

ALABAMA TEACHER OF THE YEAR

**MILKEN FAMILY FOUNDATION NATIONAL
EDUCATOR AWARDS**

CHRISTA MCAULIFFE FELLOWSHIP

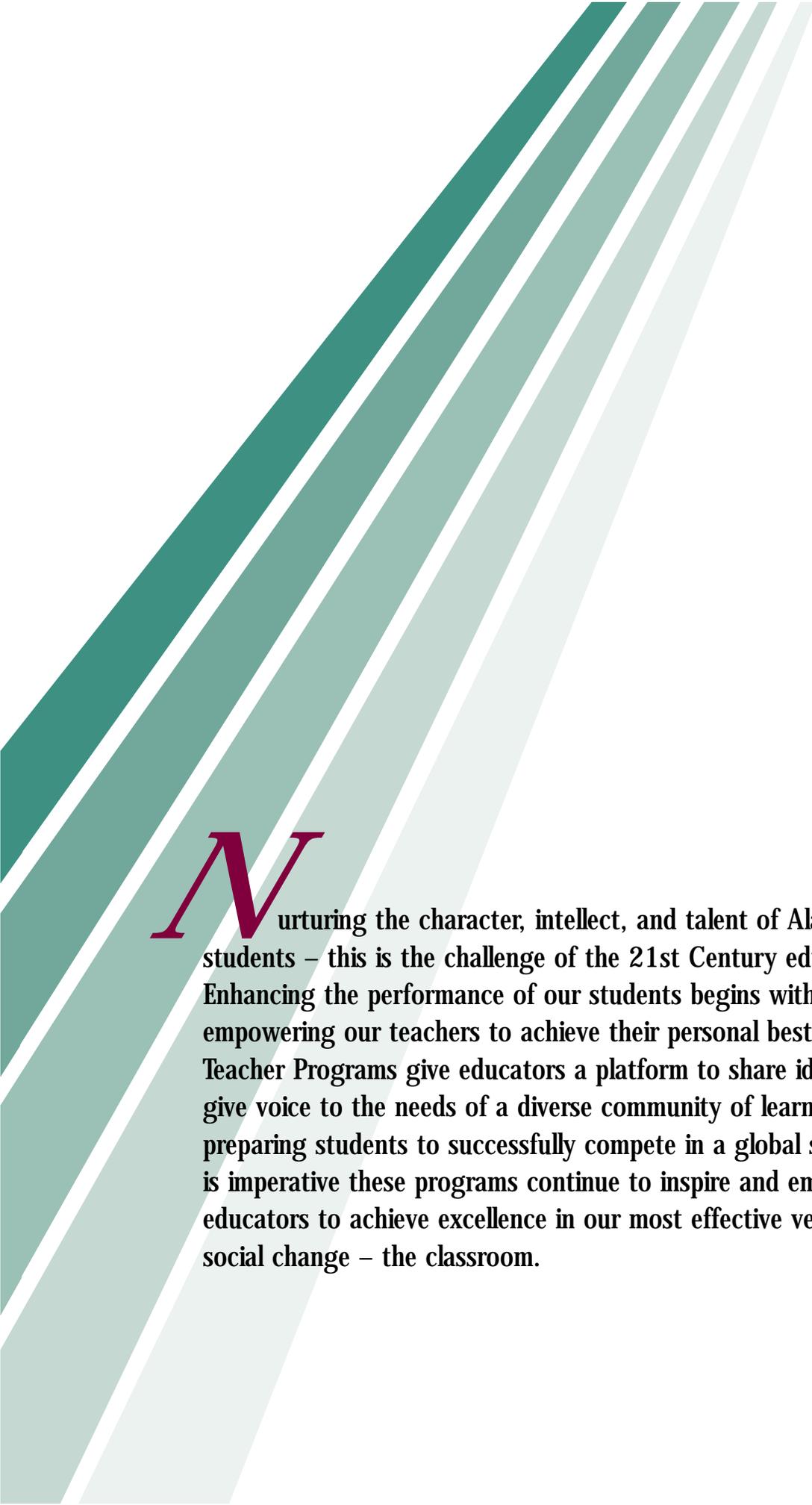
BLUE RIBBON SCHOOLS

ALFA TEACHER OF THE MONTH

**ALABAMA
TEACHER
PROGRAMS**







Nurturing the character, intellect, and talent of Alabama's students – this is the challenge of the 21st Century educator. Enhancing the performance of our students begins with empowering our teachers to achieve their personal best. Alabama Teacher Programs give educators a platform to share ideas, and give voice to the needs of a diverse community of learners. In preparing students to successfully compete in a global society, it is imperative these programs continue to inspire and empower educators to achieve excellence in our most effective vehicles for social change – the classroom.





ALABAMA TEACHER PROGRAMS

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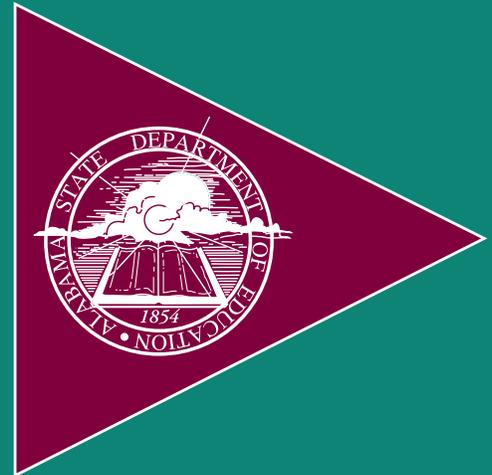


Ed Richardson, Superintendent
Alabama Department of Education

Congratulations to our class of champions – our teachers. Alabama students continue to reap the benefits from the dedicated educators in our state. The spark teachers instill in students is the source from which generations of flaming torches are lit. I commend and congratulate our educators on the success Alabama is achieving in its classrooms across the state.

It is my pleasure to recognize the dedication of our teachers and students through a series of awards.

The Alabama Teacher of the Year Program highlights outstanding performance in the classroom with personal and professional rewards for the



Teacher of the Year, an alternate, and district finalists. This year, the Christa McAuliffe award will afford two Alabama teachers – a primary and alternate – to develop innovative programs and continuing education. Additionally, the Milken Family Foundation will give public recognition and financial rewards to Alabama educators who further excellence in education.

The schools you will read about have been named as Blue Ribbon Schools by the United States Department of Education. This distinction identifies them as meeting first-class standards. The ALFA Teacher of the Month Program, which gives monthly awards to some of Alabama's top educators, is a joint venture between ALFA and the state Department of Education.

In Alabama we are continuing to provide our students with the educational opportunities needed to fulfill their individual dreams. On behalf of the state Board of Education, thanks to all our educators who continue to accomplish this task and elevate the teaching profession.

2 ALABAMA TEACHER OF THE YEAR PROGRAM



Dr. Richardson and Theresa Farmer after “surprise” announcement naming her the 2001-02 Alabama Teacher of the Year.



TACHER OF THE YEAR

The state Board of Education and state Department of Education take pride in recognizing the outstanding accomplishments of the classroom teachers through Alabama Teacher of the Year Program.

The mission of the State Teacher of the Year Program is to recognize and honor the many contributions of our classroom teachers. Alabama Teacher of the Year Program is one of the oldest and most prestigious award programs for teachers. Thirty-one teachers have represented Alabama on the local and national level. The following teachers have also been selected as national finalists: Dorothy Ellison, 1959; Addie Lee Rhodes, 1988; Beatrice Kramer Volkman, 1991; and Tonya Perry, 2000.

The program's objective is to identify and acknowledge the outstanding teachers from Alabama's public elementary and secondary schools.

The program has progressed with increased sponsorship and participation and is recognized throughout the state and nation. Alabama's Teacher of the Year serves as spokesperson for the teaching profession, conducting workshops for schools, universities, and the private sector. Through the Teacher of the Year Program, the teachers and program have been represented in Paris with Carolyn Elk, the 1999 alternate State Teacher and Secondary Teacher of the Year, and three students who traveled on the Concorde.

The Council of Chief State School Officers and Scholastic, Inc., sponsor the program on the national level providing many professional opportunities.



THERESA FARMER
2001-02 TEACHER OF THE YEAR
AND
ELEMENTARY TEACHER OF THE YEAR
OAK MOUNTAIN INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL
SHELBY COUNTY SCHOOLS

Theresa Farmer, a fourth grade teacher at Oak Mountain Intermediate School, is selected as the 2001-02 Alabama Teacher of the Year.

"When I think about the factors that influenced me to become a teacher, I immediately go back to the words of Alfred Lord Tennyson in his poem, Ulysses, 'I am a part of all that I have met.' The people, places, and events I have met shape my life and continue to influence me even as I move through the margins of life from one stage to another. Many individuals have left pieces of themselves with me – my mother, my teachers, my students, and my colleagues. Many places I have been live inside of me, and numerous life experiences have helped to bring me to the place where I now stand. No matter what the influences are that shape or have shaped me, I am always a teacher. I cannot divorce myself from the role, so I make a contribution of it."

"Mrs. Farmer is an outstanding classroom teacher. Her classroom practices are above and beyond what is normally seen in the regular classroom. Because of her knowledge of research and what is developmentally appropriate for all students, she continually provides an environment in which all children are recognized as formidable and capable learners."

Linda Maxwell, Principal
Oak Mountain Intermediate School



Linda Maxwell (right) and coworker congratulate Mrs. Farmer.



Family share spotlight.

"Mrs. Theresa Farmer is one of the most outstanding teachers with whom I have ever worked in my 26-year career. Not only is she highly committed to teaching her students effectively, but also she is highly committed to enabling her colleagues to do the same."

**Edwin S. Ellis, Ph.D
Department Head, Interdisciplinary Teacher Education Chair
Multiple Abilities Program, The University of Alabama**

Theresa Farmer congratulated by her students.



SALLY YORK

2001-02 SECONDARY TEACHER OF THE YEAR
AND
ALTERNATE TEACHER OF THE YEAR
CARLISLE PARK MIDDLE SCHOOL
GUNTERSVILLE CITY SCHOOLS



Sally York teaches 7th grade at Carlisle Park Middle School in the Guntersville City School system.

"There are very basic, human, and simple philosophies that each person who teaches must bring to the learning process with all types of children. I view the learning process not just as teacher – learner, but learning together with each one contributing something to the learning environment. It is wonderful when I introduce a 'new big' word to the class in my presentations or conversations, and Lindy searches the Web for a comparable word to use in class. It is rewarding when Brady remembers the discussion on Charles Dickens and requests a similar one about Emily Dickinson. That is learning together and loving every minute of those discoveries."

Sally York and Tonya Perry share a special moment.





After being named Secondary Teacher of the Year and alternate Alabama Teacher of the Year, Mrs. York is interviewed by local media.

“Mrs. York is a master teacher, dedicated to her profession and to learning; but her priority is her students. Every day she brings all the necessary teaching attributes to her job - preparation, organization, enthusiasm, classroom management, subject management, appropriate grade level material that challenges and stimulates, and years of classroom experience.”

**Andrew N. Lee, Superintendent
Guntersville City Schools**

Mrs. York and students react to “surprise announcement” by Dr. Richardson during assembly.



TONYA PERRY
2000-01 TEACHER OF THE YEAR
AND
SECONDARY TEACHER OF THE YEAR
BERRY MIDDLE SCHOOL
HOOVER CITY SCHOOLS



Tonya Perry is congratulated by President George W. Bush and Secretary of Education Dr. Rod Paige in a White House Ceremony for state Teachers of the Year.

For the first time in the program's history, Alabama's Teacher of the Year also served as a teacher in residence (University of Alabama at Birmingham) as well as fulfilling her role as spokesperson for the teaching profession. Mrs. Perry's year has been spent conducting workshops on the state as well as national level, speaking to higher education personnel, education-related organizations, and others.

Mrs. Perry was selected as one of four finalists for National Teacher of the Year and has left such a mark on the teaching profession and education institutions that her services will continue in fulfilling requests.

Tonya Perry and Dr. Marilyn Whirry (2000 National Teacher of the Year) pose during the National Teacher of the Year Conference in Dallas, Texas.

Tonya Perry is presented a 2001 Chevrolet Impala by Jerry Newby, President of ALFA Insurance.





TAMI PUCHTA
2000-01 ELEMENTARY TEACHER OF THE YEAR
AND
ALTERNATE TEACHER OF THE YEAR
TRACY CROSSINGS SCHOOL
HOOVER CITY SCHOOLS

"I believe it is essential that we raise children who make healthy choices and responsible decisions. Creating a positive classroom environment means there are ways for children to begin making choices and be accountable for their decisions is part of our day."

"Mrs. Puchta makes her classroom a positive place where children can make mistakes, correct the mistakes, and learn from each other."

**Ron and Pam Harris, Parents
Trace Crossings School**

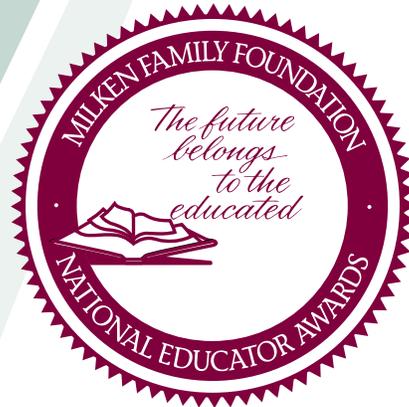


MISSION STATEMENT

The purpose of the Milken Family Foundation is to discover and advance inventive and effective ways of helping people help themselves and those around them lead productive and satisfying lives.



Students perform during assembly at Oneonta Elementary before “surprise” announcement naming Ramona Brewer a Milken Educator.



MILKEN FAMILY FOUNDATION

In Education, the Foundation is committed to:

- Strengthening the profession by recognizing and rewarding outstanding educators, and by expanding their professional leadership and policy influence.
- Attracting, retaining, and motivating the best talent to the teaching profession.
- Stimulating creativity and productivity among educators and students of all ages.
- Fostering the involvement of both the family and the community in schools.
- Helping build vibrant communities – especially by involving young people who have special needs, or who live in neighborhoods considered disadvantaged, in school-based programs that contribute to the revitalization of their community and to the well-being of its residents.

A wealth of human potential is represented by individual people of all ages whose vision and purpose make them dynamic forces for change. The Foundation's mission is to help realize this potential by giving the support that enables people to create and carry out effective, lasting solutions to the challenges facing our communities.

CHARLOTTE CHAMBERS DOUGLAS
CLOVERDALE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
DOTHAN CITY SCHOOLS

"Teaching is a profession in which you motivate and change the lives of students. As a teacher you must be dedicated (doing all you can to teach students), compassionate (have love, be available and have high expectations for your students), and be a learner/student yourself (broaden your knowledge about the learning styles of children and research information about the subject matter taught). As a teacher you must reaffirm what the students already know, help them to develop what they need to know, and give them the knowledge to be able to apply what they know to figure out the unknown."



MILKEN EDUCATORS 2000

RAMONA BREWER
ONEONTA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
ONEONTA CITY SCHOOLS

"The primary goal of an Early Childhood program is to help children understand themselves and the world around them. A successful Early Childhood program helps children develop the skills and knowledge essential for problem solving, while at the same time increasing their self-esteem and confidence. I feel that it is my responsibility as an Early Childhood educator to create in my students a love of themselves and a love of learning. I believe that children learn by doing, that they are more motivated to learn when given choices, and that they increase their knowledge by sharing with others. Children, I believe, are ultimately responsible for their own learning. Therefore, it is my responsibility to provide ample opportunities, materials, and structured experiences in which learning can take place. One of my primary goals as an Early Childhood educator is to increase my students' self-confidence and help them learn to love themselves. I believe that there is no reward greater than praise. Something as simple as a pat on the back can make all the difference in the world to some children. My students know that I do not expect perfection. I do, however, expect their best effort. They know that as long as they are truly trying, I will be thrilled with their results. Success in my classroom is valiant effort, not necessary an outstanding finished product."





BLAKE CASSEL
HARRAND CREEK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
ENTERPRISE CITY SCHOOLS

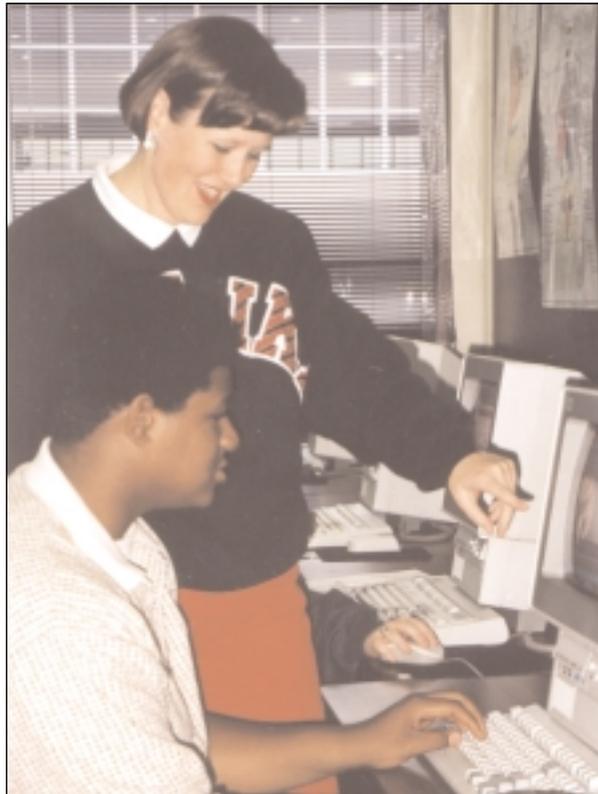
"My philosophy of teaching is short and simple: never give up on trying to help a child be successful. Even if it takes right up until the end of the year, all children deserve a teacher's best efforts to meet their academic, behavioral, and social needs. I see my role as meeting my students on their individual path of lifelong learning and guiding them toward a variety of challenging paths which can lead them to a higher level of learning and a better understanding of their part in society."



Recipients joined by Dr. Tamara Schiff (Milken Family Foundation) and Dr. Richardson.

SUZANNE CULBRETH
ANATOMY AND BIOCHEMISTRY
OPELIKA HIGH SCHOOL
OPELIKA CITY SCHOOLS

"Technology is the bridge that can connect teachers and students to the future. It is our responsibility as educators to use this tool as an integral part of instruction to spark creativity, initiative, and innovation."



MILKEN EDUCATORS 1999

GLORIA A. J. JEMISON
PRINCIPAL
HUFFMAN HIGH SCHOOL
BIRMINGHAM CITY SCHOOLS

"Becoming a Milken Family Foundation National Educator has provided me with the greatest honor of my life. I feel very accomplished to have been recognized for a lifetime of career achievement. I have always wanted to leave a legacy and to make a significant contribution to society, to education, and to children. As an educator I will continue to raise standards, improve discipline, and provide effective staff development."





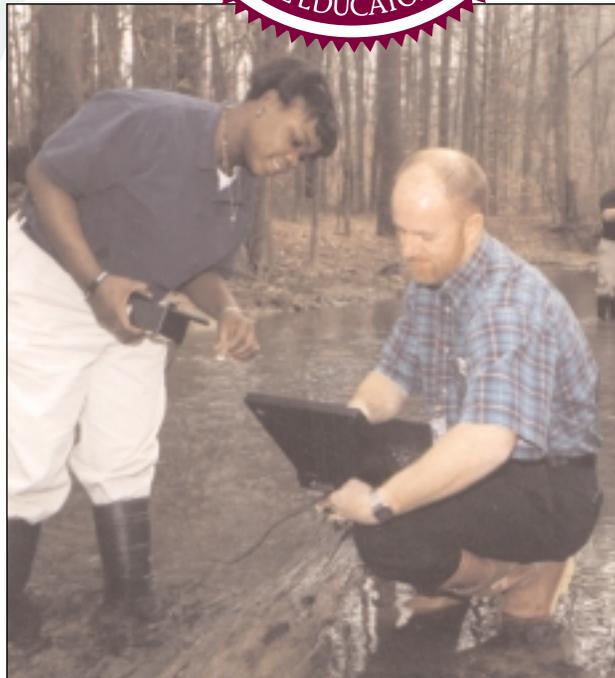
ERNIE L. MEINECKE
SOCIAL STUDIES TEACHER
LEE HIGH SCHOOL
HUNTSVILLE CITY SCHOOLS

"My personal philosophy of education is to make each student who enters my classroom feel welcome every day. I strive to make learning fun and relevant so that students do not dread coming to my class but rather look to my class as one of the bright spots in their day. It is important to me that I make the information they learn interesting and relevant to their lives."



ROBERT YOUNGBLOOD
AGRISCIENCE TEACHER
OAKMAN HIGH SCHOOL
WALKER COUNTY SCHOOLS

"My philosophy of teaching could be a recitation of 'The Road Not Taken,' by Robert Frost. It's true the pay is the same on either road, but money can't buy the rewards you find on the road less traveled. I believe it does have, perhaps, the better claim."



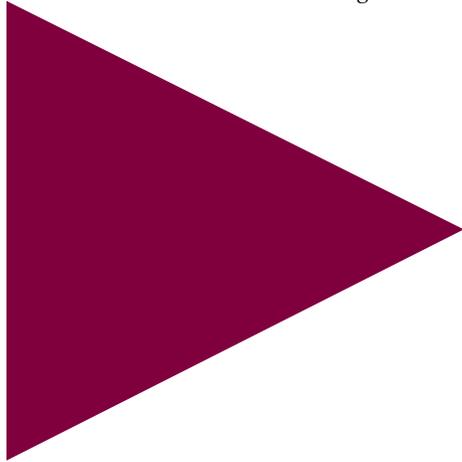
16 CHRISTA MCAULIFFE FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

CYNTHIA D. GRAY
2001-02 PRIMARY FELLOW
CARLISLE PARK MIDDLE SCHOOL
GUNTERSVILLE CITY SCHOOLS



"The purpose of my fellowship is to establish a Summer CyberCamp for middle school students. A new kind of camp for the new generation. Summer CyberCamp is a place where kids learn by doing, playing, and having fun while acquiring the technology and life skills of the future.

Students will get the chance to go beyond what the regular school year classroom has to offer and become immersed in today's new technologies. In less than a decade, technological literacy will become as fundamental to a young person's ability to obtain a good job as reading and writing. Summer CyberCamp will work with students at an age when career choice and commitment to learning are vital, and will make special efforts to provide at-risk students equal access to technology. Project-based lessons, adult mentors from the community, and teachers with a passion for technology will insure that participants reap educational benefits that will continue on in their classroom learning."



SCOTT T. NELSON
2001-02 ALTERNATE FELLOW
BAKER HIGH SCHOOL
MOBILE COUNTY SCHOOLS



"The goals of my project for the 2001-02 school year will focus on preparing students for the Alabama High School Graduation Exam (AHSGE) to impact the effectiveness of teachers and to reduce the failure rate system wide. I will develop an innovative program to train teachers at the local level to become proficient. Teachers will learn to utilize the mathematics and science remediation program designed to help students become successful on the AHSGE."





CHRISTA MCAULIFFE FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

The Christa McAuliffe Fellowship Program was created in 1987 to provide fellowships to classroom teachers in memory of Sharon Christa McAuliffe, the New Hampshire teacher who served as an astronaut on the Challenger Space Shuttle in January 1986. The Office of Elementary and Secondary Education at the U.S. Department of Education managed the program until 1995. In 1996, the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) was awarded a five-year grant from the U.S. Department of Education to run the fellowship program. This annual state-based recognition program provides scholarships to outstanding teachers. This grant offers Alabama teachers \$26,457.

In 2001, the grant will be awarded to two teachers, a primary (\$16,403) and an alternate (\$9,260). The remaining amount will be used to promote the program throughout the state.

THE CHRISTA MCAULIFFE PROGRAM IN REVIEW

TERESA D. ZIMMER
2000 FELLOW
CARLISLE PARK MIDDLE SCHOOL
GUNTERSVILLE CITY SCHOOLS

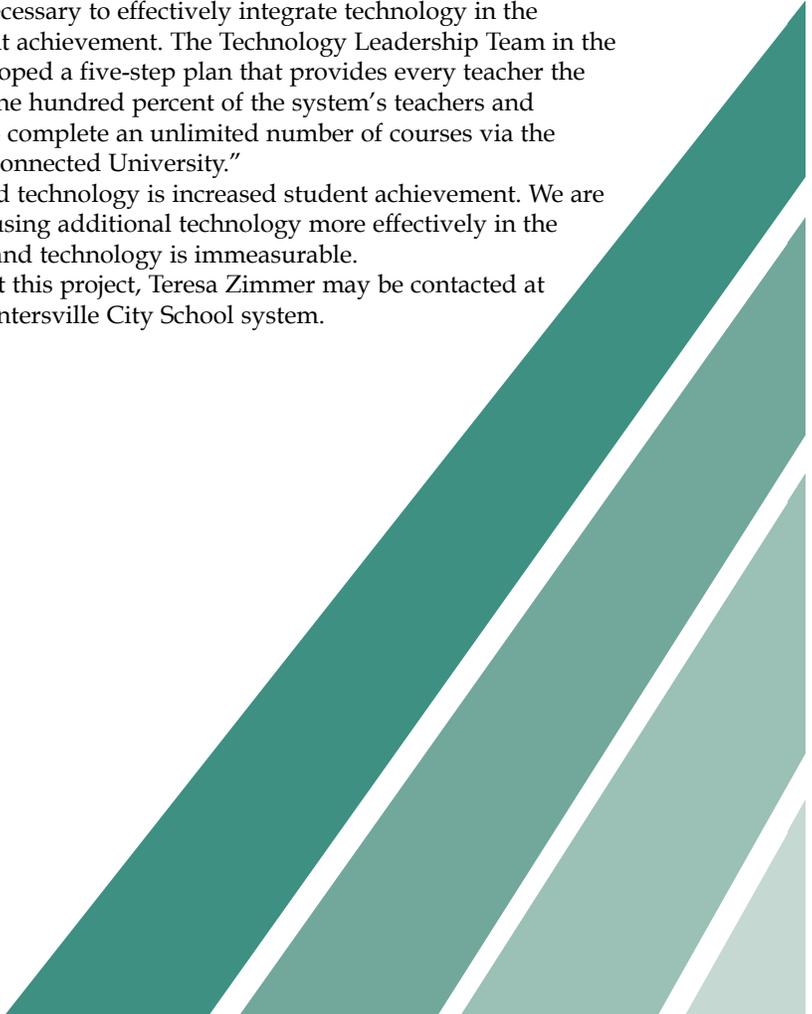


Project: "Leading with Technology," "Using the Net to Create Thematics Units," "Creating Web pages," "Quests"

The purpose of this fellowship was to develop a model of professional development that provided the teachers the tools necessary to effectively integrate technology in the curriculum in order to increase student achievement. The Technology Leadership Team in the Guntersville City School system developed a five-step plan that provides every teacher the tools necessary to achieve this goal. One hundred percent of the system's teachers and administrators have an opportunity to complete an unlimited number of courses via the Internet from Classroom Connect's "Connected University."

The ultimate goal of increased technology is increased student achievement. We are already seeing the results of teachers using additional technology more effectively in the classroom. The power of the Internet and technology is immeasurable.

For further information about this project, Teresa Zimmer may be contacted at Carlisle Park Middle School in the Guntersville City School system.



MARTHA HOWARD
1999 FELLOW
FOLEY HIGH SCHOOL
BALDWIN COUNTY SCHOOLS



Project: "Write Into the 21st Century: Integrating Technology to Encourage Higher Standards Through Publication"

This fellowship program was designed to integrate new technology and training into established journalism classes, creating a model, computerized, publishing laboratory. This prepared students to enter the work force after learning and using publishing, photo manipulation, and word processing programs as newspaper professionals use them. Mentors from local newspapers and businesses assisted them. The technology attracted more students to write for and take journalism classes while encouraging high standards through publication. Distributed free of charge, newspapers were designed for high student interest to encourage reading. Students also used technology to design a Web page and publish, for the first time, an online edition of the *Foley Hi-Lites*, linking students to the community, the nation, and the world.

Ninety percent of the established goals were completed with the other expected to follow during the 2000 school year.

The project was designed to be ongoing. Because of equipment purchased during the fellowship year, there were dramatic changes in the *Foley Hi-Lites*. The project benefited more than 1,500 students and teachers in the community and beyond.

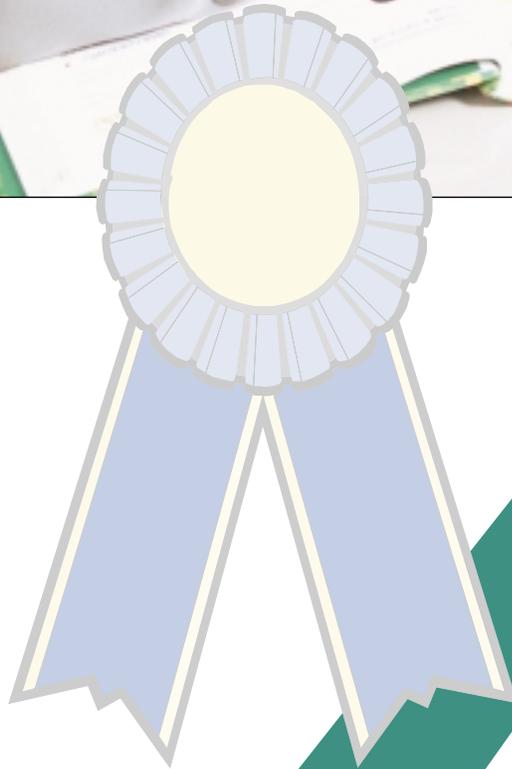
To find out more, contact Martha Howard at Foley High School in the Baldwin County School system.

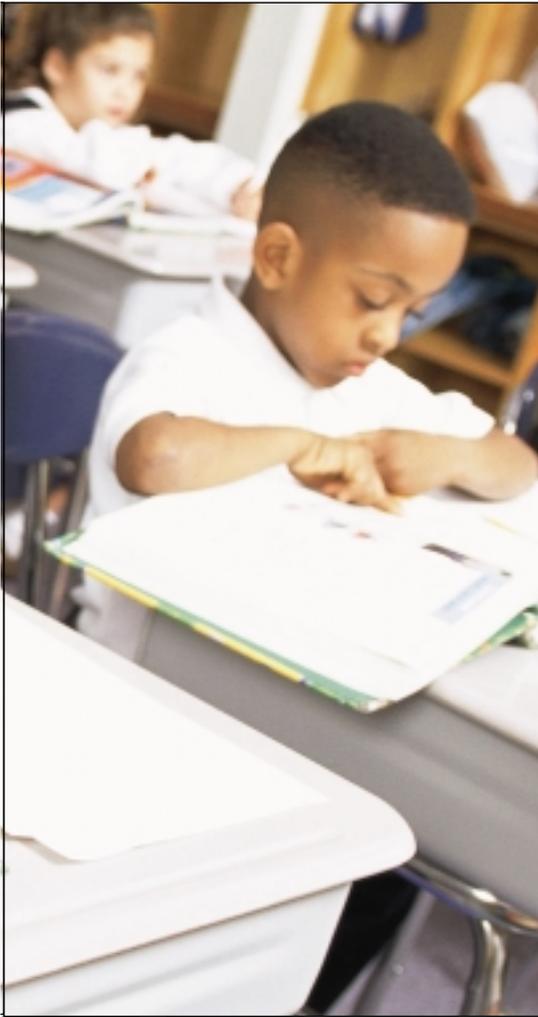
JULIE LAZZARI
1998 FELLOW
FAIRHOPE HIGH SCHOOL
BALDWIN COUNTY SCHOOLS

Project: "The Information Connection: Bringing the International Community into the Classroom Through Technology"

The purpose of "The Information Connection" was to increase the accessibility and rate of acquisition of new and current knowledge for gifted high school students. The aim is to open the doors to the world through integrating state-of-the-art technology into an established curriculum including International Studies, Cultural Explorations, Human Personality, and Law. The fellowship ultimately creates a technologically advanced program that brings the international community into the classroom and enables this population of gifted and talented students to reach their awesome potential.

Julie Lazzari can be contacted at Fairhope High School in the Baldwin County School system.





*B*LUERIBBON SCHOOLS

The Blue Ribbon Schools Program was established by the Secretary of Education in 1982. Its purpose is threefold:

- ▶ to identify and give public recognition to outstanding public and private schools across the United States;
- ▶ to make available a comprehensive framework of key criteria for school effectiveness that can serve as a basis for participatory self-assessment and planning in schools; and
- ▶ to facilitate communication and sharing of best practices within and among schools based on a common understanding of criteria related to success.

Elementary and secondary schools are eligible to participate in alternate years.

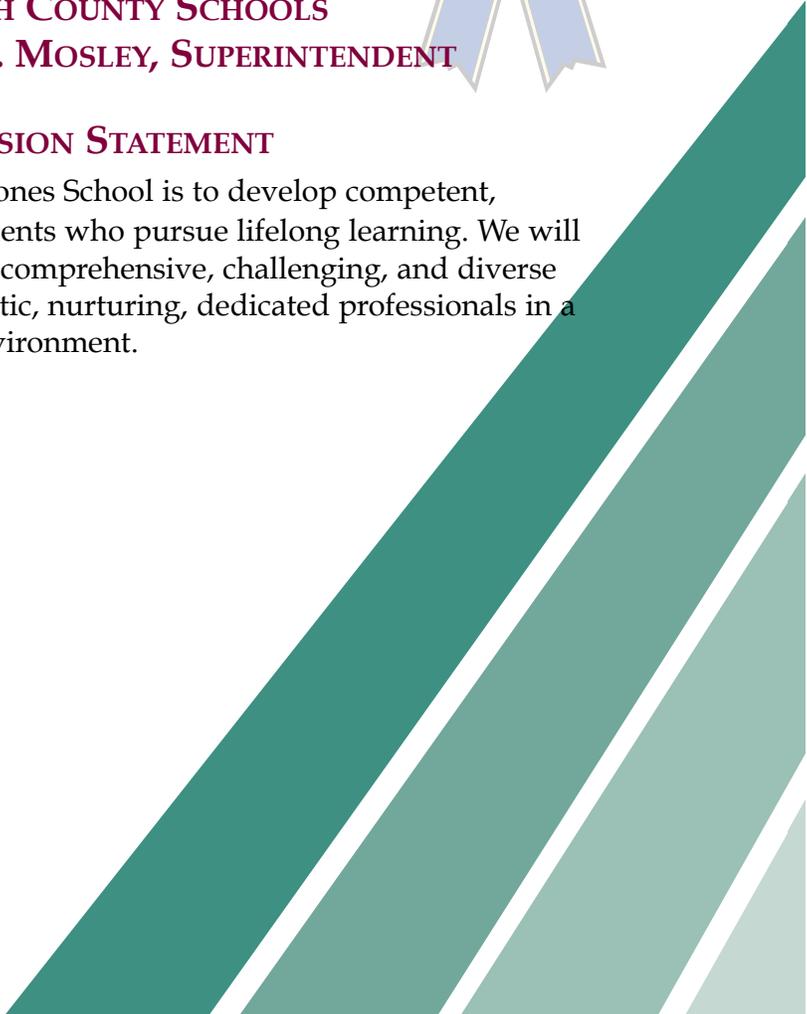
JOHN S. JONES ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



CHERYL TYLER, PRINCIPAL
ETOWAH COUNTY SCHOOLS
DR. RONALD T. MOSLEY, SUPERINTENDENT

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of John S. Jones School is to develop competent, respectful, and resourceful students who pursue lifelong learning. We will accomplish this by providing a comprehensive, challenging, and diverse curriculum taught by enthusiastic, nurturing, dedicated professionals in a safe, healthy, child-centered environment.



WEST BLOCTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



**CAROL BELCHER, PRINCIPAL
BIBB COUNTY SCHOOLS
DONALD R. MCCALLA, SUPERINTENDENT**

MISSION STATEMENT

The faculty and staff of West Blocton Elementary School believe that it is our responsibility to provide our students with a safe and secure learning environment. Within this environment, we work to implement a program of learning experiences that foster maximum growth in physical, intellectual, social, aesthetic, emotional, cultural, and creative development for each individual. Every child is recognized as unique with different needs, capabilities, and limitations. The faculty and staff acknowledge that it is imperative to provide each child with the opportunity to reach his or her full potential. In view of these differences, we strive to promote each child's development into a responsible independent adult citizen possessing skills that will make him or her a self-sustaining productive member of our global society.

CRESTLINE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

DR. MICHAEL MELVIN, PRINCIPAL

MOUNTAIN BROOK CITY SCHOOLS

CHARLES G. MASON, SUPERINTENDENT



MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Crestline Elementary School is to promote learning for life in a caring environment dedicated to the total child. This is further addressed and clarified in the Crestline Elementary School Philosophy.

We believe that Crestline should be a positive, safe, caring environment, which maintains an atmosphere that is conducive to each child reaching his/her fullest intellectual, emotional, and social potential.

OLIVE J. DODGE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

DORIS TILLMAN, PRINCIPAL

MOBILE COUNTY SCHOOLS

DR. HAROLD W. DODGE, SUPERINTENDENT



MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Olive J. Dodge School is to provide all students with a quality education, which will allow them to become productive citizens. This will be accomplished by a dedicated staff, parents, and a community committed to success.



A LFA TEACHER OF THE MONTH PROGRAM A PROGRAM OF ALFA INSURANCE AND THE ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

In 1998, the Alabama Farmers Federation and the ALFA Insurance Company partnered with the Alabama Department of Education to create the ALFA Teacher of the Month Awards. The program rewards outstanding public or private school teachers and principals with \$1,000 cash awards (not grant awards) and \$1,000 to their schools. The Alabama Department of Education coordinates the application process.

The state superintendent of education sends a written request for applications to principals of public and private schools and to public school superintendents prior to each award period. Each call for applications specifies a deadline for applications to be returned. This program honors one outstanding public school teacher from each of Alabama's eight state school board districts, two private school teachers, and two principals from public and private schools.

For more information about the ALFA Teacher of the Month Program, contact the Alabama Department of Education at (334) 242-9950, or visit the Department's Web site at www.alsde.edu.



Ed Richardson, State Superintendent of Education

August 2001

It is the official policy of the Alabama State Department of Education that no person in Alabama shall, on the grounds of race, color, disability, sex, religion, national origin, or age, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program, activity, or employment.

