishing his third year as North Springs principal after having spent four years as a principal and 10 years as an assistant principal in Orlando, FL.

South and Achievement Zone – LaToya Miley, A. Philip Randolph Elementary School

Mrs. Miley, as a veteran educator, believes that all students can learn and will learn in the right environment: a blended learning environment that is data-driven, rigorous and relevant for each student. “I take great pride in serving as the number one advocate for ALL students.” Her experiences combined with her data-driven and strategic approach to teaching and learning have contributed to her success as a leader in elementary, middle and high schools in Fulton County. An educator for 20 years, Mrs. Miley has served 14 years in FCS, as a teacher, lead data support specialist, assistant principal and as executive manager for the Superintendent prior to her position as A. Philip Randolph principal. Her vision is “To ensure all students and teachers are provided a conducive learning environment, which ultimately leads to success.”

Employees of the Year

Elementary Schools	Teacher of the Year	Professional of the Year
Abbots Hill	Pam Jenkins	Taylor Leslie
Alpharetta	Ellie Fergus	Maureen Wakes
Asa G. Hilliard	Anita Whyte-Out	Raymond Selmon
Barnwell	Jamie Silverboard	Ellen Basile
Bethune	Tess Burns	Ranndi Reed
Birmingham Falls	Beth Nation	Carrie Hilliard
Brookview	Vanessa Charles	Atiya Carruth
Campbell	Erica Terrell	Adonica Lopez
Cliftondale	Erica Jones	Hope Render
Cogburn Woods	Kathy Gould	Jackie Foote
College Park	DeShunta Ross	Valencia Durden
Conley Hills	Kosher Asberry	Wandra Ponder
Crabapple Crossing	Lizzie Chalpan	Anne Bopp
Creekview	Julie Stallard	Sangeetha Suhanthan
Dolvin	Hope Knight	Nancy Adams
Dunwoody Springs	Latoya Tolefree	Betty Grivakis
Esther Jackson	Lindsey Walker	In Sook Moon
Evoline C. West	Michell Tankell	Tiffany Yates
Findley Oaks	Karen Reed	Evelyn Sanchez
Gulatt	Elbony Johnson	Aundrea Hammock
Hamilton E.Holmes	Johanna Coley	Dr. Eugenia Fletcher
Hapeville	Jessica Shaw	Eleanora Dunn

Heards Ferry	Ilana Adler	Valerie Gardner
Hembree Springs	Leigh Wagner	Beverly Shiotelis
Heritage	Donneka Slade	Vanessa Vargas
High Point	Benita Bearden	Colleen Zeller
Hillside	Innai Thompson	Beth Zermuehlen
Ison Springs	Rina Correa	James Reaves
Lake Forest	Laurie Cummings	Kendra Bettis
Lake Windward	Michelle Levesque	Blair Boyle
Liberty Point	Gemayel Joiner	Martina Frankie
Love T. Nolan	Teneisha Hiter	Deandra Wooden
Manning Oaks	Michelle Neal	Stamatia Hagen
Medlock Bridge	Madsion Clark	Melissa Millikan
Mimosa	Nicole Whitehurst	Gloria Hernandez-Hillard
Mountain Park	Tiffany Barnes	Mary Keogh
New Prospect	Ashley Flaherty	Michelle Levine
Northwood	Nicole Sickle	Victoria Walker
Oakley	Samantha Jackson	Dominique Johnson
Ocee	Kathie Justice	Kathy Nugent
Palmetto	Traci Dickens	Marcie Lewis
Parklane	Erica Pendleton	Rosa Colon
Renaissance	LaTasha Rutledge	Towanda McMullen
River Eves	Lizzie Fragale	Susan Gowin
Randolph A. Phillip	Eddie Myree	Gwendolyn Jucks
Roswell North	Katrina Scoggins	Lisa Glass
S. L.Lewis	Joycelyn Hamilton	Valencia Brock
Seaborn Lee	Victoria Duckett	Sheila Brewster
Shakerag	Melissa Minore	Erin Collins
Spalding Drive	Kellie Sprinkle	Tiffany Plowden
State Bridge Crossing	Suzie Hall	Debra Krupp
Stonewall Tell	Christine Carr	Martreica Fobbs
Summit Hill	Lauren Goldfuss	Patty Lico
Sweet Apple	Beka Sexton	Nancy Lattanzi
Vickery Mill	Amy D'Eloia	Laura Robinson
Wilson Creek	Kilo Henderson	Alicia Harrington
Woodland ES	Jessica Chambliss	Stephanie Cumberbatch
Middle School	Teacher of the Year	Professional of the Year
Amana Academy	Nicole Woodard	Sara Norman
Autrey Mill	Lizzie Haber	Marissa Donker
Bear Creek	Keenan Cameron	Victoria Washington
Camp Creek	Lon Gibson	Valerie Franklin
Crabapple	Magdalena Nelms	Marianne Sher
Elkins Point	Malikah Williams	Traci Dease
Fulton Academy of Science and Technology	Lionel Thompson	
Haynes Bridge	Tonya Henderson	Alton Bryant
Holcomb Bridge	Nakitah Browne	Hannah Milligan
Hopewell	Lisa Waldorf	Mary Mueller

McNair	Rosanna Schofield	Felicia Nobles
Northwestern	Lindsay Coberly	Maria Gavenchak
Paul. D. West	Takisha Freeland	Howard Turner
Renaissance	Mellonee Bowen	Alfredo Ramirez
Ridgeview	Jessica Burgess	Florence Kosloski
River Trail	Heather Wright	Claire Graff
Sandtown	Terrel Matchett	Tanya Beauford-Vernon
Sandy Springs	Mary Frost	Ayana Veal
Taylor Road	Maria Andres	Lea Anne Moxley
Webb Bridge	Julianne Hunter	Neeta Seletsky
Woodland	Tenisha Blackman	Keteria Franks-Smith
High School	Teacher of the Year	Professional of the Year
Alpharetta High	Amy Landi	Denise Baugh
Benjamin Banneker	Latoya Morgan	Tammy Styles
Cambridge	Brad Coulter	Karen Thimsen
Centennial	Christopher Buechner	Dana Smith
Chattahoochee	Pam Whitlock	Cynthia Butler
Creekside	Danea Bennett	Rance McCrary
Independence	John Chase Campbell	Penny Najar
Johns Creek	Jamie Chuyen	Lisa Hoot
Langston Hughes	Taneisha Favors	Patrick Arnold
McClarlin Success Academy	Amanda Buck	Garolyn Forts
Milton	Gillian Miller	Kara Peters
North Springs	Brittany Peyton	Michael Farmer
Northview	Clifford "Sean" Morgan	Evelyn "Odette" Talbert
Riverwood	Patricia Lawrimore	Gordon Ellison
Roswell	Daniel Waldroup	Jennifer Miner
Tri-Cities	Mr. Octavious Hose	Darron Franklin
Westlake	Dr. Alanna Johnson	Candice Hickman

###

About the Fulton County School System. The Fulton County School System is the fourth largest school system in Georgia. More than 95,000 students attend 106 schools in the cities of Alpharetta, Chattahoochee Hills, College Park, East Point, Fairburn, Hapeville, Johns Creek, Milton, Mountain Park, Palmetto, Roswell, Sandy Springs, South Fulton and Union City.