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ALABAMA EDUCATION NEWS

The electronic newsletter of the Alabama State Department of Education

From the Superintendent

The men and women who serve and protect the United States come from all walks of life. They are parents, children, and grandparents. They are friends, neighbors, and coworkers, and they are a very important part of their local communities. In like manner as it relates to their service to our great country, a program exists to allow these individuals to continue serving the United States upon the occasion of their retirement from military service.

With Veterans Day approaching, I wanted to highlight the Troops to Teachers (TTT) program, which began in 1992. The TTT program enriches the quality of education by helping to place mature, motivated, experienced, and dedicated personnel in our classrooms. Nationwide, thousands of retiring military and Reserve Component personnel are discovering rewarding new careers in teaching and helping to build and sustain our communities starting with our children.

The program has been successful in producing quality teachers, a high percentage of whom are men and minorities. In addition, these teachers have experience beneficial to successful teaching in high-demand fields such as mathematics, science, and special education, and they are teaching in high-demand areas such as inner cities and outlying rural areas. Alabama currently



The Troops to Teachers program enriches the quality of education by helping to place dedicated personnel in our classrooms. — *Dr. Tommy Bice, State Superintendent of Education*

has 240 individuals who went through the TTT process and now serve in our public schools through this unique program.

Potential TTT candidates must possess a Bachelor's Degree or higher in order to pursue certification to teach through the Alternative Certification Program. Stipends and Bonuses may be available as noted below.

\$5,000 Stipends—Available for TTT teachers who agree to teach for three years in a public school within a school system that has at least 20% of its students who come from families living below the poverty line OR where at least 50% of its students are eligible for the free or reduced cost lunch program or have a high percentage (as determined annually) of students with disabilities (in a school in a school system that has between 10%-20% of its students who come from poverty-level families).

\$10,000 Bonuses—Available in lieu of a stipend if the TTT teacher is employed in a school system that has at least 10% or greater of students who come from families living below the poverty level and are (a) teaching in a school where at least 50% of students are eligible for the free or reduced cost lunch program or (b) teaching in a school that has a high percentage (determined annually) of students with disabilities.

If you know someone who would like more information about Troops to Teachers and making the transition to a second career in public education in Alabama, please contact Debra Williams at dwilliams@alsde.edu.

Homewood City Teacher Wins "Education Oscar"

Edgewood Elementary Teacher Pamela Yau Smith Receives Prestigious Milken National Educator Award and \$25,000!

Edgewood Elementary Teacher **Pamela Yau Smith** has been presented the 2012 Milken Family Foundation National Educator Award! The announcement came during the 26th annual coast-to-coast tour to reward top educators. Smith never expected the award or the \$25,000 check presented with the prestigious award, known as the "Education Oscar."

The unsuspecting teacher from the Homewood City School System was presented with the 2012 Milken Educator Award at a surprise schoolwide assembly disguised as a school event. Presented by President and CEO of the National Institute for Excellence in Teaching and Milken Family Foundation representative, Dr. Gary Stark, 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's 26th annual National Notifications Tour is honoring more than 32 outstanding educators and 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 2012 Milken Educator by saying, "This recognition of Pam Yau Smith as a Milken Educator is a direct reflection of her unwavering passion to ensure ALL students have a depth of understanding of math and science and how that understanding applies to real-world problems needing real-world solutions. She is a role model for what rigorous and relevant instruction looks like in action."

Smith is a Learning Enhancement and Academic Design (L.E.A.D.) Teacher who instructs kindergarten through fifth-grade classes in science and math enhancement for hands-on learning. She collaborates with grade-level teachers to design technology-integrated, inquiry-based lessons. Smith is a National Board Certified teacher and a lead teacher for the Alabama Math, Science, and Technology Initiative for five years. She was a member of the final four for the 2011-12 Alabama Teacher of the Year award and Elementary Teacher of the Year for the Homewood City School System the same year.

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, 30 Alabama educators have received the "Education Oscar" and a total of \$750,000.

The "Education Oscar" recognizes teacher-leaders in the early to middle part of their careers who are innovative and effective. There is a rigorous and confidential selection process. Teachers cannot apply for the award.

Educators are recommended without their knowledge to the Milken Family Foundation by an independent blue-ribbon panel appointed by each state's department of education. Awards

alternate yearly between elementary and secondary educators. In recognizing these outstanding teachers with \$25,000, the Foundation hopes to raise public awareness that high-quality teachers are essential to student achievement. The award was developed to reward, retain, and attract the highest quality K-12 teachers.

Smith joins the Milken Educator Network, a nationwide coalition of more than 2,500 top educators who have access to a variety of professional resources to help cultivate and expand innovative programs in their classrooms, schools, and districts.

For more information on the Milken Family Foundation National Educator Awards, visit www.mff.org or the Alabama State Department of Education's Web site at www.alsde.edu.



Pamela Yau Smith is a role model for what rigorous and relevant instruction looks like in action. — Dr. Tommy Bice, State Superintendent of Education

Alabama Schools Win Big In National Math Competitions

Alabama placed five schools in the top twenty five nationally during the 2012 National Assessment & Testing Center Fall Startup Event on September 27, 2012.

National Assessment & Testing Center administers high-quality, affordable mathematics competitions for math teams and honor societies. Its contests cover a wide range of topics, difficulties, and formats in order to provide both confidence and challenges to students of all abilities.



The winners in the High School Category were:

Vestavia Hills in Vestavia Hills City Schools (8th place)

Hoover High School in Hoover City Schools (17th place)

James Clemens High School in Madison City Schools (21st place)

Bob Jones High School in Madison City Schools (22nd place).

The winner in the Middle School Category:

Discovery Middle School in Madison City Schools (3rd place).

In each division, all recognized schools and students will receive personalized certificates.



Teacher of the Year Applications Available Now!

The Alabama Teacher of the Year Program seeks annually to honor and recognize excellence in the teaching profession by identifying outstanding Alabama classroom teachers at local, district, and state levels. [CLICK HERE](#) for the application.

The Camellia Award Program

Alabama's children's choice book award program

Registration is open now [HERE](#). Unlike the well-known Newbery and Caldecott awards selected by adults, the Camellia Award program allows Alabama's students to pick the winners. It is open to all students in public and private K-12 schools and patrons of public libraries. Many other states have a similar program.

Each spring a select committee of school-based professionals chooses 30 books (10 from each of three grade-level categories) from those submitted by publishers. Most years there are 300 to 400 titles submitted for consideration by publishers.

The books are read by students or read aloud by teachers, parents, and librarians to students during the fall and winter. In March, students vote on their favorite book in each category. The grades included in each category have changed over time.

Presently, the categories are Grades K-1, 2-3, and 4-6.

Students who have read or listened to all nominated books in a category may vote for their favorite book in that category. The book in each category receiving the largest vote (statewide) wins. There is a winner in each of the three grade-level categories. Winning authors and illustrators receive notification of their winning title. All participating schools receive a certificate of participation. Also, all schools that participate are entered into a drawing for one grade-level set of the books.

Library media specialists try to purchase as many of the books as possible for their library. However, budget limitations keep some schools from participating due to lack of monies to purchase these titles. How can you help? Purchase the Camellia Award nominee books in honor of your children, grandchildren, or for area schools. Each book costs approximately \$10-20. Books bound specifically for library use tend to be more durable for multiple uses by students. A grade-level set costs between \$185 and \$225; a full set of all books costs between \$525 and \$625. Please encourage community groups, parents, and other stakeholders to donate!

The Alabama Department of Education has managed the program since 1991, although a division of the Alabama Library Association originated the program. For more information, contact [Meg Lowry](#), [Dede Coe](#), or call 334-353-1191, Alabama State Department of Education, Instructional Services.



Meet the Alabama Council for Leadership Development (ACL D)

The Alabama Council for Leadership Development (ACL D) consists of instructional leaders and educators across the state. Members of the ACL D include the following active practitioners: local superintendents, local education agency (LEA) directors of instruction or equivalent positions, elementary school principals, middle school principals, high school principals, assistant principals, and teachers who have distinguished themselves by leading sustained student achievement in their schools or LEAs. Nominations are received from the Alabama State Board of Education members, professional associations, and other educational entities. The ACL D provides advice for the development of a seamless system of professional development for Alabama's instructional leaders. The council members serve a three-year staggered term and meet regularly during the year to ensure approved professional studies delivered over time fully address the Alabama Standards for Instructional Leaders and are aligned to the Alabama Standards for Professional Development.

Alabama Council for Leadership Development (ACL D) 2012

Chairperson:

Michael Wilson, Principal, Glen Iris Elementary, Birmingham City

Co-Chairperson:

Jason Wright, Central Office, Lee County

Members:

Vicky Butler, Cullman County

Andre' Harrison, Elmore County

Joanna May, Athens City

Martin Nalls, Homewood City

Rachel Poovey, Decatur City

Celia Rudolph, Huntingdon College

Roderick Sheppard, Florence City

Quesha Starks, Montgomery County

Dilhani Uswatte, Hoover City

Lisa Williams, Mobile County

Tyrone Yarbrough, Alabama Department of Youth Services

Advisors:

Dr. Thomas R. Bice, State Superintendent, Alabama Department of Education

Evelyn Nettles, Birmingham City

Sidney Brown, Auburn University Montgomery

Earl Gardner, University of North Alabama~Regional Inservice Center

Linda Searby, Auburn University

Upcoming Meeting Dates

November 27, 2012 • February 5, 2013 • April 30, 2013 • June 18, 2013

For more information contact: Tena Madison, Project Administrator, by e-mail at: tmadison@alsde.edu or call 334-353-8924.

Summer Reading Challenge

For Alabama's students,

summer is a time of fun,

but those

months away from school can result in a loss of knowledge and reading ability. To combat summer learning loss, the Alabama State Department of Education began the Summer Reading Challenge on May 14th with a multi-media outreach to teachers, students, parents, and the media in order to increase participation in summer reading.

Alabama was **second in the nation** for books pledged (2,502). Fourteen states responded to the 2012 CCSSO Chief's Summer Reading Challenge. Find a Book links, videos, and other resources including printable bookmarks were posted at the [state department's Web page](#) to assist parents and teachers in finding books for students to read over the summer months. **Over 370 pledges were made to read all summer long!** Read the full report on ALSDE's Summer Reading Challenge [HERE](#).



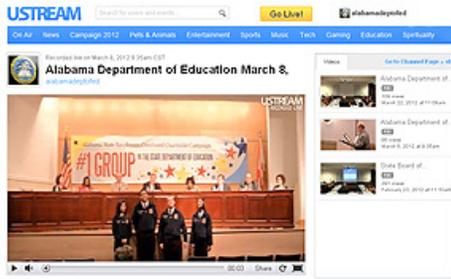
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Links to all social media sites can also be found on our [webpage](#).



State Board of Education Meetings Now on Ustream.tv!



See your State Board of Education in action – Online at <http://www.ustream.tv/channel/alabama-department-of-education>. See LIVE video every second and fourth Thursday of the month or watch the archived videos anytime you want (different days in July, November, and December).

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Submit Local Professional Studies for ACLD Approval

The **Alabama Council for Leadership Development (ACLD)** reviews school systems' professional study submissions throughout the year. Proposals deemed acceptable are approved as PLU credit for professional staff who hold valid Alabama instructional leader certificates. Those holding such certificates may include, but are not limited to, selected central office staff, principals, assistant principals, career technical education directors, teachers, and other educators.

Although superintendents may grant locally approved PLUs, school systems may wish to seek ACLD approval for locally developed professional studies. By seeking ACLD approval, an instructional leader has the opportunity to earn an ACLD PLU in his/her respective school system. Therefore, as directed by the local superintendent, professional development coordinators, curriculum specialists, or other designated personnel are encouraged to submit the professional study on behalf of the school system via the ACLD's online Instructional Leadership Professional Study Application (ILPSA) system. The professional study should be submitted at least two months prior to the date of **initial** implementation. To request access to the professional study application, complete the Contact ACLD form [HERE](#).

The submission deadline for the upcoming meeting is **January 23, 2013**. For complete information, contact [Telena Madison](#), State Department of Education, Office of Teaching and Leading, at 334-353-5230.

Application Requirements to Consider

- Identify the standard(s) addressed by the professional study.
- Do the professional study activities, in summary:
 - Address all key indicators for knowledge?
 - Address applicable key indicators for ability?
 - Align to all professional development standards?
- Identify the targeted participant(s) for the professional study.
- Identify any methods to reflect professional study content delivered over time.
- Is more than one delivery method identified to support professional study delivered over time?
- Does the provider describe all requirements related to pre- and/or post-activities for successful completion of this professional study? Note: This is not the professional study Method of Evaluation.
- Does the provider identify and describe the methods of evaluation for the professional study?
 - Describe how participants will effectively acquire knowledge and demonstrate their ability to use that knowledge to positively impact student achievement. *If specific evaluation tools are used, include the formal name of the instrument.*
 - How will participants demonstrate what they know and what they can do with what they know?
 - How will their growth be evaluated? This may include, but not be limited to: data analysis, personal reflections, demonstration of a change of instructional practice(s), survey(s), evidence of successful implementation, etc.
 - Who is responsible for the evaluation in the school system or educational agency?