

## Tuscaloosa County Teacher Wins “Education Oscar”

*Walker Elementary School science teacher Krystle Bryant is the latest recipient of the prestigious Milken Educator Award!*



Photos courtesy of the Milken Family Foundation

**Walker Elementary School science teacher Krystle Bryant** has used her educational talent to effectively implement creative instructional strategies and to provide care and compassion to each of her students.

For her unwavering passion to ensure all students have a depth of understanding of science and how that understanding applies to real-world problems needing real-world solutions, Bryant has been awarded the prestigious Milken Educator Award. The fifth-grade Tuscaloosa County teacher received the “Education Oscar” and a \$25,000 check during a surprise schoolwide assembly disguised as a school event.

Presented by Milken Educator Awards Senior Vice President, Dr. Jane Foley, and Dr. Tommy Bice, State Superintendent of Education, the award honors the exceptional work of educators as a model for the state and nation.

The Milken Family Foundation is honoring more than 32 outstanding educators this year and the

Milken Educator Award is the nation’s largest teacher recognition program. The entire school gathered to hear the extraordinary news that one of its own would receive an unrestricted \$25,000 financial reward.

Bice praised Alabama’s 2014 Milken Educator by saying, “She is a role model for what rigorous and relevant instruction looks like in action.”

When her school’s math scores became a focus in 2013, Bryant took it upon herself to enroll in the state’s one-year training for mathematics standards so she could add them to her science curriculum. With her help, the school’s math scores improved on each benchmark in 2014.

She also incorporated reading standards into her science curriculum, thereby teaching students three subjects at once. This dedication to cross-curricular excellence is in addition to her students’ mastery of



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## Alabama Teacher of the Year Selected as Finalist for Nation's Top Teaching Honor

Alabama Teacher of the Year Ann Marie Corgill has been named one of four finalists for the 2015 National Teacher of the Year Award.

The [National Teacher of the Year Program](#), run by the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), identifies exceptional teachers in the country, recognizes their effective work in the classroom, amplifies their voices, and empowers them to participate in policy discussions at the state and national levels. The 2015 National Teacher of the Year will be named in April and will then spend a year traveling the nation to represent educators and advocate on behalf of teachers.

Corgill, Alabama's 2014-2015 Teacher of the Year, joins Hawaii Teacher of the Year Catherine Caine, Indiana Teacher of the Year Kathy Nimmer, and Texas Teacher of the Year Shanna Peeples as a finalist for the nation's top teaching honor.



"We are excited about Ann Marie Corgill being named a National Teacher of the Year finalist. She is to be commended for this outstanding accomplishment of achieving national recognition for the positive impact she has had on teachers, students, administrators, and the nation," said State Superintendent of Education Dr. Tommy Bice.

A National Board Certified teacher, Corgill has been teaching fourth-grade students at Cherokee Bend Elementary School since 2012. Prior to that, she taught English for three years at Hewitt Trussville Middle School and also worked in the New York Public School System.

"I am humbled and honored to be chosen as a finalist for National Teacher of the Year," Corgill said. "It will be a joy and a pleasure to represent the educators and children of our state and nation—to be an ambassador for them, to celebrate them, to advocate for them, and to share their stories of success and tireless efforts in the classrooms of our country."

Every year, exemplary teachers from each state, the U.S. extra-state territories, the District of Columbia, and the Department of Defense Education Activity are selected as State Teachers of the Year. From that group, the National Teacher of the Year is then selected by a panel representing 15 renowned education organizations, which collectively represent more than 7 million educators.

The recipient of this prestigious honor is scheduled to be recognized by President Barack Obama in a White House Ceremony this spring.

For more information about the National Teacher of the Year Program, including learning more about the 2015 finalists or previous recipients, [click here](#).

## Regions Accepting Entries for "Riding Forward Scholarship" Essay Contest

**In honor of Black History Month** and the African-American achievements that have moved us all forward, Regions Bank is accepting entries for the Regions Riding Forward Scholarship Essay Contest.

Regions will award a \$5,000 scholarship to 16 high school seniors who live in states with Regions branches and will attend college in the fall of 2015.

To enter, students must choose the African-American they want to write about. It could be someone famous, a relative, or a person they know. The main criteria is to make sure the person is inspirational and motivational.

Essays should be 500 words or less and can be written directly in



the application form [online](#) or can be copied and pasted into the form. Essays should be received by February 26. Students with winning essays will be notified by International Scholarship and Tuition Services (ISTS) in April 2015.

To learn more, [click here](#).

## Science Course of Study Draft Review – Happening Now!

The Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) is asking for public input on the current draft of the *2014 Alabama Course of Study: Science*, which includes Alabama's College- and Career-Ready Standards (CCRS) for science. These standards should provide Alabama's K-12 public school students with the highest level of rigor and challenge and enable them to graduate college- and career-ready for science.

The *2014 Alabama Course of Study: Science* provides the framework for Grades K-12 science education in Alabama's public schools. These standards specify the minimum required content by grade/course (*Code of Alabama*, 1975, §16-35-4). While the standards are fundamental and specific, they are not exhaustive. When developing a local curriculum, each school system may include additional content standards that focus on local resources and needs.

**Beginning January 5 through January 30, 2015**, the public can view and provide feedback on the draft of the *2014 Alabama Course of Study: Science*. The public review of the *2014 Alabama Course of Study: Science* has two goals:

1. Engage the general public, parents, educators, business and industry, and civic leaders in a general review of the science course of study.
2. Increase awareness and understanding of the revised science standards.

During the review, you will be asked to enter demographic information. You can select *Appropriate as Written* if you are satisfied with the standard as it is written, or *Needs to be Changed* if you would like to see a standard modified. If *Needs to be Changed* is selected, you will be able to provide suggestions for revising the standard.

You have several options for reviewing the document. You may review the entire document, standards, and narratives by grade level/subject, by grade band, or by science domain (Physical Science, Life Science, or Earth or Space Science).

[CLICK HERE](#) for access to: Structure of the Standards, Checklist for Reviewing the Standards, and Learning Progressions.

At the conclusion of the public review, the feedback generated will be reviewed by the State Science Course of Study Committee. The Science Course of Study Committee will then recommend the revised science course of study to Dr. Bice, the State Superintendent, who will then make a recommendation to the Alabama State Board of Education in the spring of 2015.

[CLICK HERE](#) for the entire Science Course of Study Document  
[CLICK HERE](#) for all Science Course of Study Review Forms

## Governor Bentley Wants You To “Break for a Plate”

Alabama Governor Robert Bentley is joining the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) in urging schools, churches, governmental agencies, college and universities, and private non-profit organizations to help ensure that all children in the state have access to nutritious meals in the summer.

Bentley signed a proclamation in support of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) recently in the Old House Chamber in the State Capitol Building. Administered in Alabama by the ALSDE Child Nutrition Programs Section, the SFSP was established to ensure that children

continue to receive nutritious meals when school is not in session.

Joining Bentley were members of the CNP staff, whose work has led to



Alabama leading the Southeast in filling the summer “nutrition gap” in underserved areas in the state. A total of 1,995,852 meals were served in 2014, compared to 1,650,652 meals in 2013, and 1,265,105 in 2012.

The continued growth of Alabama’s summer feeding program can be attributed to awareness raised through its annual SFSP kickoff rally and [www.BreakforaPlate.com](http://www.BreakforaPlate.com), a Web site developed to promote the need for more sponsors in USDA targeted areas where SFSP participation is low.

Sponsors are currently being sought for the 2015 distribution of summer meals. Information can be obtained by contacting the Alabama State Department of Education Child Nutrition Programs at 334-242-8249 or visiting [www.BreakforaPlate.com](http://www.BreakforaPlate.com).

## 2015 Alabama Pharmacy Association

## Poison Prevention

## Art Contest

www.aparx.org

www.poisonprevention.org

Questions? Call APA at 334.271.4222

The Alabama Pharmacy Association (APA) is holding an Art Contest to raise awareness about poison prevention. Winners will be awarded gift certificates, recognized in the APA Journal and eligible to compete in a national competition in April 2015.

## Art Contest Guidelines

- **2015 Theme: Poisonings Span a Lifetime.**  
Entries should illustrate a message that poisonings can happen to people of any age, including children, adults and the elderly. Messages may be word for word or the wording may be altered as long as the theme remains the same.
- Entries should not include any state or regional logos or symbols. Trademark symbols, company names, or characters (e.g. Snoopy, Clorox, Tide, Tylenol, Motrin) are prohibited.
- Contestants must do all the work.
- Use crayons, acrylics, colored markers, watercolors or colored pencils.
- Designs should be on 8 1/2 x 11 paper. Entries can be horizontally or vertically oriented.
- Original art must be submitted. Copies will not be accepted.
- Clearly print the artist's name in the lower right-hand corner on the back of the poster.
- A completed entry form is required for all submissions.
- **Deadline:** Artwork must be postmarked by Friday, **March 20, 2015**

*Submitted entries to this contest become the property of the Alabama Pharmacy Association and will not be returned. Entry into this contest implies consent and permission for the Alabama Pharmacy Association to reproduce, publish, circulate, display on its website, and/or to use as advertising or for marketing purposes for the Alabama Pharmacy Association. Additional information may be added to the winning artwork such as, Poison Hotline's toll free number, Medication Safety Week Date, artist's first name, APA website. Public recognition information will be in accordance with all Child Protection laws.*



## Divisions

Kindergarten - 2nd grade  
3rd - 5th grade  
6th - 8th grade

## Prizes

**Grand Prize:** \$100 gift certificate  
**Second Place:** \$60 gift certificate  
**Third Place:** \$40 gift certificate

## To Enter

Fill out the entry form below and send it in with your artwork to:

**APA Art Contest**  
**1211 Carmichael Way**  
**Montgomery, AL 36106**



## APA ART CONTEST ENTRY FORM

Please Print

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Grade/Division \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Name of School/Pharmacy (if applicable) \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Teacher/Pharmacist/Adult \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Alabama Pharmacy Association // P: 334.271.4222 // www.aparx.org // 2015

## Welcome to New and Returning State Board of Education Members

The Alabama State Board of Education is pleased to welcome **Dr. Cynthia McCarty**, (District 6). Dr. Yvette Richardson (District 4), Mary Scott Hunter (District 8), and Betty Peters (District 2) are returning for another term. **Thank you for your service.**



Dr. Cynthia McCarty



Dr. Yvette Richardson



Mary Scott Hunter



Betty Peters

# PLAYWRIGHT IN THE CLASSROOM



Through a grant the Young Southern Writers' Project (YSWP) at the Alabama Shakespeare Festival offers a free workshop for your high school students with ASF Playwright-in-Residence James Bowen. Through the use of critical thinking, conflict resolution and problem solving activities, students learn how to create a one-act play while exploring their own creative potential.

Northern Alabama January 26 – January 30  
Central and Southern Alabama February 2 – 6  
For more information contact: [nrominger@asf.net](mailto:nrominger@asf.net)

**JAMES BOWEN** is the current playwright in residence for the Alabama Shakespeare Festival. He has participated as both an actor and a playwright for the Southern Writers' Project in the past. His screenplay *Just Like That* is a former finalist for the AFI's Norman Jewison Fellowship. He is co-author (along with dramaturg John Manfredi) of the children's play, *Untangled: The True Story of Rapunzel*. Their fairytale plays, *Aladdin: And His Magic Lamp* and *Puss N' Boots, The Master Cat* had world premieres in the summer of 2012 at the Meadow Brook Music Festival.



James Bowen

## Updated Data Center – Policies and Reports

Visit our **updated Data Center** to see policies and reports.

[CLICK HERE](#) to see the full site.

Data Use and Governance in Alabama is very important to parents, students, and educators.

[CLICK HERE](#) to learn more.



## ACCRS Standards of the Week

Feel free to promote on your Web site, newsletter, and social media sites!

[Here's the link](#) to the page for all ACCRS Standard of the Week images.

## Apply Now for a U.S. Space & Rocket Center® Scholarship

**The U.S. Space & Rocket Center** is offering scholarships to educators from Marshall Space Flight Center's five-state region to attend a four-day, three-night professional development session featuring NASA-focused STEM content and resources. Sessions will be offered June 4-7, 2015, and July 9-12, 2015. The Marshall Space Flight Center region includes Alabama, Arkansas, Iowa, Missouri, and Tennessee. This is a terrific opportunity to learn new ways to bring science



to life both inside and outside the classroom.

For more information, and to apply, [CLICK](#). Applications are due by 11:59 p.m. CST on February 3, 2015.

## ACT Aspire and Plan Scores

ACT Aspire and Plan scores for the state and systems are now online under the updated Data Center. [Click](#) to view.

## High School Students: Enter the National Liberty Museum's Selma Speech & Essay Contest!

Calling all high school students: Martin Luther King, Jr. used his words to change history. How will you use yours? To participate, click [HERE](#). Grand prize: \$5,000! Contest timeline: December 25, 2014 - February 15, 2015.

### Who Can Participate?

The National Liberty Museum's *Selma* Speech & Essay Contest is open to U.S. high school students ages 14-18 (as of the February 15 deadline), who are enrolled in a public, private, or parochial high school or home study program in the United States and its territories. After viewing Paramount Pictures film *SELMA*, contestants will respond to the contest topic with an original 500- to 700-word essay and videotaped speech reading of their essay. [CLICK](#) for rules:



### It all started with a speech:

At the age of 15, a young Martin Luther King, Jr. entered a high school public speaking competition with his submission called "The Negro and the Constitution." He was in his junior year, and he won the competition. On the bus ride home, young King and his three companions were told to give up their seats to a white couple who had just boarded the bus, and they stood for several hours on their way back to Atlanta.

It has been widely written that the high school speech Dr. King wrote inspired his "I Have a Dream" oration, since all of the concepts in his competition submission were encapsulated into the historic 1963 speech. There are striking parallels between the two writings. That is the power of words.

### Selma Speech & Essay Contest Topic:

"The movie *Selma* tells the story of how Martin Luther King, Jr. and others peacefully protested to advance voting rights. What do you think needs to be done today to protect individual freedom and self-determination? What are you doing or will you do to peacefully advance those rights?"

### Contest Prizes:

One grand prize: \$5,000  
 First runner up: \$2,500  
 Second runner up: \$1,000  
 Seven honorable mentions: \$500 each  
 \$300 cash prize for each teacher/mentor who sponsors a top 10 finalist

*The Selma Speech & Essay Contest is made possible through a grant from the John Templeton Foundation and in-kind support of Paramount Pictures.*

### Contest Timeline:

**December 25, 2014**, 12:01 am EST: Official Opening of *Selma* Contest & limited release of *Selma* film  
**January 9, 2015**: Wide release in theaters of *Selma* film  
**February 15, 2015**, 11:59 pm EST: DEADLINE for submissions  
**March 2015**: Winners notified  
**April 20-22, 2015**: Award Ceremony held in Philadelphia, PA

## Thomasville's "Come Back Academy" Shows Outstanding results *By:Carolyn Drinkard*

**The CBA gives students an opportunity to recover credits and graduate with their class.**

**As the first term ended** at Thomasville High School, five students had much to celebrate. In four months, these five students had finished 41 classes, setting a record for themselves and the Come Back Academy! For the students, this record meant much more than mere numbers, however. Now, these students will be able to graduate with their class.

For Adam Elliott, Director of the CBA, it was a moment of great pride! Elliott, who had previously taught physical education at Thomasville Middle School for the past 9 years, took over the leadership of the CBA in August. When he was asked to take the job, he was excited about getting to try something different. He also hoped that some of the coaching skills he had learned might work in this non-traditional classroom setting.

Thomasville's Come Back Academy was established in 2013 to give struggling students more assistance. The CBA uses Plato Programs to allow students to catch up and to recover failed credits. The program specifically targets students who are two or more credits behind. CBA also focuses on older ninth-graders, who may be behind their actual grade level or struggling to earn credits. Typically, these are the students who drop out when they turn sixteen.

"We find out what works with each student and try to create a positive environment for each one," Elliott explained. "Some of these kids don't like being around a lot of people, or maybe their learning styles differ from others. Some students like teacher-led classes, while others are better at individualized work."

Students in CBA receive individual counseling and advising, extra support, and daily encouragement. They work at their own pace on computer-based programs in classes of 15-17 other students. Teachers come in during their planning times to give individual tutoring in areas such as math and Language Arts. Teachers in other areas are also available, as needed.



*Adam Elliott, Director of the Come Back Academy, works with Laquisha Brown, who had fallen behind her class and felt she could never catch up on her work. Brown is now on track to graduate in May. The Senior 2015 shirt she is wearing is one of her prized possessions.*

"A student has to want it, though," explained Elliott. "That's the key. I would say 99% want it. Many don't know they want it, but we figured out a way to make them want it," said Elliott.

Elliott says that he lives by the teaching philosophy that 'Students don't care how much you know until they know how much you care.' Once these students realized that he was trying to help them reach their goals, they bought into the idea of working with him. On Friday of each week, he would print out each student's progress and grade reports. Then, he and the student would work together to develop a plan and choose the strategies that might help that student finish the class. Elliott constantly praised the students, and he always had some kind of reward for each one.

Elliott pointed out that he saw many positive changes in the students as the semester progressed. Some became more focused on their goals and developed a stronger work ethic. He saw a big difference in their self-confidence and personal esteem, as they worked hard to do something that now seemed within their reach. The students began to talk about their futures and jobs they might be interested in. They also began to interact with each other, finding ways to work together to solve problems.

"I give all the credit to the students," Elliott added. "They really made up their minds that they were going to graduate on time and get caught up. All I did was push them to work hard and encourage them not to be afraid to succeed!"

For the five students who accomplished their goals, the end results cannot be measured! For Thomasville High School, whose graduation rate jumped to 95% this year, it means five more students will get a diploma this year and a better chance to succeed in life.

For more information on the Come Back Academy, contact THS Principal, Keith Jackson at 334-636-4451 (Ex. 1006) or [rjackson@thomasvilleschools.org](mailto:rjackson@thomasvilleschools.org).



## GET 15% OFF!

Alabama State Department of Education employees, as well as all Alabama public school teachers and support staff, can now enjoy a **15% discount** on tickets to any Alabama Shakespeare Festival 2015 performance! To get your discount, visit [www.asf.net](http://www.asf.net) and use promo code **ALEDU** when ordering tickets.



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### Tuscaloosa County Teacher Wins “Education Oscar”

science. In 2014, 92 percent of her students scored a Level 3 or 4 on the Alabama Science Assessment, which was an increase of 4 percent over the previous year, and 57 percent scored a Level 4.

Bryant is also a valued mentor, sharing her techniques with colleagues and student-teachers as a clinical master teacher. Her colleagues are often in awe of the relationships she has with students. Together with parents, personal goals are set for each student to ensure that he/she is striving both within and outside of the classroom, and regular contact with parents involves them in their students' progress.

Each year the Milken Family Foundation travels from coast to coast surprising teachers, principals, and specialists with \$25,000 awards because they are furthering excellence in education. Since Alabama joined the Milken Educator Awards program in 1998, 32 Alabama educators have received the “Education Oscar” and a total of \$800,000.

For more information on the Milken Educator Awards, visit [www.mff.org](http://www.mff.org) or the Alabama State Department of Education's Web site at [www.alsde.edu](http://www.alsde.edu).

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*Alabama Education News*

P.O. Box 302101

Montgomery, AL 36130-2101

*Alabama Education News* (USPS #387-290) is published monthly by the Alabama State Department of Education, P.O. Box 302101, Montgomery, AL 36130-2101. This publication, authorized by Section 16-2-4 of the *Code of Alabama*, as recompiled in 1975, is a public service of the Alabama Department of Education designed to inform citizens and educators about programs and goals of public education in Alabama.

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