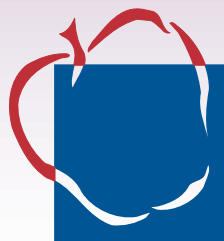


# 2008 *Excellence in Education Awards*

Thursday, April 24, 2008  
BWI Marriott Hotel  
Linthicum Heights, Maryland

*Presented in Partnership*



ANNE ARUNDEL  
COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

*Sponsored by*



**Constellation  
Energy**

*Anne Arundel Community College  
Greenberg Gibbons Commercial*

## *Please Note*

The *Excellence in Education* Awards Ceremony is a time to celebrate outstanding teachers and education/business partnerships, and to socialize with friends and colleagues. To provide each teacher and business honoree with the dignity and recognition they deserve, we ask that you refrain from talking at your table during the awards ceremony.

*Thank you for your cooperation.*

2008

*Excellence in Education Awards*



*Awards for*

*Anne Arundel County Public Schools  
Teacher of the Year*

*Anne Arundel County Business Partnerships  
of the Year*

*Excellence in Education*

# *Program Schedule*

## *Reception/Registration - 6:00*

A time for fellowship with colleagues and friends

## *Seating for Dinner - 6:30*

### *Welcome*

Tony Hill

*Master of Ceremonies  
Host, Comcast Newsmakers*

### *Greetings*

Larry Ulvila

*Chairman of the Board, Annapolis and Anne Arundel County Chamber of Commerce*

## *Dinner - 6:45*

## *Awards Ceremony - 7:30*

### *Honoring Educators*

Tricia Johnson

*President, Board of Education*

Kevin M. Maxwell, Ph.D.

*Superintendent of Schools*

Darla Strouse, Ph.D.

*Maryland State Department of Education*

*Recognizing Excellence*  
*Presentation of the 2008 Teacher Honorees*

Tony Hill

*Host, Comcast Newsmakers*

Roniann LaRoque

*Host, Teen Talk, AACPS TV*

*Finalists*

Jane Robinson Ciupek

*Hillsmere Elementary School*

Clayton Culp

*Broadneck High School*

Kathryn Davis

*Southern High School*

Amy Weissenburger

*Meade High School*

*Promoting Partnerships*  
*Presentation of Business Partnership Nominees and Awards*

Sandra Anderson

*Chairperson, Education Committee*

*Annapolis and Anne Arundel County Chamber of Commerce*

*Presentation of the*  
*2008 Anne Arundel County Public Schools*  
*Teacher of the Year Award*

*Closing*

Tony Hill

## Excellence in Education Honorees



**Carolyn Anderson**

*Marley Middle School*

*"The ability to touch and help shape the minds of our future leaders is an awesome responsibility that must be tempered with love and commitment... to foster a wholesome and productive classroom environment, my students must feel safe and valued. Students must be able to connect with me and truly believe that I love teaching, care about them, enjoy working with them, and am concerned about their future."*

Carolyn Anderson embarked on her dream of being a teacher when she began teaching physical education at Arundel High School in 1969. Her dream has lasted 39 years, and she has no plans of stopping anytime soon. "The rewards are still heartwarming and humbling, and I look forward to each day as another chance to make a difference in some child's life," she says. Anderson has spent the last 35 years at Marley Middle School, where she is currently the lead Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) teacher.

With an emphasis on the individual success of every student, Anderson considers mentoring neophyte teachers as part of her teaching legacy. "As a veteran teacher I feel it is my obligation to share my experiences and expertise with new teachers and colleagues," she says. Anderson has conducted several professional development workshops to help beginning and veteran AVID teachers, and has also been featured on the "AVID Achievers" program on AACPS-TV.



**Dorothy Arida**

*Central Middle School*

*"An outstanding teacher finds value in each student who walks in her door every day... students should regularly leave school thinking, 'I didn't know I could do it, but I am glad I realized I could.' Outstanding teachers don't amaze their students, but allow their students to amaze themselves."*

Many of her peers, students, and friends can describe Central Middle School AVID teacher Dorothy "Dot" Arida with one word: unselfish. For 12 years she's given her time and talents to the students, parents, and educators of Anne Arundel County Public Schools. She's been known to take over lessons for sick teachers, help her colleagues enter grades, and support new teachers with lesson planning and classroom management strategies. Arida extends her passion for teaching further as an Adjunct Professor at Towson University and staff development trainer for the national AVID Center.

When it comes to her students, Arida takes her responsibility as an educator very seriously. She believes that she succeeds only once her students have. She supports student growth by creatively engaging the entire family through helpful workshops about topics ranging from library resources, to how to use a graphing calculator, to understanding standardized testing results. She even finds time to give back to her community by being involved in church projects and volunteering at a local karate school.



**Shenese Armstrong**

*Van Bokkelen Elementary School*

*"No matter what the situation or lesson, I can usually find a creative way to teach to my children, because that's who they are to me. They are not just students, they are my children and I give to them what I would expect someone to give to my children."*

From teaching aquatic aerobics to serving as cookie mother for a Girl Scout troop, Shenese Armstrong feels that "teaching is the beginning and end, whether I do it in the classroom or at home." Her 12-year career as an educator has afforded her the opportunity to share her simple love for children with students in Prince George's, Howard, and Anne Arundel counties. At the age of ten, Armstrong was inspired by a family friend with special needs who needed several surgeries throughout her childhood just to survive, but loved and enjoyed life despite her circumstances.

As a special education teacher at Van Bokkelen Elementary School, a position she's held for three years, Armstrong has embraced her students and their families. Claudette Robinson, the school's social worker, explains, "Her presence is an asset to the young men and ladies in our school who have limited role models in their lives."

## *Excellence in Education Honorees*



### *Kelly Arnett*

*Ridgeway & Van Bokkelen  
elementary schools*

*"Some students may not have a good sense of themselves because of external factors that we, as educators, cannot control. We can help to increase students' self-worth. When a student achieves an assignment or an activity in school, and he or she feels good about it, the teacher needs to make sure that it doesn't go unnoticed."*

Splitting time between two schools may seem challenging, but for Kelly Arnett the situation is simply a way to touch the lives of more children. With a belief that increased self-esteem impacts academic achievement, Arnett is passionate about helping her students see and define their self-worth. Her first-grade teacher helped her overcome her fear of speaking up in class, and gave her the confidence to do well in school.

Arnett, a talent development teacher, takes this philosophy beyond the classroom by getting involved in extracurricular activities. "I feel that it is important to attend after-school activities to show the students and the parents that you care. Students are excited when they get to see their teachers outside of the classroom setting." Arnett not only attends activities, but she creates them. She recently launched Ridgeway's first National Space & Aeronautical Administration (NASA) science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) club.



### *Matilda Ann Barckley*

*Rippling Woods Elementary School*

*"Establishing a rapport with my students is top priority. I greet each child in the morning and as they leave for the day. I also make it a point to speak to other children in the school, inquiring how their day is progressing, to let them know there is someone else who is interested in their education."*

Matilda "Tillie" Barckley has taught fifth or sixth grade at Rippling Woods Elementary for 35 years. Throughout that time, she has exhibited patience and determination that has allowed her students to thrive. Barckley has been more than a teacher to some, and has carved indelible marks in the hearts of the many students she's taught. Former students, "who are now adults, continue to come back to visit her to share stories of their favorite moments when she was their teacher," says Rippling Woods Reading Specialist Yvonne Pukacz.

Barckley has extended her teaching talents to her church, Ebenezer African Methodist Episcopal Church in Baltimore, where she is the Women's Missionary Society president. She formerly served as church school superintendent and Young People's Department director.



### *Maria Barnes*

*Arnold Elementary School*

*"During her tenure, Mrs. Barnes has demonstrated the creative talent, unwavering dedication, and commitment to excellence that has made the Arnold staff, students, and community fall in love with her."*

As a classically-trained opera singer, Maria Barnes combines her innate vocal abilities and sheer passion for music arts to not only teach music to the children of Arnold Elementary School, but also to live through music. Known for organizing exciting productions in which all the fourth- and fifth-graders can participate, she wrote more than 45 parts into last year's school musical, "Treasure Island," to make sure everyone was included.

For eight years, Barnes served as the youth choir director at Severna Park United Methodist Church. Her experiences in the classroom and at church have only reinforced her desire to share music with as many people as possible. Few things have been more rewarding than, "seeing a student who was painfully shy and nonsocial begin to interact with his peers as a result of having a lead in the school musical," she says.

# Excellence in Education Honorees



**Katherine Blakefield**

*Crofton Middle School*

*"Every few weeks a small group or an individual student comes to see Mrs. Blakefield. They write notes on her chalkboard to her current students telling them that they will never have a better teacher and to listen carefully and learn all her little songs and rhymes because they will really be helpful in the future."*

With one of the highest foreign language enrollments in the county, Katherine Blakefield cherishes her role as the world and classical languages department chairperson at Crofton Middle School. Having taught Spanish for 21 years at the school, Blakefield has a pretty good idea of what motivates her students to learn and perform well. Her secret is to make learning fun. "I think children learn best when they are actively engaged and enjoy what they are doing. I create lessons that include songs, raps, games, dances, and ditties. I wear strange hats while singing funny songs," she says. But it's not all fun and games in Mrs. Blakefield's class. She balances her fun approach with high expectations, and her students consistently produce some of the highest scores in the county on quarterly assessments.

Initially, Blakefield expected to only teach for a few years as a way to have a schedule similar to her children's. But that changed quickly. "I found to my amazement that teaching was the most intellectually challenging, personally satisfying, all-consuming career imaginable," she says.



**Kristyn Breeds**

*Northeast High School*

*"Ms. Breeds is the spark that raged. We are so fortunate to have a teacher who has inspired so many students and helped to unite our faculty."*

She's only been teaching at Northeast High School for two years, but Kristyn Breeds has already immersed herself in the school's community. In addition to being an outstanding special education teacher, Breeds is co-sponsor of the sophomore class, a leader for promoting High School Assessment (HSA) readiness, a master co-teacher, and head coach for cross country, indoor track and field, and outdoor track and field. The perpetual Special Olympics volunteer also ended her first year of teaching at the school as teacher of the month for June 2007.

While success has come easily for the young teacher, Breeds is quick to point out that her journey into education had many detours. She initially wanted to be a veterinarian, but this daughter of a school administrator soon found her way back to the teachers' lounge, a place where she spent many hours as a child. "The detours and critical turns I've taken to get to my teaching career have helped transform me into a well-rounded educator; consequently, instructing with compassion and respect for students and this profession," she says.

## Finalist



**Jane Robinson Ciupek**

*Hillsmere Elementary School*

*"Jane possesses the unique ability to never 'age' in our profession. She has the outstanding trait of viewing life as the pursuit of excellence, a path she unceasingly travels."*

She's helped hundreds of students learn to read. She's guided several teachers to achieve teaching's highest credential. She's traveled to New Zealand to learn about its highly effective literacy program. But most of all, Jane Robinson Ciupek is known for being an ultimate educator and friend to her students and fellow teachers. "Her at-all-costs approach guarantees that even the most challenging student will learn to read," says her principal, Christopher Wooleyhand.

Having earned National Board Certification in 2004, Ciupek has taken responsibility for helping other Hillsmere Elementary School teachers navigate the grueling process by which the certification is attained. Interestingly, she had planned to teach secondary English and had taught high school English in the Philippines through the Peace Corps. When she arrived in Anne Arundel County 38 years ago, however, she was assigned to teach first grade at Parole Elementary School. Surprised by the assignment, Ciupek met the challenges of the unfamiliar position and has never looked back. "What better reward than when you teach a child to read and then discover that he is the only reader in his family?" she asks.

## Excellence in Education Honorees

### Finalist



### Vickie March Coover

Windsor Farm Elementary School

*"She made sure I was never alone. Ms. Coover lighted my path to happiness with her helping hands and a smile that were always available to me ... she continues guiding young hearts to live wonderful lives with her heart and good soul."*

On her birthday every year for the past 16 years, Vickie March Coover has received a phone call from a former student sending best wishes. Such a gesture is priceless to Coover, but it's also a testament to the impact she has had on students as a teacher and guidance counselor in Anne Arundel County for the past 35 years. Her contributions to the community are also far reaching. As a volunteer for The Sharing Foundation, she has led efforts for the organization to double the number of needy families receiving school supplies and holiday gifts.

From gathering cards to send to soldiers in Iraq, to collecting and delivering food for the local food bank, to leading Team Windsor in the American Cancer Society's Relay for Life program, Coover has organized countless outreach programs for the school. Described as a friend to all, Coover even rallied the Windsor Farm community to donate a custom-made tricycle for a former student who has cerebral palsy after the student had a serious surgery. Simply put, Coover uses author Leo Buscaglia's advice as her life mantra: "Too often we underestimate the power of a touch, a smile, a kind word, a listening ear, an honest compliment, or the smallest act of caring, all of which have the potential to turn a life around."



### Clayton W. Culp

Broadneck High School

*"By his example and his efforts, Mr. Culp has taught our students a valuable lesson about the importance of helping others and the power we have to make a difference."*

Clayton Culp's professional objective is simple: to become the best teacher possible. To accomplish this Culp has actually found fulfillment for himself and students outside of the classroom. While he regularly teaches a variety of mathematics courses, including Advanced Placement Statistics, his community service projects with students have been quite rewarding. Humbled by the fact that he's been able to coordinate three separate trips with more than 50 students to deliver financial support and physical labor to help areas of Louisiana and Mississippi that were destroyed by Hurricane Katrina, Culp gives all the credit to the students, parents, and other school community members who volunteered in the effort.

With almost six years of teaching experience, Culp incorporates current events into his math lessons in an effort to prepare students for the real world. Preparing students for their future is a priority for Culp. In an effort to enhance their social skills, he makes it a point to shake every student's hand as he greets them at the classroom door before every lesson.

### Finalist



### Kathryn J. Davis

Southern High School

*"A child in a wheelchair can learn fitness and health every bit as well as a varsity athlete. Whatever one's body type, a person can learn conditioning and healthful practices. A student who is constantly disruptive in class can claim authority over his body and well-being. Despite disability, genes, or attitude, an individual can learn and succeed."*

It is truly by design that Kathryn Davis' resume includes stints at both Southern High School and Southern Middle School. "I made a career choice to be a south county educator and to be involved in this community," she says. Looking at Davis' numerous activities as a fitness instructor at a local gym and recreation center, a personal trainer to area clients, a strength coach for the Southern High School girls volleyball and basketball teams, a cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) instructor, and the SHS Bulldog 5K Fun Run/Walk organizer, it's an understatement to say she's committed to the community.

Her credentials as an educator are equally noteworthy. She is the 2007 Maryland Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance Teacher of the Year. She is also the holder of more than a dozen professional certifications. Whether working with the large red, yellow, and blue balls in strength class or leading county workshops on new PE programs, Davis sets the bars high. She is a true example of living healthy and living right, and her entire family is certified in CPR and the automated external defibrillator (AED) device.

## *Excellence in Education Honorees*



*Eleni S. Dykstra*

*Old Mill Middle School South*

*"Mrs. Dykstra has changed our struggling art program into a juggernaut. She had over 82 percent of our seventh-grade and 90 percent of our eighth-grade students request her program this past school year."*

With an emphasis on promoting the middle school art teacher, Eleni Dykstra uses her position as director of the Maryland Art Education Association's Middle Level Division to advocate for a greater role for visual arts both in the lives of students and in society in general. "Arts education makes a tremendous impact on the developmental growth of every child and has proven to help 'level the learning field' across socio-economic boundaries," she says. She is a candidate for National Board Certification.

She is the founder of the after-school Art Club at Old Mill Middle School South, where she has been teaching for three years of her 17-year career. She also is coordinator of the Lighthouse project and co-chair of the "Committed to Community" banner project at Marley Station mall. The 2008 Eastern Region Middle Level Art Educator of the Year, Dykstra also established the school's National Art Honor Society, which has grown from six inductees three years ago to 20 talented students. To boost overall student morale, she has lent her talents and those of her students to transform their school building by revamping the main office and media center with large photographs of students, student artwork displays, and the placement of trophy display cases. Future projects include stairwell murals and cafeteria artwork.



*Kathleen Ferris*

*Jones Elementary School*

*"I think my teacher, Mrs. Ferris, should be Teacher of the Year because she is very nice and goes the extra mile. She can turn the most boring assignment into something we would rather do than recess."*

For the past 24 years, Kathleen Ferris has "had the privilege of getting to know the families" of Jones Elementary School. Her longevity at the school has enabled her to teach siblings and really be a part of many of the families that have passed through the school. It has also allowed her to be an ambassador, sharing the school's traditions and history with new faculty members and the community as a whole. She is best known for the fifth-grade annual overnight trip to Williamsburg, Va., which has become a rite of passage for Jones students in their final year of elementary school.

While Ferris brings her own unique ideas and innovative practices to the classroom, she gives equal credit to her students. "Young learners have wonderful imaginations and are extremely creative." It is this sort of respect for her students and simple love for teaching that has built Ferris' reputation as a quintessential educator.



*Jamie B. Fowler*

*North County High School*

*"As a colleague, a community volunteer, and a friend, Jamie is one of those rare people who can take care of hearts while also taking care of business."*

Following in her mother's footsteps, Jamie Fowler has become a mathematics teacher with an excellent work ethic. She has spent her entire nearly nine-year career at North County High School, which has enabled her to sincerely invest her time, energy, and talent in the school community. Her work with the Positive Behavior Interventions and Support (PBIS) program has been a highlight of her contributions to the students and families of North County High School. She, along with many other teachers, uses Knights Notes to celebrate when students are "caught" behaving or acting respectfully.

Because she takes time out of most lessons to talk to her students about life and simply how they are doing, Fowler has developed a reputation as a friend to those she teaches. She is also known to use her musical talents to create catchy tunes to help students remember critical lessons. On occasion, she also might change the lyrics of a song to honor student achievements.

## *Excellence in Education Honorees*



*Sally G. Haertel*

*Ruth Parker Eason School*

*"I have tremendous respect and admiration for my parents, students, and co-workers. I am willing to listen and learn from all of those around me."*

As an art teacher at one of the county's special centers, Sally Haertel brings out the artist in all her students, who range in age from 3 to 21. With such a diverse group, Haertel's work brings new meaning to meeting the needs of every child. The 14-year veteran educator accomplishes this by making sure her classroom is equipped with innovative tools and materials to engage every child. From battery-operated scissors to switch-activated painting materials, Haertel has made art accessible to every child.

But cool art materials pale in comparison to Haertel's skills as a compassionate teacher. "You will be inspired as you witness Sally's interaction with her students," explains Ruth Eason Media Specialist Mary Dragos. "She delicately challenges each child to fully participate in the day's activities. She intimately knows each of their strengths and can even recite each student's favorite color."



*Selecia M. Hardy*

*Van Bokkelen Elementary School*

*"There has probably never been a teacher more excited to teach at Van Bokkelen no matter what challenges come her way."*

Selecia Hardy first joined the Van Bokkelen Elementary School family as a substitute teacher in 1995 and held various long-term positions for six years, during which time Van Bokkelen was considered a "failing school." However, Hardy's "determination to make a difference fueled her to return to school to earn her teaching degree and certification. Ms. Hardy came back to Van Bokkelen ... and thanks in part to her, Van Bokkelen is experiencing some of the highest standardized test scores in its history," says her principal, Andrea Kane.

As a Title I mathematics resource teacher, Hardy is known as the school's all-around math expert. Because of that she has also taken responsibility as the school's math team chairperson, Title I summer and extended day programs director, Title I budget adviser, and family involvement activities coordinator. Her ability to juggle so many tasks and her overall kindness led her to get even more involved in the community. "On any given day, Ms. Hardy can be found in the community or at school offering encouragement to students and teachers, helping staff members with graduate coursework, or researching for fun ways to help our students perform at higher levels. She is generous to a fault and always smiling," says Kane.



*Diane Hilditch*

*Glen Burnie High School*

*"A great teacher can lead the perpetually confused out of the forest so that they might see the trees. Diane brings that capacity to her classroom every day. She infuses her classroom with skill, energy, a love for her subject matter, and most importantly, a love and investment in her students."*

Since the day in 1972 when her fifth-grade teacher allowed her to help grade papers, there was never a question in Diane Hilditch's mind that she would one day become a mathematics teacher. "My life was forever changed through one simple act," she says. For 24 years, all at Glen Burnie High School, Hilditch has performed similar simple acts that have led to many student success stories. She often has former students call on her to help them get ready for tests that will help them advance in their careers. One of her students was so moved by her energy and dedication that he left a Capitol Hill career to join her in the math department at Glen Burnie High School.

While Hilditch has been mathematics department chairperson at the school for 14 years, her leadership has extended to other parts of the school system. In particular, she has found creative and effective ways to best address scheduling issues that meet the needs of students. Her model of innovative problem solving has been replicated in other high schools in Anne Arundel County. "Diane is a valued member of the Glen Burnie High School faculty, a leader in the secondary mathematics community in AACPS, and a tireless teacher leader advocating for students and learning," says former principal David Hill.

*honorees continued*

## Excellence in Education Honorees



### Barry Hopkins

Severna Park High School

*"The fact that so many students still respect and admire Mr. Hopkins despite the work involved (and extremely tough grading) is a huge testament to the value they've found in what they've learned, rather than the grade they received."*

Once fueled by a love for all things related to space and science, Barry Hopkins did not pursue a career in astronomy because he felt unprepared for college-level science coursework. "I quickly lost interest in becoming a research astronomer and began to consider a career as an educator... hopefully, one who could help students close the gap between the high school and college-level experience," he says.

The 33-year teaching veteran and self-proclaimed "trekkie" has made good on his promise. Several of his former students have gone on to earn physics and engineering degrees and often tell him of how well prepared they were for college because of him. "I like to think that I'm not just teaching them about science. I'm teaching them how to be scientists," he says. Hopkins is also the only Advanced Placement Physics teacher at Severna Park High School. Since taking on the responsibility, more than 90 percent of his students – far above the county, state, and national averages – boast scores of three (out of five) or higher on the difficult AP exam.



### Kristina Korona

Annapolis High School

*"As a teacher, I expect students to think. I do not believe learning happens by filling in a worksheet... this brings varying degrees of resistance; however, I know that my students realize that I respect their intellect."*

Kristina Korona is not only dedicated to the young people who pass through her classroom at Annapolis High School, but also to the youth throughout the Annapolis community and issues of racism. As an English teacher at one of the county's most diverse high schools, Korona is the adviser of both the Peace Club and Gay and Straight Alliance, where she can focus her anti-racism and anti-discrimination efforts. She is also a youth adviser at her church, Unitarian Universalist Church of Annapolis, and takes pride in the role she plays helping the church's youth work for social justice.

Her short teaching career spans a little over five years, but Korona has proven that teaching is her calling. She has not only become a leader in her school building by lending encouragement and guidance to her peers, but she is also a leader within the Teachers Association of Anne Arundel County and has tackled such difficult issues as teacher contract negotiations. She is so valued as a teacher and community member that one of her colleagues suggested that she be cloned.



### Janet Liimatta

Old Mill High School

*"Many of my students have struggled throughout their academic careers. Each failure makes them more discouraged. Many become disenfranchised with the educational experience. I feel it is my responsibility to help these students succeed. In order to do this, I hold myself to very high standards."*

Janet Liimatta is a leader who believes in preparing her students so well that they could teach a lesson themselves. As Old Mill High School's head indoor and outdoor track and field coach, she trains her athletes in the same way. In the classroom, Liimatta actually uses a technique called "students teaching students," and on the track her athletes conduct clinics for middle school students. Liimatta takes the concept a step further by encouraging the least likely students to take charge of class lessons. She is a perpetual advocate for the students who need more help. In the past she has declined to teach upper level courses where students are less needy because she feels "students who have the most challenges should be taught by our most accomplished teachers."

Liimatta also extends her support of youth leadership to the People to People Student Ambassador Program, through which she organizes service projects in local communities and abroad. Even though she's taught math for most of her 14-year career, Liimatta shines as a social studies leader as she emphasizes the importance of civic and government responsibility through the program.

## Excellence in Education Honorees



*Kathii S. Lovelady*

*Sunset Elementary School*

*"I believe that every student benefits and thrives in a positive learning atmosphere created by a caring teacher who values their unique qualities."*

As a former elementary school teacher in public and religious institutions in Louisiana, Georgia, and Florida, Kathii Lovelady not only brings a wealth of experience to her classroom, but also has wonderful stories to share. Lovelady has been a Maryland resident for the past 11 years in the Sunset Elementary community. Her children went to Sunset before she became a teacher there, so her decision to become a teacher at the school was just another way of giving back to the community with which she had fallen in love. "I believe that my involvement in my community is a vital part of who I am as a parent, teacher, and citizen in the community," she says.

With the same conviction that Lovelady contributes to her school and community, she believes in constantly expanding her knowledge and implementation of effective teaching practices. On an ongoing basis, Lovelady pursues staff development opportunities and independent study courses to strengthen her professional skills, and has become a mentor because of her knowledge.



*Geraldine Martin*

*Central Elementary School*

*"I live in the community where the very children I teach live. Every day, I see them playing on the sidewalks, attending community events, and going to church activities. It means I am a big part of their community and the teaching does not stop at dismissal time."*

Geraldine Martin has bookended 15 years as an elementary educator around a 20-year hiatus from the profession, but not from teaching. As a mother and dedicated community member, Martin has always found ways to influence children inside and outside the classroom. She's known to be a teacher to all the children who meet her as she seeks to help other teachers in her school and supports the growth of every child.

Her natural ability to teach shone brightly recently when two children with obvious disabilities were placed in her kindergarten class. One parent explained her son's challenges with autism, but Martin never flinched. "The word autism and all that it brought to her through my child did not phase her one bit," the parent explains. "Although she had some experience with autistic children before, she opened her mind to learn about my son, rather than just assuming he was like all the others." Her influence on this student is clear: He wrote a letter of recommendation supporting her nomination.



*Barbara Fields May*

*Van Bokkelen Elementary School*

*"Barbara is a model teacher because she has dedicated her entire professional life uplifting those children whose voices have not been heard."*

Barbara Fields May retired in 1997 from the New Orleans public school system after 34 years of serving its young people. After a little less than an eight-year hiatus from the profession, May joined Anne Arundel County Public Schools in 2005 upon moving to Maryland after surviving Hurricane Katrina. Already inspiring as an educator who was known to tackle the most challenging obstacles of educating high-poverty students in New Orleans, May uses her personal experiences to encourage and set an example for young people to overcome hardships.

She is one of the founders of the Van Bokkelen Elementary School Young Ladies Club, which fosters the development of young ladies to become their personal best through school and community involvement. May has also been the primary cheerleader for the school's Eagles Club, a program that aids students with a history of behavior issues. "Barbara consistently came up with incentives, celebrations, and teaching initiatives to enhance the Eagles Club. As a result, I learned quickly that Barbara pours her whole heart into making children desire and want more than whatever is their circumstance. Her enthusiasm, warm smile, and engaging personality made each challenge a victory," says Van Bokkelen teacher Mamie Ivory.

## *Excellence in Education Honorees*



### *Jennifer McVitty*

*Pershing Hill Elementary School*

*"It is important to know when to put the books away, forget the lesson plans, and take advantage of the 'teachable moments' that arise in a classroom."*

Jennifer McVitty has been an educator in AACPS for 12 years after teaching in New York for 13 years before that. Throughout her entire AACPS career, McVitty has taught and encouraged students at Pershing Hill Elementary School. While McVitty believes that educators should tend to all of a child's needs, not just their academic ones, her experience working with military families has been enlightening. "Several students have parents serving in Iraq or Afghanistan and teaching them takes a person who is intuitive to their needs," she says. "I need to have the insight to know when they are sad, worried, or just missing their parent."

McVitty is also known to bring new meaning to the phrase "joy in learning." She shares her love of learning by example. "Whenever she learns something new, she shares it with her students and colleagues with great excitement by often bursting into my classroom with the news," says fellow Pershing Hill teacher Karen Morgan.



### *Meghan Murphy*

*Marley Elementary School*

*"Ms. Murphy is an outstanding school leader with an insatiable appetite to grow professionally and a compelling disposition to serve her students and the school community."*

As a candidate for National Board certification, Meghan Murphy believes in and hopes to expand her exemplary ability to reach and make successful the broad range of students she teaches in her special education class at Marley Elementary School. Completing the extensive process to become a National Board Certified teacher is quite a challenge, which is one reason the fifth-year teacher wanted to participate in the program. Overcoming difficult challenges is one reason why Murphy became a special education teacher in the first place. "I love challenges and I am always looking for ways to grow as an educator," she says.

Using interesting and colorful techniques to not only engage her students, but also to foster stronger relationships between school and home, Murphy sees herself as a school ambassador to families of Marley Elementary School. She created behavior charts and visual schedules to be used at home in the morning and evening for her students. Parents have shared that this tool has been very helpful in creating a smooth transition from school to home and vice versa.



### *Karen Parsons*

*Van Bokkelen Elementary School*

*"Good teachers teach because they can't help it, not for what they are paid. They teach with passion, devotion, and dedication and never give up."*

Karen Parsons' first student was her sister, whom she helped teach how to read when both were in elementary school. As she got older, Parsons was able to hone her skills as a visual artist. She was often encouraged by many teachers throughout her academic career to learn through creative projects. In high school and college, Parsons had the privilege of studying drama and costume design, working as an au pair in France, and traveling to England, Italy, and Scotland. All these experiences have led to Parsons' 20-year teaching career where she's taught all grade levels in public and private schools in Maryland and West Virginia.

Committed to conducting lessons that are valuable across disciplines, Parsons is the consummate team player and strongly supports the notion that programs that integrate the arts into the core curriculum have powerful effects on students. Her hands-on projects have engaged students outside the classroom as well. Students at Van Bokkelen Elementary have shared their artistic talents and their hearts through projects for Hurricane Katrina victims and a village in Africa.

## Excellence in Education Honorees



*Myrna L. Phillips*

*Van Bokkelen Elementary School*

*"My former teacher motivated me to become a teacher. However, my students' academic and social successes motivate my decision to remain a teacher."*

**M**yrna Phillips not only makes reading a top priority in the academic atmosphere at Van Bokkelen Elementary School, she makes it a personal one for the students, parents, and staff at the school. Her reading motivational messages can be seen throughout the school and heard daily on the morning announcements. The 13-year teaching veteran is quick to stop students in the hallway and ask about their reading logs. "Reading as a recreational activity is spreading throughout the school because of her commitment," says Van Bokkelen colleague Kellie Schell-Ramey.

Often holding "lunch bunches" to discuss current events, home life, and academic endeavors with students, Phillips is most satisfied when her students achieve at high levels and feel nurtured at the same time. She carries this same belief when serving as a mentor to the new teachers that come to Van Bokkelen Elementary School. Her role as mentor is very important to her and has carried over to the many leadership roles she's assumed at the school. From serving as Maryland School Assessment (MSA) coordinator, to leading staff study groups, to providing staff development for colleagues, Phillips has built a reputation as not only a mentor, but as a "role model for all."



*Tina C. Rowland*

*Lake Shore Elementary School*

*"Tina is an impressive teacher who has given many children a beautiful beginning to their school careers."*

**T**eaching is a second career for Tina Rowland, who first dabbled for 15 years in the corporate worlds of public relations and finance before joining Anne Arundel County Public Schools in 1995 as a kindergarten teacher. Eleven of her teaching years have been spent at Lake Shore Elementary School, where she considers it a privilege to finally have full-day kindergarten. "These young children now have the opportunity to develop their skills in reading, writing, math, science, and social studies in a developmentally appropriate class," she says.

With pride, confidence, and determination, Rowland takes her role as a child's first introduction to a regular school setting very seriously. She is known to challenge the young minds of her students and balances this approach with sincere care for the children in her charge. As a reading advocate and to motivate independent reading at home, Rowland has dressed up as a fisherman, flamingo, clown, chicken, and penguin for the school's reader's theater presentations.



*Caroline A. Scott*

*Southgate Elementary School*

*"Most importantly, I believe that it is crucial to have an exceptional home-school relationship. A child's parents are often our biggest ally."*

**A**s a teacher who strongly values the role parents play in their children's learning, Caroline Scott places emphasis on creating a "learning family" for each of her third-grade students at Southgate Elementary School. "It is important that the line of communication be open so that we can work cooperatively to help shape a lifelong successful learner," she says. Her efforts are exemplified by her students' 2007 Maryland School Assessment (MSA) performance. Overall scores improved tremendously, and many African-American students outscored their peers, thereby virtually eliminating the achievement gap for last school year.

Having earned her master's degree in technology, Scott formerly served as the school's "eCoach." From fixing simple computer problems to helping teachers plan lessons that use technology, she even conducted a survey in order to gather information about what her colleagues needed and wanted for class instruction. She then organized workshops to aid in the computer literacy of her fellow teachers.

## *Excellence in Education Honorees*



### *Jacob Shinn*

*Wiley H. Bates Middle School*

*"Mr. Shinn's approach is unique. Rather than focusing on the errors in a math problem, he reinforces what the student has done correctly and builds from there. Mr. Shinn's strong belief in his students is contagious, and before long, even students who doubt their ability in mathematics are solving high-end equations with success."*

Principal Diane Bragdon describes ten-year teaching veteran Jacob Shinn as "an amazingly gifted teacher whose ability to teach the most difficult of concepts in algebra and geometry in a way that students can thoroughly understand them is nothing short of miraculous." With his unique powers of engagement, Shinn also takes the time to work individually with students who have "gaps" in their mathematics background. He spends time helping them work beyond grade-level math tasks, preparing them for more challenging mathematics classes including Advanced Placement coursework.

Shinn's talents can also be seen in the works of his award-winning Math Club. While the club's awards are too numerous to list, the simple enthusiasm shown by students who are members and those who wish they were has been an infectious catalyst for math excitement throughout the entire student body.



### *Karen Stickles*

*Broadneck Elementary School*

*"Each one of my students is treated with respect for his or her individual differences. I make it my duty to develop their self-confidence and love of learning. I take it personally when a child is not achieving in my class."*

Prior to the start of this school year, Karen Stickles made phone calls to the new families whose children would be joining her kindergarten class at Broadneck Elementary School. Through such simple gestures, Stickles has made herself a favorite among parents who are often sending their children to school for the first time. "It was so nice for us to send our son to his first day of kindergarten knowing what a friendly, outgoing teacher he was going to have," says current Broadneck Elementary kindergarten parent Daryl Cooke.

Stickles combines her friendliness and sheer love for her work and children with an enthusiasm and intense energy that has been passed along to all her students. This excitement for learning, she believes, is the key to preparing her eager group of five- and six-year-olds for not only first grade, but for a lifetime of learning.



### *Nancy H. Sutphin*

*Edgewater Elementary School*

*"I have never grown tired of my dream. It is still as exciting as that first day when I looked into 25 pairs of eyes waiting for me in September 1966, and knew that my dream had come true."*

Having taught special education, general elementary education, and provided home/hospital instruction, Nancy Sutphin's 35-year career as a teacher has been spent largely in south county. As the grandmother and caretaker of two current Edgewater Elementary students, her contributions to the Edgewater community are two-fold. She is very involved in community sports, scouts, and church activities and is often one of the school's first cheerleaders for community initiatives. As a member of the school's Parent Teacher Association, she places emphasis on parent involvement and tries to set an example for her fellow parents and colleagues.

Always striving to stay current with education news and trends, Sutphin dedicates her summers to attending workshops and seminars to expand her resources. She is a lover of all things math and science and passes that affinity along to her students through various classroom projects such as raising turtles and building bogs. She is currently working with students to help Edgewater Elementary achieve national recognition and certification as a Green School.

## *Excellence in Education Honorees*



### *Deborah A. Turner*

*Central Middle School*

*"Mrs. Turner let me be orchestra leader and I learned just how hard it was to conduct an orchestra of restless middle-schoolers. It was difficult to get their attention and even more difficult to keep it just to play a simple scale. I definitely respected Mrs. Turner's job much more after that experience."*

**A**s a music educator who is well aware of the power of music, Deborah Turner felt compelled not only to teach music, but also to involve her students in community activities. Throughout her 28 years of singing and playing instruments with students, first at MacArthur Middle School for 22 years and now at Central Middle School, Turner's instrumental ensembles have earned quite a reputation. From performing for various dignitaries at military ceremonies to visiting sick children at the Walter Reed and National Naval medical centers, her instrumental ensembles have consistently received superior and excellent ratings.

In addition to setting an example for her students by encouraging them to share their talents with the community, Turner is described by colleagues as a naturally selfless person who lends not only her music talents, but also her gifts as an educator to new teachers. "In mentoring and assisting newly hired teachers, Mrs. Turner helps Anne Arundel County Public Schools retain quality young teachers," Central Principal Mildred Beall says.



### *Barbara Watkins*

*Van Bokkelen Elementary School*

*"The students love going to media and enjoy the wide selection of books that Mrs. Watkins chooses based, in part, on student interest."*

**B**arbara Watkins has dedicated all 43 years of her storied career to the students, parents, and school communities of Anne Arundel County Public Schools. She taught fourth-grade students for 24 years and has been a media specialist for the past 19 years. She has spent time and energy at South Shore, Benfield, Overlook, Crofton, and now Van Bokkelen elementary schools. Known as "wise, focused, and generous, Watkins still recognizes the need to continually build her capacity as an educator," says Principal Andrea Kane.

She has taught fourth grade and been a media specialist since 1989, but most of her students and colleagues would say she's simply been the ultimate reading resource. Watkins consistently organizes quality book fairs that have raised significant amounts of money for her schools, establishes reading clubs where the whole school gets involved, and even has had teas with teachers in previous years to introduce new books to help them as professionals and in the classroom.



### *Karen F. Webster*

*Van Bokkelen Elementary School*

*"I try to strengthen the entire school community by encouraging administration, faculty/staff, and parents to join in PE class activities and programs. In addition, I ask teachers about student weaknesses in other subject areas so that I can do activities within my PE classes. I can teach all subject areas within the PE curriculum."*

**W**ith a primary mission of getting all her students motivated to be active for a lifetime, Karen Webster has expanded her role of physical educator at Van Bokkelen Elementary School to include writing, technology, reading, math, and science in her daily lessons. She is a candidate for National Board certification, and as a result, is finding ways to reach all the school's students. She is currently trying to implement the Brummit-Taylor Classical Music Program for the morning announcements.

The United States Marine Corps veteran is also known for exposing her students to exotic activities like Australian footy, sport stacking, and even learning bowling skills using the Nintendo Wii video gaming system. She often uses music to move from one activity to another. Recognizing that many of the boys and girls at Van Bokkelen have not had such experiences, Webster has big plans to implement fishing and golf programs at the school in the near future.

# Excellence in Education Honorees

## Finalist



### Amy Weissenburger

Meade High School

*"I would hope to encourage my students to become free thinkers, emphasizing critical thinking and writing skills. Facts would then become a conduit to discovering these thinking skills. I feel that as a teacher/guide, I would facilitate more interest in the subject by making students more responsible for their own education."*

Holding true to her father's principle of serving the community in which you live, Meade High School English teacher Amy Weissenburger has frequently participated and attended school events at the school for the past 11 years. As the National Honor Society adviser, she has helped students organize fundraising and community service projects for the Susan G. Komen Cancer Foundation, Special Olympics, and the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society. Her personal commitment to the students and community of Fort George G. Meade can be seen in her initiation of November Saturday Breakfast sessions, where she hosts groups of students in the school computer lab, supplying donuts and support for writing college application essays and filling out financial aid forms.

Inside the classroom, Weissenburger seeks to make her students feel the way she felt the day she decided to become a teacher. As she sat in a college literature class, she was so engaged by the professor's energetic and glowing enthusiasm that Weissenburger forgot to take notes. This was such a valuable moment of self-discovery and freedom that nothing in a textbook could compare to it, and students praise her often for making them feel the same way.



# Business Partnership Awards

## Businesses under 50 employees:

### Abundant Life Church

*Liz Wagner, Community Outreach Executive Director*

Liz Wagner, Executive Director of the Abundant Life Church and Legislative Aide to Senator Ed DeGrange, has been involved in the North County Business Advisory Board for the past ten years and served as President for three. Through her leadership, the North County Business Advisory Board has developed a clear mission to help young people succeed in life, beginning in elementary school. Ms. Wagner's guidance has been instrumental in both developing and sustaining a number of supporting activities including programs that transition middle school students to high school, student recognition and parent outreach programs. According to Joyce Coleman, "her leadership and guidance have been instrumental in positive relationships with our peers and our students."

*Nominated by: Joyce Coleman, Career Connections Facilitator, North County High School*

### Anne Arundel Workforce Development Corporation

*Stephen Harrison, Labor Exchange Administrator*

Stephen Harrison became 'partnered' with Old Mill High School following an informational meeting on establishing a Business Advisory Board for the school. He volunteered to chair the developing board and was instrumental in recruiting 33 business partners and community leaders. He has continued to volunteer in a number of additional school-based programs designed to support student success. He is committed to students in all academic levels and believes that career interest and opportunity are important components of learning. In describing Mr. Harrison, Virginia Langford states, "he has arms that he extends openly and widely to help benefit the students of Old Mill as well as the Anne Arundel County Public School system."

*Nominated by: Virginia Langford, Career Connections Facilitator, Old Mill High School*

### Adam's the Place for Ribs, Edgewater

*Bill Bagdasian, owner*

Bill Bagdasian, owner of Adam's the Place for Ribs, became involved in educational partnerships when his children started elementary school, and has had an on-going relationship with South River High School for more than 25 years. In the late to mid 1980s, Mr. Bagdasian began coaching and supporting the school football team, an activity in which both of his sons participated. A tragic auto accident took the life of his elder son, Hike, on January 19, 2000. A memorial fund was established and the entire proceeds were donated to expand the stadium press box, now named in his son's memory. Over the years, Mr. Bagdasian has participated in work-based learning, provided numerous team dinners, sponsored yearbooks, newspaper silent auctions and door prizes, and provided food for the concession stands and golf tournaments. He recently contributed the first \$2,500 toward an electronic scoreboard in memory of his daughter's friend Kevin Morris, who was killed in a motorcycle accident. Longtime basketball coach Ken B. Dunn best summarized Mr. Bagdasian by stating that, "Bill is a true booster mentally and emotionally. He is one solid individual and the school could not have a finer gentleman associated with it. He is the best example of what is right with the world."

*Nominated by: Becki Hutchinson, Career Connections Facilitator, South River High School*

# Business Partnership Awards

## Iggy Apparel

*Mike Logan, owner*

Northeast High School formed a partnership with Mike Logan, owner of Iggy Apparel, during the 2006-2007 school year with a primary goal of providing incentives to help increase the grade point averages of students. Mr. Logan designed fleece pullovers embroidered with the school mascot eagle insignia and Northeast High School Academic Honors underneath. Students who receive straight A's become members of the Principal's Honor Roll and are invited to an assembly to receive a fleece pullover. Repeating students earn a small eagle pin. By the fourth marking period last year, 62 students had made the Principal's Honor Roll, representing close to a 100% increase over the previous year!

*Nominated by: Kathy Kubic, principal, Northeast High School*

## The Baltimore Blast

*Marc Dombek, Game Day Director*

For the past several years, the Baltimore Blast has partnered with Edgewater Elementary School in a variety of ways. Through the "Lunch with the Stars" program, professional soccer players dine with students who have demonstrated exceptional behavior. The players and General Manager have brought messages of sportsmanship, fair play, and lifelong learning on each of their visits. They have spent time on the playground teaching skills and counting games to first graders and had serious talks about what it means to demonstrate good character to third-, fourth-, and fifth-graders, sometimes imparting a strong anti-drug and alcohol message where appropriate. According to PTA President Raymond Leone, "The Baltimore Blast takes great pride in picking smart, well-mannered players who represent their club with great pride and dignity. It is truly a pleasure working with them."

*Nominated by: Raymond Leone, Parent Teacher Association President*

## The Rotary Club of Glen Burnie, Club 5174, District 7620

*Pat Kasuda, past district governor and past president*

Jessica Paugh highlighted several roles that Pat Kasuda has played at Glen Burnie High School including: "superwoman, fairy godmother, teacher, bodyguard, referee, sounding board, coach, leader, mentor, and therapist. However, the most important role that she plays at Glen Burnie High School is advocate." As Chairperson of the Business Advisory Board, she has provided purpose and structure to the career cluster program, raised thousands of dollars for scholarships, orchestrated the first Achievement Breakfast, spent time as a guest teacher in eighth-grade classrooms, and presented the 'Student of the Month' awards. This year, the Business Advisory Board created the "Most Improved Students of the Month," where awards are presented Publishers Clearing House-style. Pat takes time out of her busy day to travel throughout the high school, surprising the student winners with the award. She has recently undertaken the Alumni Wall of Honor project which is designed to build stronger ties to Glen Burnie High School alumni.

*Nominated by: Jessica Paugh, Career Connections Facilitator, Glen Burnie High School*

# Business Partnership Awards

## Three Brothers, Odenton

*Shawn Fair, owner; David Bartlett, general manager*

According to PTA officers Ann Allen and Dawn Jung, “the partnership established between Three Brothers in Odenton and Odenton Elementary School is symbiotic in nature. Odenton Elementary was searching for a partner willing to participate in various activities and Shawn Fair, Three Brothers owner, and David Bartlett, General Manager, saw the advantages of partnering with the school.” Three Brothers has provided reduced costs for food, offered their facility for school use, and given generous cash donations to the Parent Teacher Association. They have also supported Sarah’s House located at Ft. Meade.

*Nominated by: Ann Allen, Treasurer and Dawn Jung, President, Odenton Elementary School, Parent Teacher Association*

## Timberlake Homes

*Mary Sheppard, administrator*

Meade High School has seen an increased need in the number of students who need and deserve scholarships to continue their education. One scholarship, The Bonnie Showalter Memorial Scholarship, was created in memory of a Meade teacher who taught for over 25 years. The initial funding provided one scholarship a year for five years. To support this effort, several Meade High School alums formed a non-profit organization to raise funds. Over the past three years, Timberlake Homes has contributed \$20,000 toward the scholarship. As a result, four students have received \$1,000 from the Bonnie Showalter Scholarship each year. According to Jon Putt, “The financial support, employee dedication, and ongoing interest in quality education shown by Timberlake Homes is not only commendable, but also a viable part of the success of this education and business partnership at Meade High School.”

*Nominated by: Jon Putt, Guidance Department Chairperson, Meade High School*

# Business Partnership Awards

## Businesses with 50 or more employees:

### Doubletree Annapolis Hotel

*Angela M. Anderson, Senior Catering Manager*

For the past five years, Annapolis Doubletree Hotel has made a commitment and connection between the care they provide to hotel guests and how that lesson can be shared with a new generation of business and civic leaders through the Teaching Kids to CARE community outreach program. In November 2007, the hotel sponsored a three-day program for kindergarten students at Hillsmere Elementary School. Participating students had the opportunity to interact with their teachers and Doubletree Teaching Kids to CARE volunteer hotel teams to learn more about water conservation, waste reduction, air pollution, and energy conservation. At the program's end, students used collected recyclable materials to create 'eco-inventions.'

### Greater Severna Park Chamber of Commerce

*Linda Zahn, Executive Director*

As the Executive Director of the Greater Severna Park Chamber of Commerce, Linda Zahn has provided leadership, support, and direction for the Severna Park High School Business Advisory Board. Over the past five years, she has recruited chamber members as board members, provided a work-based learning site for high school students, and encouraged chamber member participation in a variety of school-based projects, including the School Store, Teacher Recognition Program, Student Support/Mentor Program, Mock Interviews, Leadership Institute, Project Lead the Way mentors, Youth Leadership Conference, and the evolving College/Career Center. Jason Dykstra commented on the partnership as reinforcing the ability for "students to make a connection between what they have learned in high school to what they will experience in life after high school."

*Nominated by: Jason Dykstra, principal, Severna Park High School on behalf of the Business Advisory Board*

### Junior League of Annapolis

*Mrs. Dory Mondor, past chair, present committee member*

At Marley Elementary School, members of the Junior League of Annapolis have spent countless hours making a positive difference in the lives of many students and teachers. Every year, 75-100 full backpacks arrive at the school for needy students with extras for teachers to have on hand during the year. The 'Kids in the Kitchen' program reinforces nutrition, fitness, and health with fourth graders. League volunteers purchase, prepare, and encourage students to try different healthy foods, as well as assist them with the preparation of granola, fruit, and other nutritious snacks. They reinforce the benefits of eating healthy foods in relation to their growing bodies as well as enhanced school performance. Not only are the parents impressed, Marley Elementary students look forward to becoming fourth graders so they can participate! In addition, the League supports an outdoor fitness program, teacher luncheons, and a teen resource guide connecting external resources to the school. According to Joyce Burke, the Junior League of Annapolis has "...given so much time, money, and energy to help us with the educational process of our children. We have had such a wonderful experience with this fine group of young ladies."

*Nominated by: Joyce M. Burke, school counselor, Marley Elementary School*

# *Business Partnership Awards*

## *Pomodoro Italian Grill*

*Brock Anderson and George Jones, owners*

When Brock Anderson and George Jones, owners of the Pomodoro Italian Grill, have received a telephone call from Hillsmere Elementary principal Christopher Wooleyhand, their first response has been, “How can we help?” This level of business commitment, coupled with countless volunteer hours, has contributed greatly to a variety of school activities. A field trip to the restaurant reinforced a language arts unit on “Our Neighborhoods at Work.” Students experienced a behind-the-scenes look at the inner workings of a restaurant. Pomodoro’s generous contribution of food has assisted the Parent Teacher Association in raising over \$10,000 annually, and this effort has allowed the school to reinforce the Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) program. They also donate food for the annual holiday celebration at the Robinwood Recreation Center in Annapolis. Students participating in the Homework Help program, a cooperative effort between Hillsmere Elementary and the Annapolis Housing Authority, are recognized during the holiday celebration at the Robinwood Recreation Center.

*Nominated by: Christopher Wooleyhand, principal, Hillsmere Elementary School*

*Excellence in Education*

# *Acknowledgements*

## *Judges for the 2008 Teacher of the Year*

*Alicia Appel, 2007 Public School Teacher of the Year*

*Duane Arbogast, Anne Arundel County Public Schools*

*Pam Barnes, Anne Arundel County Council of PTA's, Inc.*

*Richard Benfer, Teachers Association of Anne Arundel County*

*Hilary Humphrey, Chesapeake Regional Association of Student Councils*

*Diana Strohecker, Association of Educational Leaders*

*Brandi Ulrich, Sheraton Annapolis Hotel*

*Sabrina Walsh, Chesapeake Regional Association of Student Councils*

## *Judges for the 2008 Business Partnership Awards*

*Sandra Anderson, Comcast*

*Kathleen Beaman, Anne Arundel Community College*

*Lise Foran, Anne Arundel County Public Schools*

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*We are very grateful for their dedication to the educators of Anne Arundel County.*

*Excellence in Education*

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Special Olympics Maryland

Teachers Association of Anne Arundel County

# Former AACPS Teachers of the Year

**1986-87** (*also Maryland Finalist*)

Richard Wiles, Physical Education Teacher,  
Millersville ES

**1987-88**

Penny Vahsen, Science Teacher,  
Magothy River MS

**1988-89**

(*also Maryland Teacher of the Year - 1990*)  
Patricia Neidhardt, Science Teacher,  
Broadneck HS

**1989-90**

Art Smelkinson, Drama Teacher,  
Old Mill HS

**1990-91** (*also Maryland Finalist*)

Olin Yoder, Art Teacher,  
Meade HS

**1991-92** (*also Maryland Finalist*)

Virginia Crespo, Social Studies Teacher,  
Broadneck HS

**1992-93** (*also Maryland Finalist*)

Jane Daugherty, Music Teacher,  
Broadneck HS

**1993-94**

(*also Maryland Teacher of the Year - 1995*)  
Linda Adamson, Elementary Teacher,  
Mayo ES and Jessup ES

**1994-95**

Thomas Cordts, Physical Education Teacher,  
Windsor Farm ES

**1995-96**

Kandace Chase, Special Education Teacher,  
Ruth Eason School

**1996-97** (*also Maryland Finalist*)

Priscilla Ward, Pre-K Teacher,  
Germantown ES

**1997-98**

Bruce Villwock, Physical Education Teacher,  
Broadneck HS

**1998-99** (*also Maryland Finalist*)

Diane Gerrior, Instrumental Music Teacher,  
Severn River MS

**1999-00**

Denise Levitine, Art Teacher,  
Piney Orchard ES

**2000-01**

Anthony Berard, Social Studies Teacher,  
Glen Burnie HS

**2001-02**

Mattie Procaccini, English Teacher,  
Old Mill HS

**2002-03**

André Jones, Social Studies Teacher,  
Severna Park MS

**2003-04**

Michael Bell, Art Teacher,  
Southern HS

**2004-05**

Walter "Skip" Lee,  
Physical Education Teacher,  
Chesapeake HS

**2005-06** (*also Maryland Finalist*)

Susan Casler, Language Arts Teacher,  
Crofton Middle School

**2006-07** (*also Maryland Finalist*)

Alicia Appel, English Teacher,  
Southern High School

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