2010–2011 NORTH CAROLINA

at&t TEACHER OF THE YEAR

Recognition and Awards Ceremony | May 5, 2010 | Embassy Suites, Cary, NC

Public Schools of North Carolina
State Board of Education | Department of Public Instruction

SPECIAL THANKS

AT&T

On behalf of the State Board of Education, the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, the 2010-2011 Teacher of the Year team, and the thousands of teachers across North Carolina, we would like to express our extreme gratitude to **Cynthia Marshall** and AT&T for the their continued sponsorship of this celebrated event. Through their gracious support, the teaching profession is honored and justly recognized.

FLOW AUTOMOTIVE, LLC

Our sincere gratitude to **Don Flow** of Winston-Salem for his generous sponsorship donation. Supporting the North Carolina Teacher of the Year highlights the company's support for education and teachers across our state. The Department of Public Instruction greatly appreciates their generosity.

THE IRA WIGGINS QUARTET

Ira Wiggins, Director of Jazz Studies at North Carolina Central University, holds a doctorate in music education from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. As a saxophonist and flutist, Dr. Wiggins is a highly respected musician and educator with 15 albums to his credit as a sideman and soloist. He has shared the stage with such jazz notables as Jimmy Heath, Grady Tate, Frank Foster, Nnenna Freelon, Slide Hampton, Louie Bellson, Ellis and Branford Marsalis, and Vanessa Rubin. Individual honors earned by Wiggins include the Walter J. Norfleet Award for Outstanding Service to the Arts by an Artist and the UNC-Greensboro Jazz Education Service Award. Under his direction, the highly decorated NCCU Jazz Ensemble has received accolades at many national and international music festivals and is the recipient of two invitations to the White House, where the students performed for the White House's national press reception and a private audience with President and Mrs. Clinton.

SMART TECHNOLOGIES

Over the last ten years SMART Technologies has honorably supported the State Teachers of the Year recognition programs across the United States through the Teaching Excellence Award (TEA) Program. SMART Technologies understands how important a seamless integration of technology products is to a successful learning environment for today's generation of educators and those to come in the future. In support of this vision, the company donates a comprehensive technology package to the North Carolina Teacher of the Year winner and a secondary package for the other eight regional winners.

GERALD OWENS

Gerald Owens is the co-anchor on the 10:00 news on Fox 50, and WRAL's 11:00 news. Gerald grew up in a military family but spent much of his childhood in the Washington D.C. area. He attended Guilford College in Greensboro, NC, where he majored in business and played basketball. After thirteen years of working in the business arena, he discovered his passion for journalism. Gerald interned with ABC News Nightline in Washington D.C. and WJZ TV in Baltimore before spending a year as a reporter trainee for WUSA TV. These experiences led to his first on-air job at WTKR TV in Norfolk. He eventually returned to WUSA TV as the morning anchor and later as the sports anchor before transitioning to WRAL TV in 2002. Passionate about education, Gerald hosts a weekly segment called the Teacher of the Week, where WRAL profiles the exceptional work by teachers all across the area. He credits his decision to join WRAL because he believes the station promotes the values he strives to live by—integrity, credibility, and a sense of community.

DINNER AND AWARDS CEREMONY MAY 5, 2010

INTRODUCTION OF THE MASTER OF CEREMONY
Brandon Patterson
Assistant Director, Educator Recruitment and Development
North Carolina Department of Public Instruction

GREETINGS
Gerald Owens
Lead Anchor/Reporter, WRAL TV

WELCOME
Dr. June Atkinson
State Superintendent, North Carolina Department of Public Instruction

RECOGNITION OF THE SELECTION TEAM AND REGIONAL FINALISTS
Brandon Patterson

INVOCATION
Dr. Lynne Johnson
Director, Educator Recruitment and Development
North Carolina Department of Public Instruction

DINNER

REMARKS
Dr. William C. Harrison
Chairman, North Carolina State Board of Education

Cynthia Marshall
President, AT&T – North Carolina

Darrin Scott
Area Manager for North Carolina
SMART Technologies

REFLECTIONS
Jessica Garner
AT&T 2009-2010 North Carolina Teacher of the Year
Porter Ridge High School, Union County Schools

ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE AT&T NORTH CAROLINA TEACHER OF THE YEAR
Dr. June Atkinson

ACCEPTANCE REMARKS
AT&T 2010-2011 North Carolina Teacher of the Year

CLOSING REMARKS
Gerald Owens

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

For more than 50 years our nation has honored teachers with the National Teacher of the Year Program. The National Teacher of the Year Program, sponsored by the ING Foundation, is a project of the Council of Chief State School Officers. Since 1970, North Carolina has participated in this program recognizing outstanding teachers.

In accordance with national guidelines, North Carolina chooses a candidate who is "dedicated and highly skilled, a candidate proven capable of inspiring students of all backgrounds and abilities to learn." The Teacher of the Year will travel, speak on behalf of education and demonstrate master teaching skills.

The program recognizes teachers at the school, local, regional and statewide levels. Individuals are chosen to represent their school as Teacher of the Year, then advance to competition at the local school district level. Once that selection has been made, district Teachers of the Year and top representatives of the public Charter Schools vie for the eight Regional Teacher of the Year designations and the title of Charter School Teacher of the Year respectively. Using a process including a portfolio, interviews, and public speaking, the statewide Teacher of the Year is chosen from among the eight regional winners and Charter School Teacher of the Year by a selection committee consisting of professional educators and community leaders. The regional winners, along with the state Teacher of the Year, comprise the AT&T North Carolina Teacher of the Year team and work collaboratively on issues critical to education in North Carolina.

The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, along with its corporate sponsor, AT&T, administers the program. The AT&T North Carolina Teacher of the Year earns the use of a State vehicle for one year, a one-time cash award of $7,500, two national conference trips, the opportunity to travel abroad through an endowment at the North Carolina Center for International Understanding, and a technology package valued at over $17,000 from the SMART Technologies. The state winner is also given a step increase in salary and one year's leave from the classroom to serve as an ambassador for education across North Carolina and is the state's nominee for the National Teacher of the Year competition. The regional winners receive one-time cash awards of $5,000, and one national conference trip. In addition, they receive professional leave from the classroom to provide professional development to other teachers across their respective regions.

In the 40 years of the program in North Carolina, three State Teachers of the Year have become National winners. Four have become National Finalists and one has been inducted into the National Teachers' Hall of Fame.

Thirteen North Carolina Teachers of the Year have taught at the elementary school level, seven at the middle or junior high school level and twenty at the high school level.

Public Schools of North Carolina
State Board of Education | Department of Public Instruction

DR. JUNE ST. CLAIR ATKINSON

State Superintendent of Public Instruction

June St. Clair Atkinson was elected as the North Carolina State Superintendent of Public Instruction in November 2004 and re-elected in 2008. Dr. Atkinson is North Carolina's first woman elected to this position. She heads the NC Department of Public Instruction, an agency which she served for nearly 28 years as a chief consultant and director in the areas of business education, career and technical education, and instructional services. As a former business education teacher, Atkinson has been involved in instruction and curriculum development throughout her career. She is past president of the National Business Education Association, Southern Regional Education Board's High Schools that Work, and the National Association of State Directors of Career and Technical Education Consortium. Atkinson is a member of Delta Kappa Gamma and Phi Delta Kappa and was inducted into East Carolina University's College of Education Educator Hall of Fame in 2008. She received a Bachelor's degree in Business Education from Radford University in 1969, a Master's degree in Vocational and Technical Education from Virginia Tech in 1974, and a Doctorate degree in Educational Leadership and Policy from North Carolina State University in 1996.

DR. WILLIAM C. HARRISON

North Carolina State Board of Education Chairman

Dr. Harrison was appointed to the State Board of Education by Governor Beverly Perdue in March 2009. A native of Pennsylvania, Dr. Harrison has served North Carolina public schools throughout his career. In addition to more than 11 years as Superintendent in Cumberland County, he also has served as Superintendent in Orange County and in Hoke County. He has also served as an Assistant Superintendent in Brunswick County Schools and as a principal and teacher. Dr. Harrison is an adjunct assistant professor at North Carolina State University. His experience includes serving on numerous state commissions, most recently as Co-Chair of the Education Lottery Oversight Committee and as Vice-Chair of the Military Child Education Coalition. Dr. Harrison holds a bachelor's degree in Intermediate Education from Methodist College - Fayetteville, a master's degree in Educational Administration and an Education Specialist degree in Education Administration from East Carolina University, and an Educational doctorate in Education Administration from Vanderbilt University.

2010-2011 Teacher of the Year State Selection Committee

CINDY RIGSBEE
AT&T NC Teacher of the Year, 2008-2009
Literacy Coach/ District Mentor
Gravelly Hill Middle School
Orange County Schools

SHIRLEY PRINCE
Executive Director
North Carolina Principals and Assistant Principals Association

VANN PENNELL
2009 Wachovia Principal of the Year
South Brunswick High School
Brunswick County Schools

CHARLIE NELMS
Chancellor
North Carolina Central University

SHIRLEY HARRIS
State Board of Education

JESSICA GARNER — EX OFFICIO
AT&T NC Teacher of the Year, 2009-2010
Porter Ridge High School
Union County Schools

2009–2010 TEACHER OF THE YEAR TEAM

at&t

2009-2010
NC TEACHER OF THE YEAR

Jessica Garner
Southwest Region
Union County Public Schools

Gina Beaman
Northeast Region
Pitt County Schools

Nicole Murray
Southeast Region
Duplin County Schools

Matthew Bristow-Smith
North Central Region
Edgecombe County Public Schools

Martha Anderson
Sandhills/South Central Region
Richmond County Schools

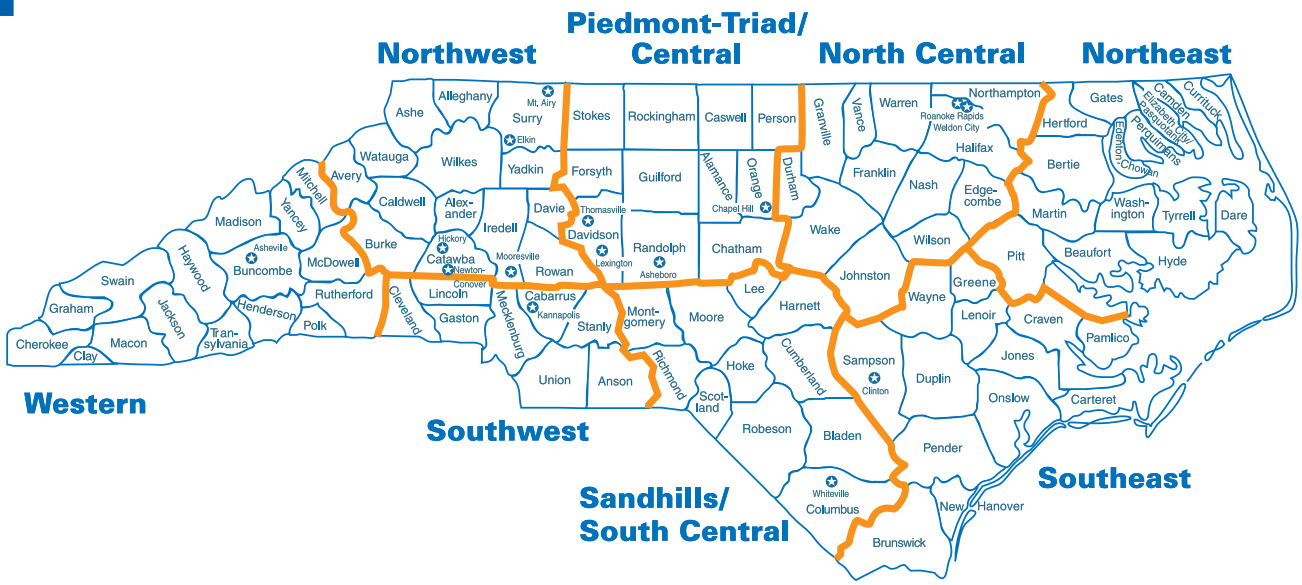
Jo Peterson Gibbs
Western Region
Asheville City Schools

Phillip Little
Piedmont-Triad Central Region
Chatham County Schools

Robert P. Turner
Northwest Region
Hickory Public Schools

John Hall
Charter Schools
ArtSpace Charter School

TEACHER OF THE YEAR REGIONAL MAP



VANN MIZZELLE LASSITER NORTHEAST REGION

ASSIGNMENT
Grades 9-12, Business & Information Technology
John A. Holmes High School
Edenton-Chowan Public Schools

EXPERIENCE
4 years, 4 in current position
Teacher, Edenton-Chowan Public Schools, North Carolina

EDUCATION
Old Dominion University, PhD/Occupational & Technical Studies
North Carolina State University, MEd/Curriculum & Instruction
North Carolina State University, BS/Business & Marketing Education, Magna Cum Laude

RECOGNITIONS/AWARDS
Northeast Region Teacher of the Year, 2010-2011
Edenton-Chowan Public Schools Teacher of the Year, 2009-2010
John A. Holmes High School Teacher of the Year, 2009-2010
Professional Education of NC Continuing Education Scholarship Recipient, 2009
NC Technology in Education Society Instructional Technology Scholarship Recipient, 2009
Certificate of Appreciation in Recognition for Outstanding Support of the Inaugural Entrepreneurial Student Leadership Conference, 2007
NCSU Florence, Italy Study Aboard Program Participant, 2006
North Carolina Teaching Fellow Recipient, 2002

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS
Professional Educators of North Carolina
North Carolina Technology in Education Society
Association for Career and Technical Education
North Carolina Association for Career and Technical Education
National Business Education Association
North Carolina Business Education Association
Phi Delta Kappa National Educational Honor Society
The Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi
Gamma Beta Phi National Honor Society
Phi Eta Sigma National Honor Society
Golden Key International Honor Society
Iota Lambda Sigma National Workforce Development Honor Society (Alpha Rho Chapter)

"It's a bird…it's a plane. No, it's Super Vann," remarks a co-worker as I make my way through the halls, dashing and diving cheerfully, smiling through a crowd of high school students, most of whom are taller than my 5'4" stature. The bell rings, and I step into my room to begin the warm-up. "Five-minutes," I say, walking briskly through the rows of neatly aligned computers. A student whispers, "He just went by. I could feel the breeze on my head. Do you think we are going to sing the business letter song?" I reply loudly, "YES!" The two students look at each other as if to ask, "How did he hear that?" That is a glimpse into my classroom.

My classroom is my stage, and I want my students to demand an encore. We sing, dance, jump, cheer, collaborate, write, create, or draw to cover important concepts. I provide my students with the "why" and "how" of what we are learning. I engage the whole student, creating rigorous lessons that are cross-curricular, twenty-first century focused, preparing students to be global learners, critical thinkers, and problem solvers - skills necessary to compete in a global economy. Teaching is my opportunity to impart a love of learning in my students by addressing the needs of diverse learners, building positive relationships, setting high standards for all with the belief that they can obtain them. Working with students at an age when they are learning about themselves and the world is a charge I take seriously. I lead by example: demanding respect by giving respect, encouraging questions by asking questions, expecting excellence by being excellent, encouraging interaction through engaging instruction.

The seed for this passion to teach was implanted through the compassion of a special teacher, Mrs. Lucille Stalls, who made a short, shy sixth-grade boy feel special each morning that he walked into her classroom. Mrs. Stalls was tough, but she was fair and cared about her students. She made me feel good about myself, making me want to learn. My experiences that year sparked my desire to teach, to do for other students what Mrs. Stalls had done for me. Each day that I enter my classroom, I answer a God-given mandate to make a positive difference in the lives of those students whom I am privileged to teach. I share with my students my life story, from being told by some individuals that I would not make it in college, to my current experiences as a doctoral student. I share my six-week study abroad experience to let them know there is a world beyond the walls of Chowan County. As a product of this county, I offer proof that they can make it. They will be great if they push themselves, dream—and dream big. In addition, I strive to make sure that they believe in themselves as I do. This noble profession allows me to ignite hope in children. That is why I teach!

JENNIFER J. FACCIOLINI SOUTHEAST REGION

ASSIGNMENT
Grades 9-12, Social Studies and Paideia
Midway High School
Sampson County Schools

EXPERIENCE
11 years experience, 3 in current position
Teacher, Sampson County Schools, North Carolina
Teacher, Wake County Public Schools, North Carolina
3 years Instructor, Global Initiative Program with FuHsing School, Meredith College

EDUCATION
Meredith College, BA/American Civilization, Secondary Social Studies Certification

RECOGNITIONS/AWARDS
Sampson County Schools Teacher of the Year, 2009-2010
Midway High School Teacher of the Year, 2009-2010
Fuquay-Varina Chamber of Commerce, Excellence in Education Award, 2006
Wake County Teacher of the Year, semifinalist, 2006
Fuquay-Varina High School Teacher of the Year, 2005-2006
Wake County Public Schools Institute for Teacher Leaders, 2005-2006
National Board Certification, 2005
North Carolina Teaching Fellow, 1994

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS
Professional Educators of North Carolina
Parent Teacher Association

As the oldest of three children, I cannot recall a time when I was not teaching in some form or fashion. Whether it was how to make a bed, or how to find all the good hiding places so your room looks clean, I have always taught. As I begin to think about the many factors that influenced my decision to teach, my mind races. I cannot recall one defining moment, but rather a series of events that led me to teach.

Like many others, I can tell you stories of lining up my dolls, asking Santa for chalkboards, and memories of teachers who changed my life. However, it was the first few years in the classroom that kept my passion for teaching alive and provided me the inspiration to educate each child. I remember fondly, the mentor, department chair, and principal who taught me what teaching is really about. One afternoon in my second year of teaching, I was in tears alone in my classroom. All but four students had failed my test and in my mind I had worked so hard to "teach" the lesson. My mentor and department chair walked into my room and by asking me the right questions, taught me that education is not about my "teaching"; it is about what the students learn. Since that afternoon, I have become a teacher whose true passion is the education of each of my students. While I realize that I was shaped by the wonderful teachers at all stages of my life, my true influences to be not only a teacher, but a facilitator, mentor, learner, and leader came in my first few years in education.

When I was in high school, a good friend said, "Even a broken clock is right twice a day." I chuckled at first, but progressing through my career, I have adopted my friend's statement as my personal philosophy of education. Every student has strengths and teachers must tap into them to create life-long learners.

At the end of my career, I want to know that I have done all that I can to help each person with whom I have worked. I am the teacher who finds each day in my classroom rewarding. I find reward in the shy student who survives senior project presentations because we practiced. I find reward in the student whose paper on drop-out rates forced him to face reality and graduate. I find reward in the student who contacts me years later to tell me she is teaching. If I waited to only find reward in the "broken clock" moments, my fire might have long since been extinguished. I am fortunate to have found a career where "work" is what I love and enjoy.

RENÉ HERRICK NORTH CENTRAL REGION

ASSIGNMENT
Grade 4 Classroom Teacher
A. B. Combs Leadership Magnet Elementary School
Wake County Public School System

EXPERIENCE
7 years, 4 years in current position
Teacher, Wake County Public School System, North Carolina
Teacher, Chittenden South Supervisory Union, Charlotte, Vermont

EDUCATION
Norwich University, BA/English & Elementary Education

RECOGNITIONS/AWARDS
Wake County Public School System Teacher of the Year, 2009-2010
A.B. Combs Leadership Magnet Elementary, Teacher of the Year, 2008-2009
Candidate–National Board Certification, 2010

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS
National Education Association, North Carolina Association of Educators
Wake Education Partnership, Ex-officio Board of Directors
Delta Kappa Gamma Education Society

What influenced me to become a teacher after spending several years in the business profession? Perhaps it was the satisfaction I found as a 1st grader teaching imaginary students and grading writing in my Dr. Seuss books. Or was it the loving influence of my 4th grade teacher who tenderly braided my unmanageable hair during recess? Maybe it was the memory of my favorite teacher Mr. Henderson, who had the gift of inspiring greatness in all of his students by teaching us anything was possible with hard work and determination. Maybe it was because I experienced loss and asked myself the tough question, "What do you really want to do with your life?" I am the product of all of these influences and more.

My professional career began in the business world. Several years later, I began accepting substitute-teaching positions at an elementary school. Being a substitute teacher is not the most glamorous role in education, but it solidified the unanswered yearning in my heart to teach. I was soon promoted to a full-time position as a special education tutor. I supported the learning of students whose success depended on a passionate and involved adult. During those 10 years, I joined the battle of a loved one fighting kidney cancer. After his death, I picked myself up and went back to college while working full time. In 2003, I earned my teaching degree—I knew teaching was how I wanted to spend the rest of my life.

My philosophy of teaching is embodied in 3 foundational truths. First, students learn and perform at their academic best when they have a genuine relationship with their teacher. Second, students require relevant and rigorous tasks in order to make personal investments in their education. Third, using technology is an essential part of preparing students for the 21st century.

Building relationships with my students has always been my top priority. I develop a loving and disciplined environment for my students, and in turn, they perform to their highest potential and love coming to school everyday. I enhance the rigor and relevance of my lessons by utilizing a "top down" method. I present tasks, and my students decide what they need to be successful. Thinking outside the box and being creative are 21st Century skills. I'm preparing students for jobs that currently don't exist. These professions will more than likely be connected with the advancement of technology. Therefore, I must teach my students using the technology tools that are available today. I use my Blackboard website to daily create a paperless classroom environment. Technology also allows me to differentiate my instruction based upon the needs of students, and it allows students the freedom to move forward or review as they discover more about their learning styles and abilities.

While my entrance into the educational field was not a traditional one, my life experiences have shown the importance of preparing students to be creative, critical thinkers who can survive and flourish in an ever-changing world.

AMBER ALFORD WATKINS SANDHILLS/SOUTH CENTRAL REGION

ASSIGNMENT
Grades 9-12, Social Studies
Scotland Early College High School
Scotland County Schools

EXPERIENCE
5 years, 2 in current position
Teacher, Scotland County Schools, North Carolina

EDUCATION
University of North Carolina at Pembroke, Masters of School Administration
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, BA/Political Science
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, BA/African Studies

RECOGNITIONS/AWARDS
Scotland County Schools Teacher of the Year, 2009-2010
Scotland Early College High School Teacher of the Year, 2009-2010
Scotland High School of Math, Science and Technology Teacher of the Year, 2008-2009
Scotland County NAACP Youth Council Image Award, 2009
New Technology Foundation Lead Teacher and Advocate, 2008-2009
Scotland High School Team Member of the Month (3 months), 2005-2006
Order of the Old Well–University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2005

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS
National Council for the Social Studies
North Carolina Council for the Social Studies
Scotland County Achievement Gap Committee
Co-Founder of "Our Youth, Their Future, The FACTS, Inc." (Fundraising Achieving Collaborating Traveling for Success, a nonprofit organization)

The summer before my senior year, as an undergraduate at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, I applied for financial assistance and traveled alone to Esperanza, Dominican Republic. I was a volunteer teacher at an all-boys orphanage through *Orphanage Outreach.* The older boys, between twelve and eighteen years of age, were usually skeptical and non-responsive to volunteers. Within a very short period of time, I was able to gain the respect of these boys, and was thereby able to create an environment conducive to learning. I was told by a long-term volunteer that the teenage boys had never been so willing to learn, to listen, and to make efforts to communicate with any volunteers, in the past. The challenges and successes of serving those young men ignited the fire that is now my commitment to serving youth.

Marian Wright Edelman, founder of the Children's Defense fund, once stated, "When I fight about what is going on in the neighborhood, or when I fight about what is happening to other people's children, I'm doing that because I want to leave a community and a world that is better than the one I found." There, in the Dominican Republic, I realized that my purpose in life is to serve youth of all backgrounds, through strengthening self-worth and emphasizing knowledge as power. Therefore, upon returning from Esperanza, I became dedicated to "leaving a community and a world better than the one I found," through serving youth as a teacher and humanitarian. As a first generation college student, the first step on my journey was to move back home to Laurinburg, North Carolina and after graduating, serve the community that supported me to be and made me who I am today.

When I am serving children as a teacher as well as outside the school walls, I am fulfilling God's "calling" for my life. As a volunteer and co-founder of a non-profit organization, I have served children in my local communities; in Liberia, West Africa; in New Orleans, Louisiana; and in Esperanza, Dominican Republic.

As an educator, I am totally committed to the academic and personal success of all students. My greatest achievement within my teaching career is defined by the success of my "at-risk" students. According to statistical data, these kids were less likely to succeed. However, through real-world applications of the coursework, the "at-risk" students enjoy successes far beyond their own imagination. In order to be engaged, students want and need relevancy and opportunities to express their own creativity.

Through the workshops and training sessions I have facilitated, I have also come to believe that teachers can inspire and encourage other teachers. The concerted effort of a community of educators provides students with the ideal environment for learning.

In my community, and around the world, I know that I can begin to change the world "one child at a time." I am honored and humbled by the opportunity to serve as an educator. My journey has only just begun.

COURTNEY R. DAVIS PIEDMONT-TRIAD/CENTRAL REGION

ASSIGNMENT

English I, Honors English III, AP English III, English IV, and Honors English IV Teacher
Teacher Cadet Instructor
Graduation Project Co-coordinator
Randleman High School
Randolph County Schools

EXPERIENCE

12 years, 3 years in current position
Teacher, Randolph County Schools

EDUCATION

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Bachelor of Arts in Education Middle Grades Education: Major: Language Arts; Minor: Social Studies
High Point University, Certification in Gifted Education

RECOGNITIONS/AWARDS

Asheboro Jaycees Distinguished Service Award, 2010
Asheboro Jaycees Outstanding Young Educator Award, 2010
Randolph County Teacher of the Year, 2009-2010
Randleman High School Teacher of the Year, 2009-2010
Southwestern Randolph Middle School Teacher of the Year, 2006-2007
Asheboro Jaycees Distinguished Service Award Nominee for Outstanding Young Educator, 2005-2006, 2002-2003, 2001-2002, and 2000-2001
Uwharrie Middle School Teacher of the Year, 2003-2004
Uwharrie Middle School Distinguished Educator, 2003-2004
Sallie Mae Young Teacher Award, 1998-1999

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

NC Teaching Fellow
NCAE member, 1998-present
Randolph County Graduation Project Committee, 2008-present

I was given the greatest gift any child can be given, I had a family that believed in me and made the pursuit of education a priority. Along with the wonderful teachers I had, they are the reasons why I became a teacher.

My parents instilled a respect for education during my childhood. One of my fondest memories is listening to the changing tones of my mother's voice as she read the Little House on the Prairie books to me as a child. She taught me that books are a bridge to the outside world, history, and imagination. Nightly, my father would sit with me at the kitchen table, patiently going over my homework and asking me insightful questions. My parents taught me to treat people with respect and to look at the individual, not judge by the exterior. I apply those same principles of respect and integrity to how I interact with my students.

I am a teacher today because I was lucky enough to be raised in a multi-generational family. My paternal grandmother was a major influence on me. She was orphaned at age nine and had little formal education. After school I remember sharing my lessons and reading books with her. Later, she confided that she learned along with me through those early years, providing a lesson to me that learning is vital at all ages. I am proud that I was my grandmother's teacher and believe that our shared learning sparked the passion I have today to help each student that enters my classroom reach his peak potential. One of my final memories of my grandmother is of her visiting me when I was a student at Chapel Hill. Her face glowed as she attended a class with me that day. At eighty-seven years old, she was impassioned about learning. When I teach, I try to encourage the same joy in my students because I remember the confidence my grandmother gained as she expanded her knowledge.

The brilliant, demanding, and nurturing teachers I have had greatly impacted my desire to become a teacher. In sixth grade Ms. Clark taught me about wonderful works of adolescent literature, but what I remember most is that she made an awkward and shy eleven-year-old feel like what she had to say and who she was mattered. Mrs. Fogleman, one of my eighth-grade teachers, assigned me to help another student that was struggling. This experience gave me the gift of patience and the knowledge that some students need extra help and differentiation to achieve success. Once I reached high school, my teachers not only stimulated my mind, but they also gave me my future. A caring, selfless group of educators gave of their time to help me earn a Teaching Fellows scholarship. Their examples of investment, kindness, and diligence made me want to emulate them. They showed me that teaching is a calling and that students are at the heart of the profession.

DAVID DAHARI SOUTHWEST REGION

ASSIGNMENT
Grades 10-12, Physics and Chemistry
Marvin Ridge High School
Union County Public Schools

EXPERIENCE
10 years, 3 years in current position
Union County Public Schools
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Public Schools
Japan Exchange Teaching Program — Gifu, Japan
University of Florida
Santa Fe Community College
PK Yonge Laboratory School at the University of Florida

EDUCATION
University of Florida, MEd/Science Education
University of Florida, BS/Astrophysics
Franklin & Marshall College, BA/Physics
University College London, Study Abroad

RECOGNITIONS/AWARDS
Union County Public Schools Teacher of the Year, 2009-2010
Union Power Cooperative Bright Ideas Grant, 2010
Hach Scientific Foundation Educators Grant, 2009
Fulbright Academy of Science and Technology Fellow, 2008
NASA Research Fellow, 2000

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS
National Science Teachers Association
American Association of Physics Teachers
Society of Physics Students

On brisk autumn nights I often stargaze and marvel at the moon, the constellations and the occasional shooting star. I reflect on my family, my friends, my life as it was, and my life as it is now. I think about my decision to become an educator and to leave the profession of astronomy, which was my childhood ambition, so that I could afford other children the opportunities to fulfill their dreams. As I bask in the warm glow of Orion, the wise and mighty hero of ancient times, I feel confident and proud in my decision to teach and to excite children about the world around them.

Teaching is intuitive and so was my decision to become an educator. Spontaneity and relationships are the highlights of teacher and student interaction in the classroom. When I first started teaching in North Carolina, I taught at one of our state's toughest schools where students were more worried about providing food for their families than they were about passing a test. There was an opportunity for success in a classroom like mine, however, and it had less to do with Newton's Laws and everything to do with developing relationships and serving as a role-model. Students who had been lethargic and apathetic towards learning had shown sparks of curiosity and genuine enthusiasm for physics and chemistry. Their eyes glowed brighter than the stars in the Big Dipper.

While my passion is teaching, my obsession is learning and experiencing new things. One of the accomplishments that has strongly influenced my teaching is the opportunity to extensively travel and work abroad. I have spent several years teaching and traveling in Asia as well as Europe. I often reflect on my experiences teaching and learning in other parts of the world and use these ideas in my classroom. I am interested in seeing the big picture in everything I do and getting my students to see how academics, history and culture are connected especially through technology and the arts. I am very enthusiastic about sharing my experiences with students, helping young men and women to see the world around them in a meaningful way.

Since I teach upper-level science classes, most of my students are involved in the college application process. I feel so honored to be a part of this critical time in their lives. One important facet of my professional obligations is to discuss with students the possible course of their lives over the next several years. Conversations often include discussions about likes, dislikes, ambitions, goals and even fears. I have had the opportunity to form many lasting relationships with students as they communicate with me throughout college and often after graduation. I teach to help my students become better doctors, better scientists and better people.

JOY JENKINS NORTHWEST REGION

ASSIGNMENT
Grade 3
Cleveland Elementary School
Rowan-Salisbury Schools

EXPERIENCE
11 years, 6 in current position
Teacher, Rowan-Salisbury Schools, North Carolina
Teacher, First Assembly Christian School, North Carolina

EDUCATION
Iona College, Master of Science in Teaching
University of North Carolina at Charlotte, BA/Human Services–Public Relations

RECOGNITIONS/AWARDS
Rowan-Salisbury Schools Teacher of the Year, 2009-2010
Cleveland Elementary School Teacher of the Year, 2009-2010
Phillip J. Kirk, Jr. Honored Educator Scholar, 2009-2010
Rowan-Salisbury Schools 21st Century Model Classroom Teacher 2008
Rowan-Salisbury Schools Math Teacher of the Year 2007-2008

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS
International Society of Technology and Education
North Carolina Technology in Education Society
National Education Association
North Carolina Association of Educators
Rowan-Salisbury Association of Educators
Cleveland Elementary Parent Teacher Association

As an only child, I filled my play time imitating my teachers and forcing my stuffed animals and toys to learn. I loved learning, but being frail and sickly, I missed many days of school. Falling further and further behind, school, for me, became a nightmare.

Convinced I was stupid, joining the work force seemed a reasonable choice. Later, when I decided to continue my education, I chose to major in Human Services, avoiding, at all costs, my worst subject, math.

But before I could graduate, I became a cancer survivor with a five-year life expectancy. Living to celebrate my 30th birthday—more than five years later— I realized nothing was more necessary than unearthing my dreams and achieving them.

Enrolling in a career changer's program, I attended classes without my employer's knowledge. During the 18 months that followed, I worked full time for an investment banking firm, concurrently earning my master's degree in education. I stopped running from math and faced it. And when I did, I realized I could do anything.

Learning with others for eleven years has been an honor. Perhaps the most defining and transforming experience to date occurred when I was awarded a 21st Century Model Classroom by the Rowan-Salisbury School System. I knew nothing about technology and almost overnight there were MacBooks, iPods, ActiVotes and a Promethean Board in my classroom.

Given tools to create without limits, I discovered abilities I didn't know I had. Progressing from novice to mentor, it has been my joy to inspire and train teachers in my school, system, state and beyond; present for Apple's iShowcase at the North Carolina Technology in Education Society Conference; and partner with the Digital Innovation Group at Georgia College to present an hour-long, live webinar session from my classroom for their Spring Collaborative Digital Education Series.

Technology has changed my world, my teaching and my life.

For the past two years, I have seen the same transformation occur in my students. Finding freedom and a voice through technology, they have become stakeholders and have taken control of their learning.

Designing a safe, happy learning environment; employing scientific research and best practices; ensuring a classroom where each student has an equal voice; communicating fluidly to build student, parent and community relationships; creating music, songs, lyrics, podcasts, movies and movement for concept development; providing differentiated learning using iPods, MacBooks and digital cameras; and developing opportunities for project-based learning are essential components in my classroom.

In this purposeful atmosphere, students are free to create, dream, build and achieve. Nothing less will do! Developing students who have courage to believe and passion to persist is my #1 goal. Thankfully, this goal extends beyond the classroom to students' dreams, who they eventually become and what they give in return.

It is the joy of my life to learn with others, create without limits and accomplish without compromise. There is no greater reward. My life as a teacher is a dream come true.

DOROTHY REID CASE WESTERN REGION

ASSIGNMENT
Grades 11-12, U.S. History and U.S. Government
North Henderson High School
Henderson County Public Schools

EXPERIENCE
40 years, 17 in current position
Teacher, North Henderson High School, 1993-2010
Teacher, Edneyville High School, 1977-1993
Teacher, Edneyville Junior High School, 1969-1977

EDUCATION
Western Carolina University, M.A. in Education
Appalachian State University, B.S. in Education with Social Studies concentration
Mars Hill College (transferred to Appalachian State University)

RECOGNITIONS/AWARDS
Western Regional Teacher of the Year, 2010-1011
Henderson County Teacher of the Year, 2009-2010
Henderson County Public Schools representative to the Distinguished Teachers Forum V
Delta Kappa Gamma (Alpha Lambda Chapter) Member of the Year Award 2000
Influential Teacher of a North Carolina Teaching Fellow
North Carolina Governor and Business Award in Social Studies
U.S. Presidential Scholars Program Influential Teacher Award from the United States Commission on Presidential Scholars
Henderson County Teacher of the Year, 1982-1983
Who's Who Among Teachers (5 years)
Educator of Distinction from the National Society of High School Scholars
Four-time winner – Brevard College Award for Outstanding High School Teacher and Mentor

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS
Delta Kappa Gamma (Alpha Lambda Chapter)
Daughters of the American Revolution
Past N.C. Close Up – Board member

The major factor that influenced me to become a teacher is that I love "kids." I thought I could make a difference in the world by teaching kids and touching the future. God did not give me children of my own but blessed me with a large number of children during my career. My students are my family!

I had an influential teacher in high school who was tough on discipline, but his love for the students and his subject came through every day. I also knew with certainty that I had been called to be a teacher when I did my student teaching. My supervising teacher was fantastic and taught me so much about the real world of teaching which extended beyond my college coursework. This experience gave me a burning passion for my kids to learn and reach their potential that I carried into my first day of teaching in a seventh grade classroom at Edneyville School and still drives me in my North High classroom forty years later.

Reflecting on the results of my labor, I recall some successes former students have shared. Many students credit me for making differences in their lives. Four of my former students have served as Teachers of the Year at their respective schools. Several of my Teaching Fellows told the committee that I influenced them to go into teaching. One of my Hispanic students told me that as he was taking his citizenship test, he realized he already knew the answers from my history class. In addition, my Inclusion students make Level 3s on the U.S. History End of Course (EOC) tests. Another student tells me at the end of the year he has learned more history than he ever thought possible. These testimonials encourage me as a teacher.

My teaching philosophy is as follows:

1) Maintain high expectations; whether students are in general or AP classes
2) Love my students; kids need to know that their teacher cares about them in today's world now more than ever
3) Know that my students come from varied backgrounds and respect that diversity
4) Expect 100% effort from my students and give them 100% in return
5) Include every student every day somehow so each will know how important they are to the whole
6) Have consistent discipline in my classroom and encourage my students to develop self-discipline
7) Use humor and laugh at myself; I often do amusing things like singing historical songs or dressing in crazy outfits

All learning, however, is not fun. Sometimes learning is hard work. So, I vary my instructional approach with a variety of methods. My philosophy brings me enormous pleasure because I see the results of my teaching daily. I could mention I helped write curriculum or reviewed state EOC questions, but the real accomplishment for me is what students learn in my classroom and use to be successful in the future. Accomplishment is also when a student calls me "Mom."

ASSIGNMENT
Grades 7-8, Science
Evergreen Community Charter School
Asheville, NC

EXPERIENCE
5 years experience, 3 in current position
Teacher, Evergreen Community Charter School, North Carolina
Teacher, Helena-West Helena Schools, Arkansas

EDUCATION
Montana State University, MS/Science Education
University of Charleston, BS/Geology

RECOGNITIONS/AWARDS
Evergreen Community Charter School Teacher of the Year, 2009-2010
Outstanding Educator, Air Quality IQ Contest, 2009
Appalachian Trail 2,000-Miler, 2005
Corps Member, Teach for America, 2002-2004

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS
National Science Teachers Association
National Middle School Association
North Carolina Science Teachers Association
Board of Directors, Evergreen Community Charter School

I can't claim to come from a long line of schoolteachers. My folks were farmers, bus drivers, salesmen, and soldiers, but teaching was not their trade. I have been blessed, however, with a family of natural educators, who have shown care and compassion as they guided me in the values and morals which define me as a person and professional.

They taught me well.

Growing up in the Piedmont, red clay and pine sap were as much a part of my education as books and pencils. My eighth grade algebra teacher inspired me, not through antics or young age, but through high standards and absolute intolerance for excuses.

They influenced me greatly.

Three months after graduating college, the bell rang on the first day of school, and a flood of eighth grade students walked into my first class as a teacher. As most teachers' first years, mine were full of trials, unexpected but much appreciated moments of joy, and for me a growing awareness of the unrivaled creativity and raw emotional energy of teenagers.

They pushed me to improve.

I hiked the length of the Appalachian Trail in 2005. In addition to the beauty, struggles, and unbelievable diversity of the biting insects I discovered, I found that persistence and dedication were not just catch phrases, but qualities that pushed me beyond my own belief in what I could accomplish.

The trail strengthened me.

I teach because I can effect great change in the world. Students leave my classroom empowered with the belief that they can make any change they want to see in the world. Whether the change they make comes from a proclamation from the oval office or a helping hand for a friend in need, the responsibility for improving the world lies within them. There is a fine line between encouragement to make change and the indoctrination with the change I would personally like to see. I give them the knowledge and the tools, and they leave my classroom ready to make the choices which will define their character.

I empower them.

I teach because integrity matters. My actions in the classroom, more than the learning goals, will echo for years in my students' worldviews and mold them as people. Middle school students, although sometimes less than attentive to due dates and rubrics, are keen observers of the adults in their lives, and in my actions and words I strive to model honesty and integrity. I challenge the students to speak openly and honestly, and reinforce these characteristics in the behavioral norms and high academic expectations in my classroom.

I inspire them.

Wendell Berry said "A teacher, finally, has nothing to go on but faith, and a student nothing to offer in return but testimony." As an educator, I put my best out there every day, and students leave my classroom for their lives ahead. These lives will be testimonies to the influences of parents, friends, and in some small part, my teaching.

I have faith in them.

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6368 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-6368 :: Telephone: (919) 807-3200 :: Fax: (919) 807-4065

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