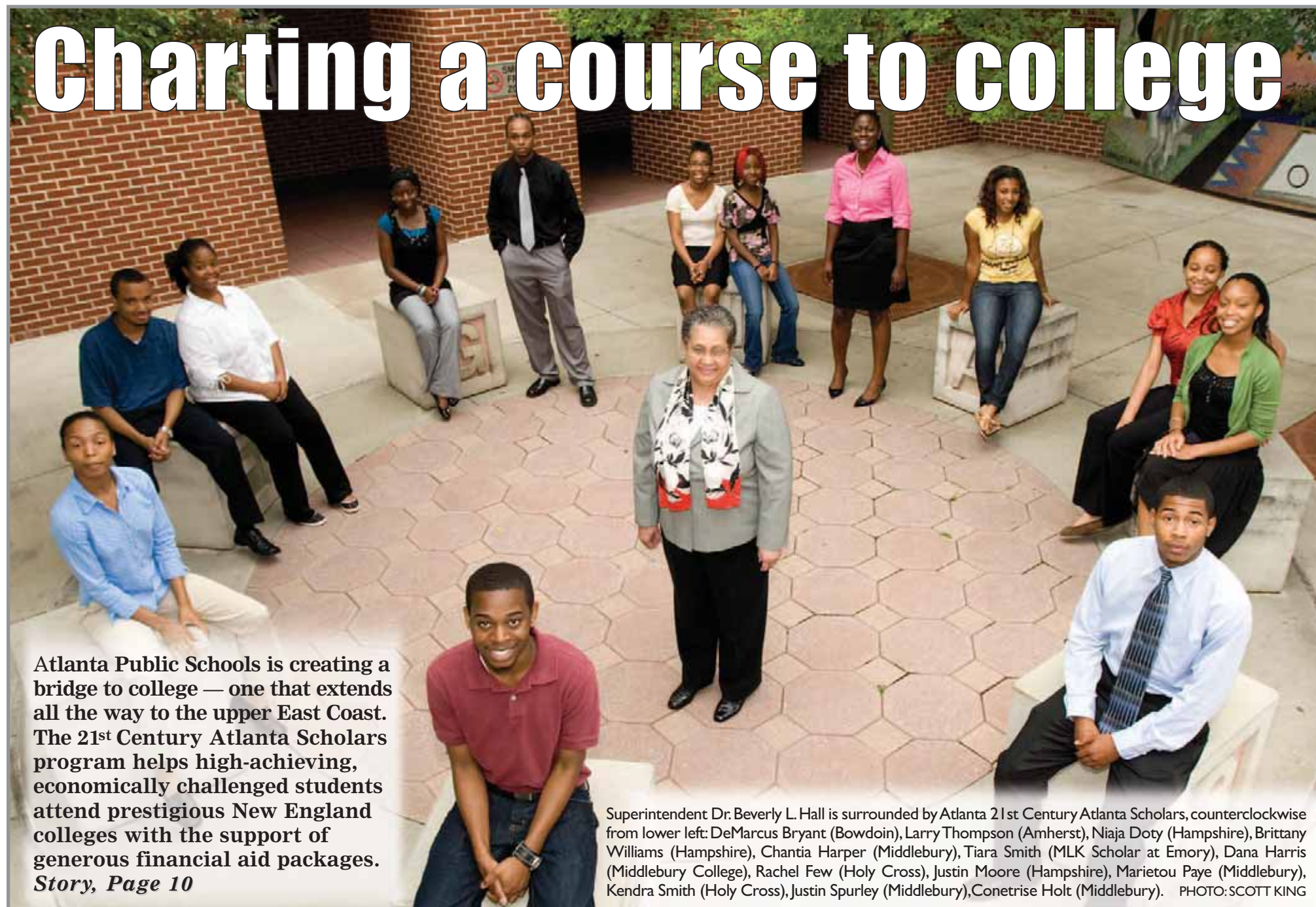




## Charting a course to college



Atlanta Public Schools is creating a bridge to college — one that extends all the way to the upper East Coast. The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Atlanta Scholars program helps high-achieving, economically challenged students attend prestigious New England colleges with the support of generous financial aid packages. *Story, Page 10*

Superintendent Dr. Beverly L. Hall is surrounded by Atlanta 21<sup>st</sup> Century Atlanta Scholars, counterclockwise from lower left: DeMarcus Bryant (Bowdoin), Larry Thompson (Amherst), Niaja Doty (Hampshire), Brittany Williams (Hampshire), Chantia Harper (Middlebury), Tiara Smith (MLK Scholar at Emory), Dana Harris (Middlebury College), Rachel Few (Holy Cross), Justin Moore (Hampshire), Marietou Paye (Middlebury), Kendra Smith (Holy Cross), Justin Spurley (Middlebury), Conetrise Holt (Middlebury). PHOTO: SCOTT KING



Jobias McLester

## Transforming his life

McLester stages turnaround at Carver

BY MEAGHAN CASEY

"Fight until there's nothing left to fight for." Those are the inspiring words of Jobias McLester, a senior at Carver School of Health Sciences and Research. "Regardless of how hard the struggle, you will progress. On the other side is a better picture, a brighter day."

McLester speaks from experience. In the fall of 2005, he entered high school unsure of what his future held, and struggled to find focus and direction.

"Jobias had a challenging eighth-grade year," said Dr. Darian Jones, his principal. "He was always in trouble."

But something clicked for McLester during the course of his freshman year. Struggle gave way to success as he slowly turned his academic career around.

Jones believes the setup at Carver — with its four small schools as opposed to one very large one — helped McLester and other students to thrive.

See McLESTER Page 20

## Inside

Art is alive at North Atlanta High

Pages 12-13





# We're happy to spread the good news



**Dr. Beverly L. Hall**

Welcome to the inaugural issue of *The Atlanta Educator*. We are very pleased at Atlanta Public Schools to share information about our schools through the eyes of parents, students, teachers, administrators and other staff members.

Over the past nine years, APS has made a remarkable turnaround. Year after year, the district posts consistent gains on standardized tests - even as Georgia has raised the bar with more challenging and rigorous standards and assessments. On the Nation's Report Card, student performance has improved in all grades and subject



Over the past nine years, APS has made a remarkable turnaround. Year after year, the district posts consistent gains on standardized tests...

areas tested, and APS students' math and reading scores have improved faster than any other urban district.

This is a story we need to share with our community, and *The Atlanta Educator* is one of the ways we will do that. Every quarter, *The Atlanta Educator* will deliver compelling articles about what's happening in our schools as well as stories about the people who help make APS one of the top-performing urban school districts in the nation.

In this issue, you will meet Jobias McLester, a senior at The New Schools at Carver who has turned his life around, and South Atlanta

High School basketball star Derrick Favors and his coach, Michael Reddick. You'll read how our students at Morningside and John Hope elementary schools are helping the environment and how our teachers are making a global impact with their work. Best of all, you will meet some of our 21st Century Atlanta Scholars, who are rising above challenges and finding new paths at some of the most prestigious colleges in America.

As we continue our journey to excellence, it's important to celebrate those who are leading the way. These are their stories. I hope you enjoy our first issue and learn about the outstanding teaching and learning taking place every day in our schools.

*Dr. Beverly L. Hall is superintendent of schools in Atlanta.*



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**Atlanta Public Schools**  
Beverly L. Hall, Ed.D.  
*Superintendent of Schools*  
Suzanne Yeager  
*Chief Communications Officer*

**Submit story ideas to:**  
Morieka V. Johnson  
Director of Communications  
Atlanta Public Schools  
130 Trinity Ave., SW  
Atlanta, GA 30303  
Tel: 404-802-2893

mvjohnson@atlantapublicschools.us  
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## ASSOCIATE SUPERINTENDENT FOR HIGH SCHOOLS RANDOLPH BYNUM

*Each quarter, The Atlanta Educator will introduce you to faculty, staff, and administrators at Atlanta Public Schools.*



**How long have you worked for Atlanta Public Schools?**



I started August 12, 2008, so I am relatively new.



**What was your previous position?**



I served as Chief Academic Officer for the Charleston (S.C.) County School District.



**What does your current position entail?**



The primary focus of my job is to provide effective leadership as we transition from traditional schools to small learning communities. Also, it is to support four main goals: reach a graduation rate of 90 percent within four years, ensure that our graduates are ready for college and post-secondary opportunities, make APS the first choice among students and parents in Atlanta, and provide our kids with a world-class education.



**What is the biggest change happening in APS high schools?**



It is the exciting, challenging transition of our high schools to small

schools or small learning communities. That will have a huge impact on the success of our high school students. Across the country, there is a sentiment, backed up by hard data, that the traditional high school model is no longer the best. We're not only talking the talk, we're walking the walk in terms of creating real learning opportunities for our students.



**What is the difference between small learning communities and the small schools model?**



In the small schools model, there is a principal running each of the autonomous schools on one campus. Small learning communities have one overall principal and each academy within has a leader. There is more sharing of teachers in small learning communities.



**What is the benefit?**



These models foster closer tracking of a student's performance and more interaction between students and teachers. You have 400 students vs. 2,500. We can do a better job with students, who select their school based on its theme (i.e., technology, arts, health sciences). If students are interested in something, they will do better. Carver, which has four separate small schools, is a good example. It has shown



**Randolph Bynum**

greater student achievement. Also, there has been a decline in discipline problems and an increase in attendance.



**Will magnet schools be converted into small learning communities?**



We are going to respect the history and the thought process that went into creating magnet schools. The needs and interests of the community and students play a part in how we work on this. Our intent is to absorb magnet schools into small learning communities.



**What is the timetable for converting schools to this new model?**

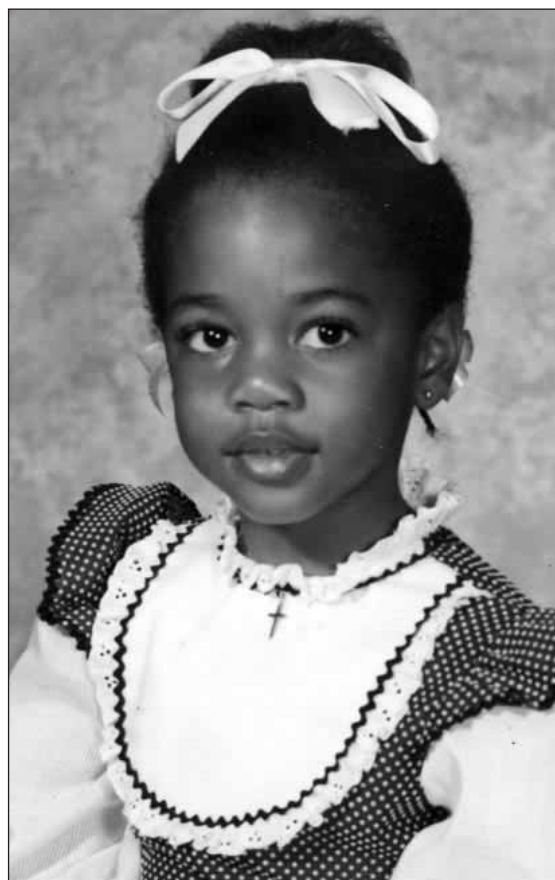


By August 2010 all our high schools will be transformed into either small learning communities or small schools.

**REASON TO BE PROUD OF APS: APS is on a consistent nine-year trend of progress.**

## APS BOARD CHAIR PROFILE

# LaChandra Butler Burks



Atlanta Board of Education Chair LaChandra Butler Burks was born and raised in Atlanta. Photos from left, Burks' L.P. Miles Elementary School portrait, her C.L. Harper High School yearbook picture, and today.

## From APS classroom to board room

**LaChandra Butler Burks, a graduate of Atlanta Public Schools, is chair of the APS board. This is the first in a series of board member profiles to be published in *The Atlanta Educator*.**

### Position

Chair of the Atlanta board of education, which is responsible for hiring a superintendent, setting policy and managing the budget.

### Background

Born and raised in Atlanta, LaChandra Butler Burks attended L.P. Miles Elementary and the former C.L. Harper High School. She earned a bachelor's degree and a Master's of Business Administration from State University of West Georgia.

"I think it's important to have someone who can speak from the perspective of having attended the Atlanta Public Schools," she said. "That's not to say we don't value the perspective of those who

may have attended public schools in other cities — or even those who attended private schools. It's just those of us who came through the system have a special love for the schools."

### Experience

Burks was elected in November 2005 to represent District 5 on the board. She received most of her political experience working for 13 years under the leadership of three Atlanta mayors.

Before becoming chair, Burks served as chair of the board's budget

commission, overseeing the district's \$645 million general fund operating budget. But she notes that financial experience isn't a requirement to serve on the board. "Your passion for the job and commitment to the students have to be No. 1," she said.

Burks is deputy director for the Atlanta

Office of Enterprise Community Partners, a national nonprofit organization that works to ensure that Atlantans have access to fit and affordable housing.

As an active member of Elizabeth Baptist Church, Burks led the church's

effort to open an accredited, early childhood program called Indelible Impressions Learning Center, and Legacy Christian Academy. She is also a proud member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.

### Points of Pride

Burks notes that the district's innovative programs are attracting national attention. For example, Carson Middle School is currently being converted into single-gender academies: the Business, Engineering, Science and Technology (B.E.S.T.) Academy, and the Coretta Scott King Young Women's Leadership

Academy.

Research shows boys and girls learn differently in certain subjects and certain grades, she said. After one year, test results for boys and girls have shown significant improvements.

"Students at our single-gender schools are performing exceptionally well," said Burks, who has a stepdaughter in the seventh grade and a niece in sixth grade at Coretta Scott King Academy. As part of the middle school transformation project, both academies will continue to grow, adding a grade each year until they cover grades six through 12. A decision on whether to expand the single-gender model to other APS schools will be made later this year.

*The Atlanta Board of Education meets on December 8, January 12, February 2 and March 2 at The Center for Learning and Leadership Auditorium, 130 Trinity Avenue SW, Atlanta, Georgia 30303. Visit [atlantapublicschools.us](http://atlantapublicschools.us) for times and topics. To subscribe to the board newsletter, visit: [Atlantapublicschools.us/boardnewsletter](http://Atlantapublicschools.us/boardnewsletter)*



**Your passion  
for the job and  
commitment  
to the students  
have to be No. 1.**



# *The Southerner* delivers for Grady High School



Junior Madeline Roorbach cuts out a news article to enter into the Columbia Scholastic Press Association Gold Circle Awards contest.  
PHOTO: MINH LAM, SENIOR DESIGN AND PHOTO EDITOR FOR *THE SOUTHERNER*

## Student newspaper racks up awards

For 61 years, the student journalists who produce *The Southerner* newspaper at Grady High School have been delivering award-winning news coverage of the school, metro Atlanta and the world.

When Army Lt. Col. Allen B. West faced a potential court martial in 2003 for his interrogation methods in Iraq, *Southerner* staffers broke the story before any other media outlet in the city.

When the Madrid bombings occurred in 2004, *The Southerner* featured interviews with Grady students studying abroad in Spain, as well as staff members who had visited the country a semester earlier. The young journalists also scored an interview with a mortician who had witnessed the carnage.

Those are just a few examples of why *The Southerner* has earned six Pacemaker awards from the National Scholastic Press Association in the last 12 years. The most recent award was announced Nov. 15. The monthly publication also has won three George H. Gallup Awards from the Quill and Scroll Society for high school journalists.

And students do all the work, with assistance from advisers Dave Winter and Kate Carter.

This year, managing editors Sarah Bufkin and Keely Youngblood direct a staff of 35 student reporters, editors, photographers and graphic designers. They spend countless

hours — two class periods, time after school and several evenings — producing eight editions of *The Southerner*.

“There is a lot of time and dedication on behalf of the students and advisers,” said Bufkin, who earned a superior ranking in newswriting at this year’s Scholastic Press Association convention.

“Students at Grady know about the quality of *The Southerner*. Teachers and students have a lot of respect for the paper,” Youngblood added.

What’s most impressive to Winter, who has been a student newspaper faculty adviser for 15 years, is the students’ ability to manage their peers.

“The kids have a cosmopolitan sense about them. They have a mature sense of what should be covered,” said Winter, an AP Journalism teacher. He also praised his predecessor, Riki Bolster, for her 19 years as faculty adviser to *The Southerner*. With her guidance, the staff won two Pacemaker awards.

In addition to the Grady community, there is a paid circulation of approximately 800. Subscriptions are \$12 (\$10 for renewals). *Subscribe to The Southerner today. To order, send a check to: Grady High School, 929 Charles Allen Drive, Atlanta, GA 30309, attention Dave Winter. For more information, e-mail [dwinter@atlantapublicschools.us](mailto:dwinter@atlantapublicschools.us).*

## Read all about us

When most people think of a student newspaper, they probably picture a group of teenagers half-heartedly writing stories on homecoming and throwing things together on pages the day before deadline. While we doubt most newspapers have rapper T-Pain playing over the staff room speakers, the work environment in *The Southerner*’s room on the days before deadline mirrors what you would find at *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution*. Just because we have a readership of around 1,500 (compared to the AJC’s of more than a million) doesn’t mean that we as a staff take the news any less seriously.

As managing editors of the Grady High School newspaper, *The Southerner*, we have an unusual job. We have to manage a staff of our peers and put out a paper worthy of the Pacemaker finalist



Sarah Bufkin



Keely Youngblood

status our previous editors achieved. When we applied for the position at the end of our junior year, we knew that it would require extensive dedication and solid organizational skills. What we didn’t see was how difficult it would be to manage our friends and the people we swap jokes with in the hallways. Confronted with the delicate position of being supervisors and classmates, we had to learn to mix our desire for efficient productivity with a dose of compassion and understanding in order get the most out of our staff. Of course, there have been those moments when one of us snapped at a staff member for failing to turn in a story by the deadline. But, for the most part, our time as managing editors has run smoothly thus far.

Not only have our roles as editors brought us surprises on the leadership front, but the way the newspaper has completely eclipsed other things in our lives has astonished us. While some things, such as our obsession with TV’s “The Office,” probably should have been curtailed, our waning interest in homework and going to the gym in favor of editing stories and planning the run list might be a bit of an issue. What many people fail to comprehend is that the time commitment and dedication the paper requires is tremendous. We put out an issue once a month, but we must edit more than 30 stories and compile 20 pages during third period on (some) days, and in the time we have between soccer practice and mock trial. There is nothing lackadaisical or careless about putting together an issue; all of the spacing on each page must be assiduously measured. A misplaced comma or hyphen throws us for a loop. Eventually, we find ourselves having to draw the line to get the paper out on time.

But while we have our complaints about the immense amount of work being managing editors of *The Southerner* entails, we wouldn’t trade it for free days after school or the time needed to study for our physics quizzes (although we might for a full scholarship to our top-choice colleges). Being an integral part of this paper has been one of the greatest experiences of our high school careers, not simply because we enjoy watching Sarah Palin on YouTube with the rest of the staff or because we like to send long rants via e-mail, but because we love holding a completed issue in our hands, hot off the press. We love knowing that we have been active participants in the national tradition of objective news presentation to the American public. Although we may never decide to become journalists or work on newspapers professionally, the experience that we have gained as reporters and leaders has made all of the rewriting of summary leads more than worthwhile.



APS  
STUDENT  
PROFILE



Above, Fabian Williams with school counselor Donna Mills, middle, and his mother, April Hood, at Gideons Elementary School. Below, Fabian Williams, right, and Cedric Williams work on math together during class.

PHOTOS: REBA SALDANHA

# Comeback kid

## After serious illness, Williams back on track at Gideons

BY MEAGHAN CASEY

One year ago, Fabian Williams was a third-grade Gideons Elementary School honor-roll student who loved SpongeBob SquarePants, soft rap music, pizza and nachos.

But everything changed last December, when Fabian suddenly became unresponsive in class and was rushed to Children's Healthcare of Atlanta.

He spent several weeks in and out of the hospital, undergoing tests and treatments for recurring epileptic seizures.

"It was a rough time for us," said his mother, April Hood. "He had never had anything like this before. The doctors kept trying different things, and he'd be fine for three days and then start seizing again."

On January 21, Fabian was admitted to the hospital after he had a seizure in the waiting room.

"At that point, his motor skills started to deteriorate, he was losing weight, and he became more agitated and aggressive," said Hood. "He was connected to a feeding tube, but somehow pulled it out and the fluid started going into his lungs. He spent four days in the Intensive Care Unit on a respirator machine."

Fabian lost his ability to speak and was confined to a wheelchair. He remained hospitalized until April 4 with his mother at his bedside. But she wasn't alone. The Gideons Elementary School

community monitored Fabian's condition. His teacher, Tremelia Donaldson, visited often, delivering cards from Fabian's classmates. Over time, Fabian made minimal gains.

"In August, he

was still in a wheelchair and still non-verbal, but you could see how much he was trying," Fabian's mom said. "At a birthday party that month, he wanted so much to be up out of that chair and hitting the piñata with the other kids."

Hood approached Gideons Principal Armstead Salters about Fabian's return to school. After meetings with the staff and personnel from the Office of Student Programs and Services, Fabian returned to Gideons on Aug. 13. He spent his first day in a familiar setting, Donaldson's third-grade classroom.

"I knew it was the environment he needed to be in, around other kids and with a teacher he was already comfortable with," said Hood. "Everybody's been great. The kids were hugging him that first day back, calling out his name. We got a lot of love."

Fabian has a great home life, Donaldson said, but being around his classmates again was important. "There's a true family atmosphere at Gideons. Everyone rallied around him and made sure he had everything he needed," she said.

Fabian returned to school on a Wednesday and quickly began improving his motor skills by scribbling and tracing. On Thursday he had a doctor's appointment. When Fabian returned on Friday, he wrote his name for the first time since his illness last December. That weekend, he spoke his first words.

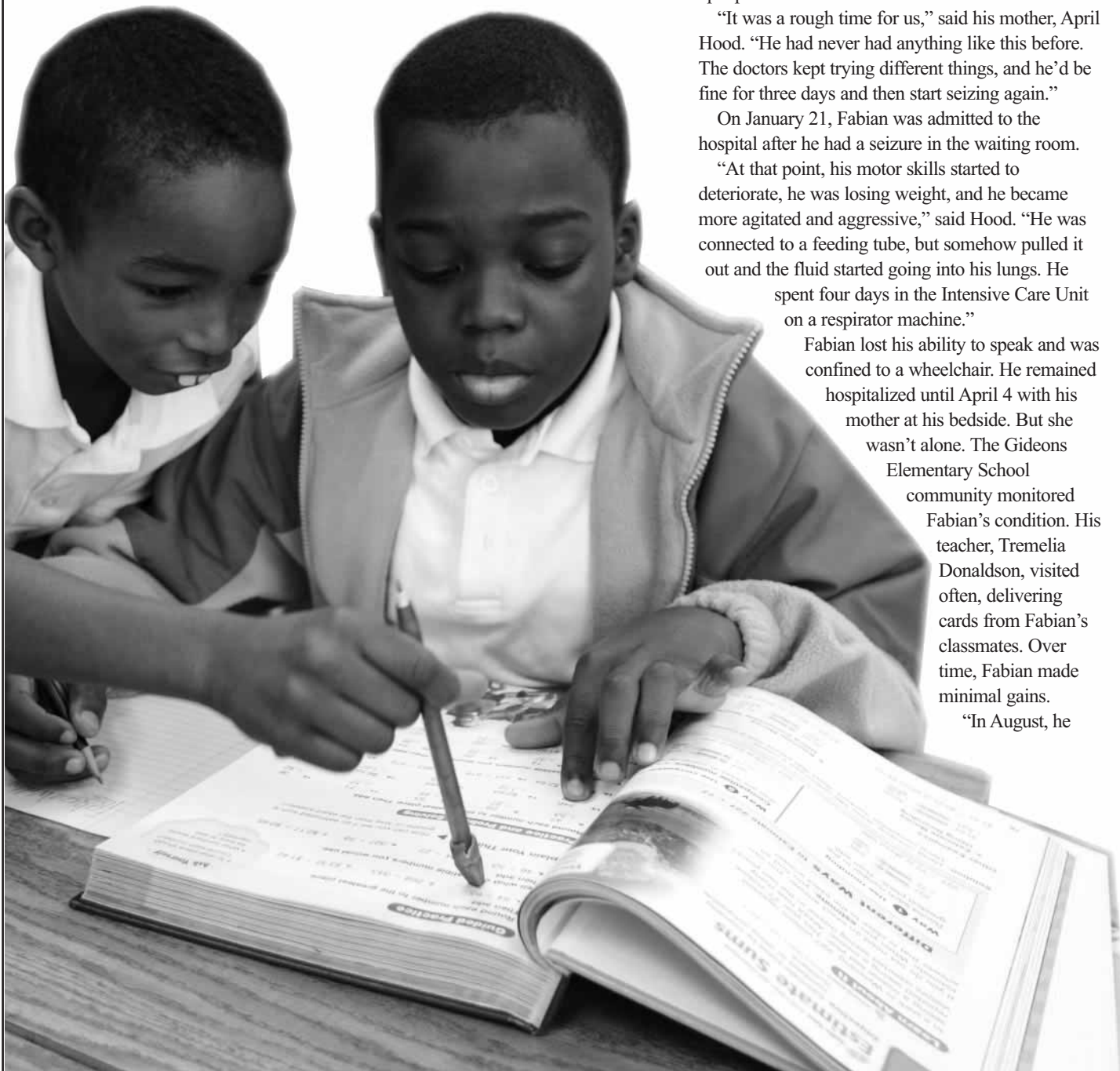
"He said my name and I couldn't believe it," said Hood. "I said, 'Is that my baby saying something?' I can't even explain the feeling. In the hospital, they couldn't tell me if he would ever recover, so for him to come back in such a short time was incredible."

On Sunday morning, Fabian used his mother's cell phone to call Donaldson.

"I picked up my phone and heard his voice saying good morning," she said. "It was such a blessing."

Since that first week, Fabian has regained the ability to walk and is speaking again. "He's a little talking box now," said Hood. With educational and rehabilitative support from the staff at Gideons, Fabian has been able to remain in his third-grade class. He also has attended two field trips and is playing video games, completing his homework and becoming more independent each day.

Fabian's next goal will be easing back into coursework, and completing occupational and physical therapy. His mom credits the Gideons community with making the transition and recovery process so successful. "He's definitely determined," said Hood. "Once he got a piece of talking, he wanted more. The same with walking — even when it hurt, he kept on trying."





# GOING GREEN

# Morningside nurtures learning environment

BY RICH FAHEY

Going green isn't just the environmentally sound thing to do. It also can save some "green" in reduced energy and waste disposal costs.

Atlanta Public Schools has embraced the environmental movement in a big way, and one of the schools leading the way is Morningside Elementary.

The school has a 40-member Green Team that has developed a year-long schedule of events and initiatives, raised awareness and helped students and their families find ways to reduce waste.

"The children are very on board with this," said Willa Paton-Smith, co-chair of the Green Team at Morningside. "They're recycling at home and they're gung-ho, eager to learn more about recycling and what else they can do."

The movement started with recycling bins in classrooms and expanded to include projects that help others. Morningside students collected 75 used pairs of Crocs, which were chopped up and remanufactured as footwear for needy children.

Soles from 153 pairs of used tennis shoes will be converted into playground surfaces around the world. Another 41 pairs of tennis shoes were cleaned and donated to the Atlanta Day Shelter for Women and Children.

In November, Morningside embarked on another program, collecting used cell phones, hand-held electronic devices and ink cartridges. Phones and electronic devices that are in good condition are being donated to the shelter; the rest will be

recycled. Students also recycle broken crayons.

Selling reusable shopping bags with the school's logo helps fund school programs while making environmental sense.

A waste audit helped the school to record and document the amount of waste generated. It also allows students to track improvements through recycling and other initiatives.

"Some of what we do overlaps with the work being done by the school's wellness committee and garden committee," said Paton-Smith. Each month, local restaurant chefs cook a dish using one of the school-grown vegetables.

Morningside students also grow sunflowers, harvest the seeds and sell them at the Halloween Fair. Green tips are offered on the school Web site ([www.morningsideschool.org](http://www.morningsideschool.org)) and in the school newspaper.

One of the school's most successful environmental

projects of the past year was its Blackout Hour, held March 25, with the goal of raising awareness about energy consumption and its impact on the planet.

All participating students were encouraged to have



Morningside Elementary School students and siblings Ellen, Mary and James Winer organize reusable shopping bags.

their families refrain from using any electricity in their homes for one hour.

Launched by teacher Stella Mercker and her students, they set a lofty target of getting 90 percent of the second grade to participate in the event, modeled after Earth Hour. One hundred fourteen of 157 second-grade students participated, about 73 percent, and the idea quickly spread to the other grades, with 306 of the 577 students surveyed eventually participating.

Morningside students from left, Viola Fruth, Anne Clare Booker, Henry Edmeades, Ashton Edmeades, Julia and Katherine Paton-Smith helped collect 75 pairs of Crocs, 153 pairs of athletic shoes and 41 pairs of tennis shoes that were cleaned and donated to the Atlanta Day Shelter for Women and Children.





# GOING GREEN

Below, John Hope Elementary School student Aranza Frutis recycles milk cartons in the cafeteria



In the garden at John Hope Elementary School are, from left, Jada Smith, Luis Marcial, Omari Byrd, Tigah Feazell and Sahara George with Hands On Atlanta liaison Marc Boyd.

PHOTOS: REBA SALDANHA



## Helping the environment is elementary in Atlanta

BY RICH FAHEY

Clearly the “green” movement is gaining popularity across metro Atlanta. Here are a few more examples of how Atlanta Public Schools is helping the environment.

### John Hope Elementary

- ◆ On Nov. 15, John Hope partnered with Sprint and Hands On Atlanta to make several “green” upgrades around the school. They installed air-dry dispensers in restrooms and added a rain barrel to save precious water for the school’s organic garden.
- ◆ Dr. Cassandra Ashley said the school also will install energy-efficient coating on the windows.
- ◆ Recycling bins in the cafeteria, teachers’ lounges, and classrooms are accompanied by posters encouraging everyone to recycle paper, aluminum, plastic and glass. The school is providing teachers with water coolers and reusable bottles to avoid the cost and extra energy involved in drinking bottled water.
- ◆ A rain barrel collects water to nourish the school’s organic garden.

- ◆ There are designated parking spaces for scooters, bikes and hybrid cars.
- ◆ An energy-efficient washer and dryer is available to clean school uniforms.
- ◆ The school will raffle pure water filters.

### East Rivers Elementary

- ◆ Student Juliana Forio in Courtney Benner’s third-grade class won a four-day trip to Seattle, Wash., for herself, her teacher and a parent. In a contest sponsored by Doubletree Hotels, the school’s education partner, students worked with their teachers to develop and present inventions that would reduce, reuse or recycle. Juliana invented an aerator nozzle with a built-in timer that would shut off automatically. She shared her invention with other students from around the country at the Doubletree National Convention in Seattle last February. The event was held in conjunction with the premiere of the Exploring Trees Inside and Out traveling tree museum exhibit, presented by Doubletree Hotels.
- ◆ “It was a simple, but very effective invention,” said E. Rivers Principal David White.

- ◆ The school has a nature walk with plants that are heat tolerant and indigenous to Georgia.
- ◆ Organic vegetables from the school garden are added to the salad bar.

### William M. Finch Elementary

- ◆ Prospective members of the National Junior Beta Club tackled an environmental community service project. Carol Semper from the Atlanta Water Department helped club members identify water conservation methods. Fifth graders began a campaign for clean water, teaching younger students about conservation and pollution.
- ◆ Nettie Douglass from the Atlanta Department of Watershed Management provided coloring books, door signs and other supplies to help spread the word about water conservation.

*What is your school doing to help the planet? Share ideas at [atlantaeducator@atlantapublicschools.us](mailto:atlantaeducator@atlantapublicschools.us).*

**APS  
TEACHER  
PROFILE**

King Middle School Teacher Shevon Howard, center, spent two weeks last summer volunteering in orphanages, schools and other areas of South Africa.



# INTO AFRICA

## Shevan Howard is King Middle School's Renaissance Man



Watching traditional African dance was part of the trip.

BY GRETCHEN WEBER

Teachers frequently spend summer vacations recharging their batteries. Shevan Howard of Martin Luther King, Jr. Middle School spent that time helping South African students dare to dream.

Howard taught orphans at Unanda Comprehensive High School to visualize goals and aspirations using photos from U.S. magazines.

"Black kids in South Africa don't see pictures of black people in a progressive way," said Howard, a sixth-grade social studies teacher. "We brought magazines with us so that the students could reflect and see images like themselves in a positive way."

Howard volunteered for the program through The Renaissance Group, a nonprofit organization that works to foster community and leadership among South African children.

"One of the best things about this trip was being able to go back to the motherland and pass on the knowledge I have gained over the years," he said. "I had a constant sense of accomplishment because I was able to put the things I have learned to good use."

During the trip, Howard spent several days in

Soweto, an impoverished area of Johannesburg, South Africa. The group painted classrooms, donated materials and trained teachers. He also spent a workday at an orphanage for young children. Howard's group arrived with students from Unanda, and everyone worked to clean the building.

“

One of the best things about this trip was being able to go back to the motherland and pass on the knowledge I have gained over the years.

**Shevan Howard**

"The high school students were so excited," said Howard. "They were orphans, too, so they knew how it felt for the younger children. These kids were working so hard. It was an awesome sight."

The experience is far from over. APS students in Howard's social studies class get an enhanced history lesson through his photos and stories.

"Kids here don't realize how good they have it," said Howard. "I don't think they comprehend all of the advantages they have at their fingertips. If you try to compare what they have with what the kids at Unanda High School or the orphanages

have, it's beyond comparison."

Through letters and fundraisers, Howard plans to forge a connection between APS students and the children he met in Durban.

To learn more about The Renaissance Group, go to <http://www.printsbyangela.com/news.htm>.



APS  
TEACHER  
PROFILE

# Live from the Bahamas

Russell  
shares  
experiences  
with students  
in real time

BY GRETCHEN WEBER

When Cook Elementary School teacher Courtney Russell headed to the Bahamas, she brought her second-grade class along with her — digitally, that is.

Russell joined a team of scientists at the Earthwatch Institute in the Bahamas. She studied how bleaching of the coral reefs affects marine ecosystems. While she worked, Russell's students in Atlanta followed her every move through blog entries, photos, e-mail and satellite phone calls.

"Traditionally, as teachers we are limited to what we can do in the classroom with books, but with this opportunity, students will feel as if they are in the Bahamas, too, through the photos and video I provide," said Russell, whose trip was funded by a community grant from HSBC Bank.

In addition to cultivating an interest in biology and the life sciences, this experience also exposed students to new technology as they communicate with Russell using the Internet and a satellite phone.

"To be competitive in this world, and to truly master 21st-century technical skills, it is really important that students start learning them even at this young age," said Russell.

Cook Elementary Principal LaPaul Shelton said Russell's trip is a good way to demonstrate to students how technology and learning go hand in hand.

*Follow the scientific adventures of Russell and her second graders at Cook Elementary online at: [www.earthwatch2.org/LFF/russell/](http://www.earthwatch2.org/LFF/russell/)*



Above, teacher Courtney Russell works on the computer with student Dwayne Chester at Cook Elementary School. At right, Russell works with students, from left, Dwayne Chester, Thurston Howells and Kasai Price.

PHOTOS: REBA SALDANHA





# 21<sup>st</sup> Century scholars find home at N.E. colleges

BY MEAGHAN CASEY

Atlanta Public Schools alum Fatoumatta Kunjo was eager to uproot and move north. “I’m a big advocate of stepping out of your comfort zone,” said the junior, who attends Bowdoin College in Brunswick, Maine. “There’s so much to experience and so much to give back outside of our immediate communities.”

Born and raised in Gambia in Western Africa, Kunjo moved to the United States as a 10th-grade student. She enrolled in Therrell High School and was selected as an inaugural member of the 21st Century Atlanta Scholars program.

Founded during the 2005-2006 school year, the program helps high-potential, economically challenged students attend smaller private colleges in New England — known as the Little Ivies — with the support of generous, merit-based financial aid packages. It was created under the leadership of Graham Balch of Boston Consulting Group, after a conversation with APS Superintendent Dr. Beverly L. Hall regarding higher education opportunities for students. Balch, a graduate of Middlebury College in Vermont, is currently a Teach For America science instructor at Grady High School.

“Top students deserve options, and should be given the ability to choose among different and prestigious colleges, all of which provide comprehensive scholarships without loans,” said program coordinator Emmanuella Revolus.

The 21st Century Atlanta Scholars program taps students in the top 10 percent of their graduating class at the New Schools at Carver, South Atlanta High School Educational Complex, Maynard Holbrook Jackson High School (formerly Southside), D.M. Therrell Educational Complex and Booker T. Washington High School. The program provides intensive training in essay writing, interviewing and applying for financial aid. School visits and application fees also are covered.

To date, 14 APS graduates have earned more than \$2.8 million in scholarships and grants from Amherst, Bowdoin, Colby, Hamilton, Hampshire, Middlebury, Tufts, Holy Cross and other small colleges.

“For most, the exposure to these colleges has been both a culture and a climate shock,” said APS Superintendent Dr. Beverly L. Hall. “Our students come from a city with a moderate winter and a large concentration of African-Americans — almost a complete reversal of the Northeast landscape. Therefore, I knew we had to prepare students in more ways than one.”

To ease the transition, scholars meet twice a month with designated mentors. They also attend an in-state college readiness retreat and a five-week summer session at Phillips Academy in Exeter, N.H. Support continues throughout the four-year college experience, including summer internships within the APS Center for Learning and Leadership.

“It’s a wonderful opportunity for any student to reach his or her full potential,” said Dr. Thelma Mumford-Glover, assistant to the superintendent. “We have the obligation to encourage them to attend these schools, if it’s a good match.”

Kunjo applied and was accepted to most of the seven 21st Century Atlanta Scholars top-tier colleges. She visited Bowdoin three times before making her final decision.

“Bowdoin felt right,” said Kunjo, a history major with a concentration in African studies. “All of the schools are great academically, but after visiting and talking to the professors, I knew. It was definitely the right choice for me. I can’t imagine the experience being any better.”

Kunjo plans to earn her doctorate, then do research, write and teach at a college. Before pursuing graduate school, she wants to teach English in the Middle East.

At Bowdoin, Kunjo founded the African Alliance, an organization designed to promote and encourage cultural and intellectual education about Africa. Working with the college’s African Studies Department, the alliance is active in fundraising for non-profits, airing documentaries and creating awareness about African culture. She also is involved in intramural soccer, the College Democrats and Students of Peace. This year, Kunjo was awarded Bowdoin’s Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship and had the opportunity to dedicate her summer to research with a faculty mentor.

In the summer of 2007, Kunjo spent a month in Ghana, volunteering and teaching. Next year she will study abroad in London. Beyond the financial benefits of the program, she credits the ongoing personal support for her collegiate success.

Hampshire College sophomore Justin Moore agrees. “My mentor, the coordinators — they call, e-mail, send care packages,” he said. “It’s good to have a group of people who support you in what you want to do.”

The Therrell High School graduate applied to 28 colleges and was accepted to 25. Moore wanted to attend a small, liberal arts school that would help shape his career path.

“I can mold my education[al] path into what I want it to be,” said Moore, a pre-med student who hopes to pursue a career in neuroscience. “This semester, I’m taking a course in brain plasticity. I have that option to take the classes that really interest me.”

Moore admits the regional differences are strong at Hampshire. “I couldn’t get used to the food,” he said, laughing. “I think I lost 10 pounds.” But the similarities, such as ambition and focus, outweigh any differences.

“Everybody’s on the same level, trying to learn and get something done,” he said. “It’s easy to build relationships.”

Atlanta Scholar Chantia Harper, a freshman at Middlebury College in Middlebury, Vt., adds that the adjustment can be a healthy challenge.

“Think about how much of a risk (President-elect) Barack Obama took, going to Columbia and then Harvard,” she said. “He just keeps pushing on. Once you get that foot in the door, you can do anything and become anyone.”

Harper, who moved to Atlanta at age 6, is a graduate of the Carver School of Entrepreneurship. Born in Michigan, she is no stranger to a cold climate. Even so, Harper admits she gave no thought to the prospect of moving north before the 21st Century Atlanta Scholars program made that option available.

“I didn’t have the slightest clue as far as applying for schools out of state,” she said. “It was also a pretty far-fetched goal for my family. My mother’s a single parent, and I’m the oldest of four kids, so we were looking at what would be affordable.”

In her freshman year, Harper is thrilled with her choice.

“I really love Middlebury’s environment,” she said. “It’s a very warm community. Class sizes are small, so you’re not just a number. I moved around a lot when I was younger, so



**JUSTIN MOORE**  
Hampshire College



**FATOUMATTA KUNJO**  
Bowdoin College



**CHANTIA HARPER**  
Middlebury College

the sense of belonging to a community was really important to me.”

Harper is considering a major in theatre. The freshman loves the arts and already is involved in Middlebury’s drama productions.

“They’ve really blossomed,” said Mumford-Glover. “We’ve prepared them well, and all of the students who have accepted the challenge have worked hard and excelled.”

For more information about the 21st Century Atlanta Scholars program, e-mail program coordinator Emmanuella Revolus at [erevolus@atlantapublicschools.us](mailto:erevolus@atlantapublicschools.us).



# Picturing America

## Classic works of art on display at M. Agnes Jones

BY CAITLIN BOWLER

On a recent afternoon, arts teacher Raymond Veon led students at M. Agnes Jones Elementary School in a discussion of “the journey” in American life. They studied James Karale’s photograph of the 1965 Selma-to-Montgomery march for voting rights, which documents the physical qualities of African-Americans’ struggle to meet an objective. The image captures the simplicity of men and women walking as well as the drama of their 54-mile journey for change.

The discussion turned more conceptual as Veon and the students considered Jacob Lawrence’s “Migration of the Negro, Panel No. 57,” which uses simple forms and powerful abstract composition to depict an African-American woman at work with her mop. The piece is part of a series that documents African-Americans’ journey from slavery to the 20th century.

Finally, discussion turned to Martin Puryear’s “Ladder for Booker T. Washington,” in which a wooden ladder suspended in space zigs and zags toward the sky.

While Veon’s classroom overflows with colorful student artwork, these three images have special significance to him and the students. Each high-quality laminate print was provided through Picturing America, a program developed by the National Endowment for the Humanities and distributed in collaboration with the American Library Association.

The Picturing America package, which was given to each of APS’ 87 schools, contains 48 high-quality prints. Organizers selected works that have become iconic — such as Karale’s photograph of the march — and pieces that capture the American spirit, such as Joseph Stella’s painting of the Brooklyn Bridge.

“The kit contains great images that will be useful to teachers in various disciplines throughout the district,” said Veon, recipient of the 2007-2008 Arts Educator of the Year award. “The images are multi-faceted and elicit great responses from students.”

In addition to the reproductions, the Picturing America kit also includes a teachers’ resource book that provides background information on the artists, the individual works and the historical context in which each was produced.

Cynthia Terry, fine arts director for APS, secured the pieces for the entire district through a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities. Any teacher in APS, regardless of discipline, can use the materials.

“Teachers can juxtapose different works in ways that supplement lessons or discussions a particular class may be engaged in,” said Veon. “It offers teachers the opportunity to weave narrative connections between historic events and concepts that might not be revealed from texts alone.”

*A collection of paintings by M. Agnes Jones students is on display at the State Russian Museum in St. Petersburg, Russia. M. Agnes Jones is the only school in the United States to be included in the exhibit called “My Favorite Museum.”*

**Background:** Artist Martin Puryear’s “Ladder for Booker T. Washington” was one of the works selected by arts teacher Raymond Veon from the Picturing America collection for M. Agnes Jones Elementary School students to study.



M. Agnes Jones Elementary School Arts teacher Raymond Veon discusses an assignment with his students.



# Art is ALIVE



At left, North Atlanta High School drama students, from left, Aurora Martinez, Ramon Harris and Danielle Galloway perform a scene from the one-act play “The First Time Club.” Clockwise from top right, North Atlanta High School dance students Alex Castellanos and Zoe Malloine; North Adanta High mariachi trumpeteer Estefani Ignacio; arts program coordinator Reginald Colbert in theatre wing; student violinists Sarah McCauley, left, and Jenna Bhaloo practice with orchestra during class; and Cheronda Brown plays the piano during class.

PHOTOS: REBA SALDANHA



## North Atlanta High trains students to pursue their creative dreams

Atlanta Public Schools graduates are busy pursuing their passion for music at such prestigious institutions as the Juilliard School, the New England Conservatory and the Savannah College of Art and Design.

Familiar faces also grace Broadway stages and Hollywood films. Reaching that level of success involved learning the basics at North Atlanta High School’s Center for the Arts.

“The arts are crucial in the life of teens in today’s society,” said arts program coordinator Reginald Colbert, who seems to have a limitless supply of energy. “Training in the arts affords students the opportunity to develop character, self-discipline and

their artistic talents. The key is repetition. Practice, practice, practice — and the end result is a beautiful, flawless performance.”

The Center for the Arts program offers concentrated study that prepares young talent for career achievement. Students can choose from a wide range of offerings, including studio art, concert, jazz and marching bands, orchestra and chamber music, chorus and voice, guitar, piano, theatrical plays, musicals, drama, technology and dance.

Interdisciplinary, collaborative student projects are designed to stimulate artistic problem solving and creative growth. Classes may infuse visual art with

mathematics, or drama with language arts. Professional equipment and recording software in the classrooms give students hands-on, industry-level experience.

But artistic enrichment isn’t confined to the classroom. Learning is further enhanced through study-travel tours to New York and Europe, as well as special visits to stages and galleries in the Atlanta area. Recent graduate Jazmia Battle attended the Debbie Allen Dance Program in Los Angeles and sophomore Donald Brown attended the Tony Awards in New York.

Colbert also has fostered relationships with well-known artistic organizations. This year, the Center hosted Juilliard’s summer jazz residency program. As a

Creating Pride arts school participant, North Atlanta students attend activities designed to ignite their creativity, such as collaborations with the Georgia State University Center for Educational Partnerships in Music, the Atlanta Ballet Centre for Dance Education and the Department for Theater Studies at Emory University.

This month, a panel of music industry producers and artists visited with students as part of the Grammy Foundation’s Grammy in the Schools program.

“Atlanta is a mecca for the arts in the South,” said Colbert. “The training ground is here for kids to aspire and realize their dreams.”



# Education is a family affair in Atlanta



Kindergartener Lizabeth Cruz and her mother, Juana, participate in the Hispanic Heritage Celebration at Bolton Academy.

## Parents play crucial role

By MEAGHAN CASEY

At Bolton Academy, Principal Laura Strickling understands the importance of building a strong connection between home and school.

“It is critical that all schools foster relationships that make parents feel welcome,” Strickling said. “Research shows that students whose parents are actively involved in their education perform at higher levels. When parents visit the school to have lunch with their children, to read with them, to assist in the classroom with support tasks, to attend festivals and events or to meet with their child’s teacher, they communicate to their child that education is important, and that it is a priority.”

A strong home-school bond also reinforces teaching principles in place at Bolton Academy, which is an International Baccalaureate candidate school. IB schools focus on helping students develop intellectual and social skills necessary to live and work in a rapidly globalizing world. Earlier this fall, parents assisted with classroom banners related to various IB themes, such as taking risks and communicating well.

“Parents are responsible for continuing the thread of learning from school to home,” said Beth Hamilton, PTA president at Bolton Academy. “By continuing discussions outside of the classroom, a child incorporates subject matter into his daily life, which takes the effort out of structured learning.”

Nearly one-third of the students at Bolton Academy are Hispanic Americans, so communicating with parents means ensuring that language is not a barrier. Strickling said a Spanish translator attends every parent meeting. All notices sent to parents are translated into Spanish. Parents

also are regularly invited to the school to assist with school-wide events and initiatives.

Parent Teacher Association meetings are held four times a year, and all parents are welcome to attend. “The best strategy, however, has been the PTA’s commitment to providing parents with relevant information,” said Strickling. “Parents are more likely to attend school meetings if they know that their time is valued and that they can consistently depend on leaving an event armed with good information related to their children’s education.”

The PTA also sponsors and hosts three family-centered events during the school year — the Fall Festival, Family Bingo Night and Drop Everything and Read Night.

Bolton’s kindergarten team also organizes a Hispanic Heritage Celebration in October to recognize Hispanic Heritage Month. This year’s event featured bilingual story time, a piñata game and a potluck lunch provided by parents.

“The potluck event continues to be an ideal way to culminate students’ learning and to celebrate not only the Latin culture but also friendships and community,” said Strickling. “The event itself has become a favorite for our families and students for the obvious reasons, but it is always my hope that cultural activities like this one help to foster our increased parent involvement and a deeper connection to the school community for everyone who attends.”

Parent Juana Cruz said the event helps Hispanic students preserve family traditions. “This gives kids memories of our culture.”

Parents also will be invited to participate in Bolton’s annual Cinco de Mayo party in May.

## Tip\$ on \$aving from a parent

Stacy Warrior Williams’ daughter, Alexis, is in the third grade at R.N. Fickett Elementary School. Like many parents, she is constantly seeking ways to save money. Williams offered tips for others to do the same:

- 1. Clip coupons:** My husband calls me the “Coupon Queen.” We purchase the Sunday newspaper weekly for the coupons. We generally save \$10-\$25 during weekly grocery shopping trips. Sometimes, I will find coupons for restaurants that we enjoy.
- 2. Plan meals:** Every week I go through supermarket sales ads and this pretty much determines what meals will be prepared for the upcoming week. I make the grocery list and stick to it.
- 3. Buy store brands:** I like Publix brand foods as an alternative to name-brand items; they are usually cheaper than the name brands.
- 4. Plan lunches:** I have become more consistent with bringing my lunch to work instead of going out to purchase a meal. I find that I enjoy leftovers from the previous night’s dinner and I save approximately \$30-\$40 per week.
- 5. Buy in bulk:** My two sisters and I have invested in a BJ’s Warehouse membership to save money. We buy food and toiletry items in bulk and then split the items up. This has been a savings for us all.
- 6. Shop around for gasoline:** Gas prices tend to vary from station to station. We make an effort to notice gas prices as we travel our routes to and from home. We don’t just pull into any station to get gas. This can save money as well.

**7. Eliminate emotional spending:** When we shop for clothes, I always make a list before heading to the stores and work hard to stick to the list. We go for what we need, and I buy clothes out of season in order to get excellent quality at sale prices.

**8. Stock up on school supplies:** Before school starts, especially during the tax-free holiday when certain items are usually priced pretty low, I try to stock up on basic items that Alexis will need throughout the year: notebook paper, pencils, folders, glue, etc. Throughout the school year, I monitor the sales ads and purchase these basics as I see them.

*Williams works full-time for the Minority Whip of the Georgia House of Representatives. She and her husband, Chuck, have been married for 13 years. They live in the Ben Hill community in southwest Atlanta, where they both grew up.*

## Community Fireside Chats

Atlanta Public Schools believes the entire community plays a role in enriching the lives of young people. For this reason, Superintendent Dr. Beverly L. Hall hosts Community Fireside Chats throughout the year. During the chats, members of the community receive district updates and are given the opportunity to provide feedback to the leadership team. The chats rotate to schools throughout the district and are held on week nights. The first chat of 2008-09 was held at Fickett Elementary in October.

### FIRESIDE CHATS SCHEDULE:

**School Reform Team (SRT) 4**  
Wednesday, Dec. 3, 6:30-8:30 p.m.  
Bolton Academy

**SRT 3**  
Monday, Jan. 26, 6:30-8:30 p.m.  
C.W. Hill Elementary School

**SRT 2**  
Monday, Feb. 23, 6:30-8:30 p.m.  
Walter L. Parks Middle School



# Reading is elementary at Beecher Hills

## Support from Kroger makes new BHS Reading Club a success

BY LINDSAY COLEMAN

Since the beginning of this school year, Schontal McClary has been a very busy woman. In addition to her normal curriculum



Teacher Schontal McClary launched the BHS Reading Club this year.

as a fourth-grade science and language arts teacher at Beecher Hills Elementary School, McClary has launched the BHS Reading Club — a literary initiative she hopes will eventually spread to all Atlanta Public Schools.

The club — comprised of third, fourth and fifth graders — has already

achieved remarkable success. With the help of some parents and faculty members, the club is now involved in several activities that not only foster a love of reading, but also tap local resources for support.

Kroger, one of the nation's largest grocery retailers, donated 600 books to help build classroom libraries. McClary worked with the Reading Tree to secure the Kroger partnership. The nonprofit organization has donated more than one million children's books throughout the country, and more than 21,000 books in Georgia alone.



Beecher Hills Elementary School's reading club thanks Kroger for its donation of books.

"Our work would not be possible if it weren't for companies like Kroger that support our mission" said Demetria White, marketing manager for the Reading Tree in Atlanta.

The BHS Reading Club also has established partnerships with other businesses, including Blockbuster. The Southwest Regional Library has even set up book

donation bins. Donations are divided among classrooms.

McClary already has 10 pages of sign-out requests for classroom books, and she said teachers regularly express gratitude for the increased involvement and oversight they now have in student reading activities.

"The classroom libraries provide a variety of books at different reading levels and

genres," said McClary. "This gives students a choice in what they read."

As classroom libraries grow, so does the BHS Reading Club, which meets after school for an hour every other week. The club now includes approximately 35 students, who receive homework assignments to help develop reading strategies. Reading club members also take time during the school day to read to younger students at the school. Eventually, that volunteer effort will expand beyond Beecher Hills to include community activities, such as reading at homeless shelters during the holidays and competing in the countywide reading bowl.

The school and the PTA also hosted a reading night, during which students dressed up as different book characters and read. An in-house reading bowl will take place in December.

On Oct. 29, Kroger staff visited Beecher Hills to talk to students about the importance of literacy.

"Kroger is excited to partner with Reading Tree and the community to improve the quality of education," said Glynn Jenkins, director of communications and public relations for Kroger's Atlanta division.

"Through our partnership, we have provided several thousands of books for children in the community and at local area schools, and are proud to participate in a book donation to Beecher Hills Elementary."

## Q & A

## What parents should know about immunizations

**Q** Why should my child get immunized?

**A** Georgia law requires that all children attending school get immunized. The Georgia Department of Human Resources Form 3231, an immunization certificate, must be on file at your child's school. The state makes some exceptions, primarily for medical or religious reasons.

**Q** What shots are required?

**A** Diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, hepatitis B, polio, measles, mumps, rubella, and varicella (chicken pox) are required for any student entering school for the first time or returning after 12 months away from school. Georgia also requires

students in sixth grade or above to receive two doses of measles vaccine, two doses of mumps vaccine, and one dose of rubella vaccine, or provide laboratory proof of immunity against each. Also, students must have two doses of varicella (chicken pox) vaccine or documentation of disease or laboratory proof of immunity.

**Q** What happens if my child doesn't have those shots?

**A** "Atlanta Public Schools focuses on educating our children," said Jayketa Singleton, director of health services for Atlanta Public Schools. "To do that, we need students in the classroom." But the Fulton County Health Department notes that children who have not been immunized may be excluded from school at any time. Also, friends and family members are at risk for

disease when students have not been immunized.

**Q** Are these shots safe?

**A** Serious side effects are rare, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. A slight fever, rash or soreness at the injection site are not uncommon. Call the doctor if your child shows a severe or persistent reaction to the shots.

**Q** Are the shots expensive?

**A** Single-dose shots cost \$8, while multiples such as measles, mumps and rubella cost \$10 at the Fulton County health department clinics. County

residents are charged a sliding fee based on income and family size. A federal program called Vaccines for Children covers the cost for children who are uninsured or enrolled in Medicaid.



**Where do I get these shots?**

Ask your family doctor. Or visit one of the 12 Fulton County health department clinics in metro Atlanta. Each location is accessible by MARTA, and some offer late hours.

*Visit the following sites for more information:*

**Atlanta Public Schools**  
atlantapublicschools.us

**Fulton County Dept. of Health and Wellness**  
www.fultoncountygga.gov/county/health

**Centers for Disease Control and Prevention**  
cdc.gov/vaccines/

**Georgia Department of Education**  
www.doe.k12.ga.us



# Family ties

## Miles School principal carries on tradition of educating Atlanta youth

Children inherit many things from their parents, from eye color to personality traits. Christopher Estes inherited a passion for education. “My mom helped guide me in the direction of teaching,” he said. “She told me, ‘They need young men in education.’”

Estes, a principal at Miles Elementary School, is the son of long-time educators devoted to Atlanta Public Schools. Sydney, his late father, was an elementary school teacher, a principal and, finally, assistant superintendent — a position he held for 15 years before retiring in the mid-1980s. He also worked at Clark Atlanta University. Estes’ mother, Barbara, is a retired teacher who spent more than three decades in APS classrooms.

Originally from Atlantic City, N.J., she taught for two years in Hampton, Va., and four years in Baltimore Public Schools.

“I always knew I wanted to be a teacher,” she said. “Even in first grade, I knew. I pursued that vigorously.”

Barbara Estes moved to Atlanta in 1971 and

taught in the metro area for six months before taking a five-year leave to raise her children. She launched her APS career in 1978, teaching at Continental Colony and West Manor elementary schools, retiring last year.

Christopher Estes, an Atlanta native, attended Warren T. Jackson Elementary, Sutton Middle School and Benjamin E. Mays High School.

“Atlanta Public Schools is what I know,” he said. “I went here; I worked here in the summer months during high school. I always wanted to come back home. I’m invested in this district.”

After earning his degree from North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University in 1996, Estes spent two years teaching fourth grade at C.M. Pitts Elementary School. He then moved to Lucas O.

Kimberly Elementary for four years.

“I was very pleased that he opted to go that way,” Estes said of her son. “I saw he had a certain affinity for young people. They gravitated to him. He’s just such a people person and has a wonderful sense of humor.”

Christopher Estes served as executive assistant principal at Sammie E. Coan Middle School for a year, dean of academics at Dunbar Elementary School for two

years, and assistant principal at Long Middle School for a year. He is in his second year as principal at Miles.

“I enjoy interacting with my students day to day,” Estes said. “Miles has a very good group of eager students with a desire to learn, and a seasoned team of teachers with various talents and abilities. One of the new challenges as principal is taking on many roles — working with central office, reaching out to community members, bringing in outside opportunities. You just have to keep your core values and remember the skills you learned in the classroom.”

He also has worked to maintain the core values and lessons his parents taught him.

“One thing my mother taught me was, ‘Don’t lose your cool,’” he said. “She encouraged me to really be patient and get to know my students.”

Both educators continue to learn from each other, swapping stories and sharing experiences. Barbara Estes still serves the district as a substitute teacher, and has even worked at Miles.

“We have a wonderful relationship,” said Estes. “She’s very supportive of me, always there as a sounding board.”

Miles Elementary School Principal Christopher Estes has a laugh with his mother, Barbara, a retired APS teacher.

PHOTO: SCOTT KING





# JROTC cadet receives Legion of Valor Bronze Cross

By RICH FAHEY

Retired Army Maj. Larry Sparks vividly remembers the day he was approached by a petite freshman with a squeaky voice. At the time, Carmen Reeves needed his approval to add JROTC to her schedule at Mays High School. Instead, he issued an order.

"I said there was a parents night that very night for first-year JROTC students, and she had to come," said Sparks. "She showed up that night with her grandmother, and she never looked back. Now she's a model for this program."

The Mays senior was recently awarded the Legion of Valor Bronze Cross for Achievement. It's the highest honor a cadet can receive on merit. Each year the Legion of Valor board selects only 10 cadets from the Sixth Brigade, comprised of JROTC programs at 240 high schools. Winning qualities include excellence in military and academic subjects, as well as good leadership skills.

The Legion of Valor Bronze Cross is one of many accolades for Reeves, who was one of just 145 students — out of 200,000 applicants — chosen to participate in a leadership program at historic U.S. Military

Academy at West Point. She also has attended a leadership seminar in Virginia.

Reeves, who in proper military fashion answers questions with a respectful "no, sir," or "yes, sir," said the hardest part of the JROTC program was preparing for the promotion boards that determine rank. Reeves added that she has received many benefits from the program.

"JROTC has made me a better leader and more respectful of others," she said. "It has also helped me to manage my time more efficiently."

Reeves hopes to attend a four-year college and major in mass communications, but her military career could continue if she is able to win an appointment to West Point.

Reeves' success proves that you don't have to be large in stature to be an excellent cadet and a strong leader, Sparks said.

The busy Mays senior maintains a full schedule. In addition to JROTC, Reeves is co-captain of the drill team, runs track, plays softball and serves on the yearbook staff.

"She is very disciplined and intrinsically motivated," said Dione Simon, assistant principal of Mays High. "This classy young lady is a great representative of the school."



Mays High School Senior Carmen Reeves received the Legion of Valor Bronze Cross for Achievement, the highest honor a JROTC cadet can receive on merit.

## Class of 2008 college acceptances

*The APS class of 2008 received more than \$64 million in scholarship offers. Here is a sampling of colleges and universities APS students are attending:*

- Alabama A&M University
- Alabama State University
- Albany State University
- Amherst College
- Agnes Scott College
- The Art Institute of Atlanta
- Atlanta Metropolitan College
- Atlanta Technical College
- Auburn University at Alabama
- Augusta State University
- Averett University
- Barry University
- Bauder College
- Beloit College
- Benedict College
- Bethune-Cookman College
- Boston University
- Bowling Green State University
- Bowdoin College
- Brandeis University
- Brenau University
- Brigham Young University
- Brown University
- Carnegie Mellon University
- Clayton College & State University
- Clark Atlanta University
- Colgate University
- College of Charleston
- College of the Holy Cross
- Columbia University
- Columbus State University
- Copiah-Lincoln CC
- Cornell University
- Dartmouth College
- Daytona Beach CC
- Delaware Valley College
- Dillard University
- Drexel University
- Duke University
- East Georgia College
- Eckerd College
- Edward Waters College
- Elon College
- Emmanuel College
- Emory University
- Florida A&M University
- Fort Valley State University
- Georgetown University
- Georgia Perimeter College
- Georgia Southern University
- Georgia Southwestern State University
- Georgia State University
- Grambling State University
- Grand Canyon University
- Gordon College
- Guilford College
- College of the Holy Cross
- Hamilton University
- Hampshire College
- Hampton University
- Harvard University
- Howard University
- Johnson C. Smith University
- Kennesaw State University
- Kenyon College
- Lincoln University
- Macon State College
- Mary Baldwin College
- Mass. Institute of Technology (MIT)
- Middle Georgia College
- Middle Tennessee State
- Middlebury College
- Miles College
- Morehouse College
- New York Film Academy
- Northeastern University
- Northwestern University
- Oberlin College
- Oglethorpe University
- Ohio Wesleyan University
- Oxford College
- Paine College
- Piedmont College
- Princeton University
- Reed College
- Saint Joseph's College
- Savannah State University
- Sewanee University of the South
- Shorter College
- South Carolina State University
- Southern University
- Southern Wesleyan University
- Spelman College
- Stanford University
- State University of West Georgia
- Syracuse University
- Talladega College
- Temple University
- Tennessee State University
- Tennessee Technological University
- Trinity University
- Tsing Hua University-China
- Tuskegee University
- Union College
- United States Air Force Academy
- University of Cairo-Egypt
- University of California, LA
- University of Colorado
- University of Georgia
- University of Kentucky
- University of Michigan
- University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill
- University of Notre Dame
- University of Phoenix
- University of Southern California
- Vanderbilt University
- Valdosta State University
- Wesleyan College
- Western Kentucky University
- Western Michigan University
- Wheaton College
- Winthrop University
- Yale University





Alfred Blalock Elementary principal Dr. Frances Thompson helps students, Qualencia Wiggles, left, and Yusef J. Skinner during science class.

# Blalock students score in science

BY CAITLIN BOWLER

Atlanta Public Schools' approach to academic success resembles the Japanese philosophy of "kaizen," which focuses on continuous, small-scale improvements on a regular basis. At Alfred Blalock Elementary, this method has created new energy and excitement. It also has delivered results.

During the past five years, teachers, administrators and students have worked to execute a dramatic turnaround in academic performance. As a result, students not only earned high Criterion-Referenced Competency Test (CRCT) scores in reading and math during the 2007-08 school year, but Blalock fifth graders also improved their average science scores by 75 points. An impressive 60 percent exceeded state standards for science — the biggest improvement among APS schools.

Those gains can be attributed to hard work and students' commitment to learning. Tamara Cotman, executive director of School Reform Team 4, also attributes some of the success to Blalock's principal, Dr. Frances Thompson.

"Success at Blalock came in part from Dr. Thompson's strength

and courage to take on significant challenges," said Cotman. "She really values instruction and appreciates the far-reaching impact that good instruction can have on students at all levels. Her support of her teachers' development in the classroom has been instrumental."

"Under the leadership of Superintendent Dr. Beverly Hall and Executive Director Tamara Cotman, we share the same vision, 'one goal, one focus...student success,'" said Thompson. "Blalock's staff strives to provide quality instruction that empowers students to perform at the highest level of their academic ability."

Working closely with instructors, Thompson adjusted academic targets on a regular basis. The school set goals for improvement at both ends of the spectrum. Teachers helped analyze data along with administrators, which allowed everyone to respond quickly.

"We know the students so well that we can identify individual

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Success at Blalock came in part from Dr. Thompson's strength and courage to take on significant challenges.

**Tamara Cotman**  
SRT 4 Executive Director

students from aggregated data and find ways to help them, whether it's just reviewing certain material or working with them on fundamentals," said Cotman.

"There are no silver bullets when it comes to public schools," she said. "But we've fostered a culture that is breeding success. In this school, there are a lot of people who believe that success is possible for each student regardless of his or her background. They simply believe every child can learn. It starts at the top."

If they continue the trend, Blalock students should post even higher scores this school year.

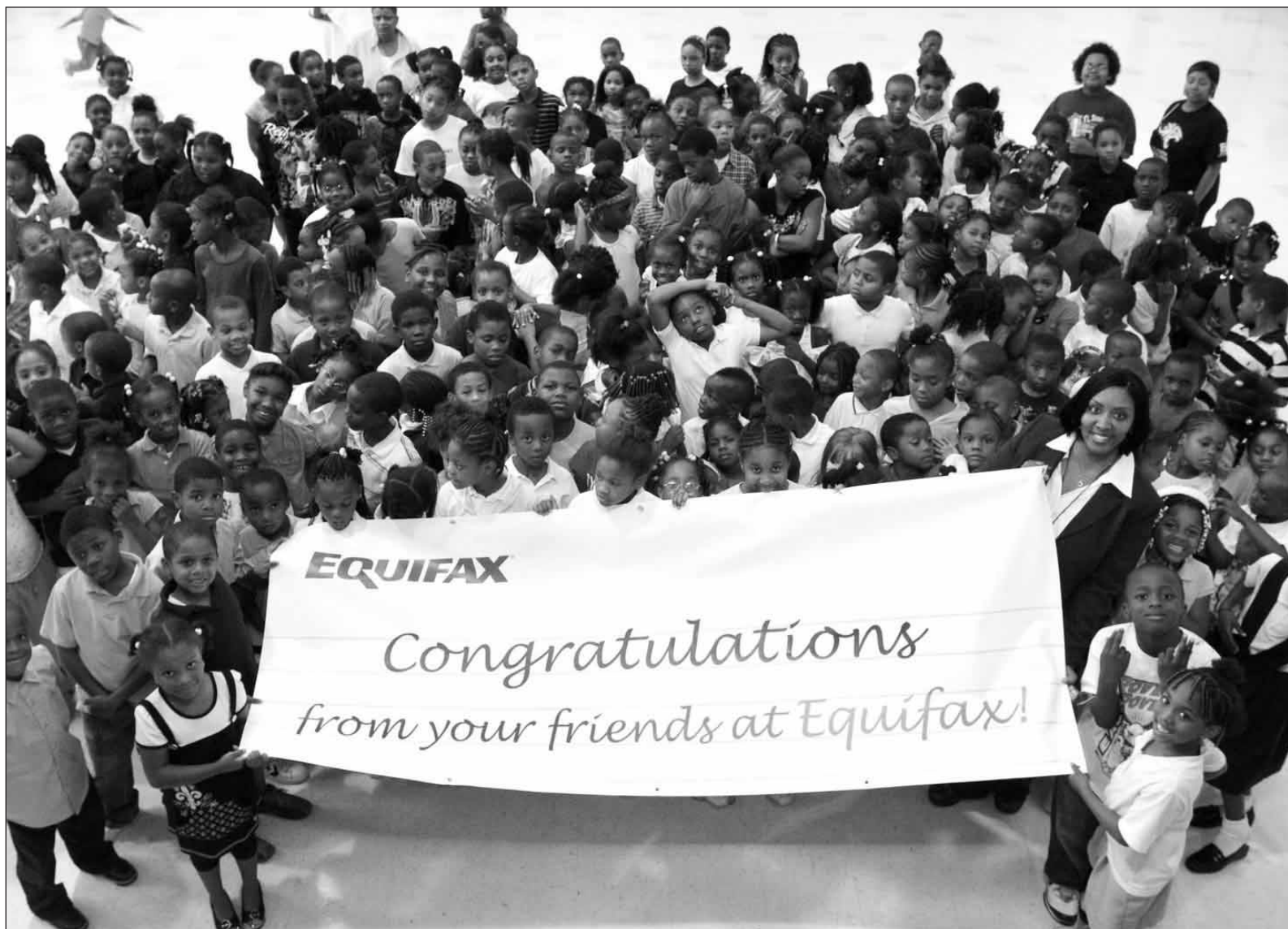
"I'm incredibly proud of the work they've done and the work they'll continue to do.

They're committed to beating the odds," said Cotman. "In the bigger picture, this is about so much more than scores. By giving them a quality education, we're equipping them with the skills they need to start a whole new story."

**REASON TO BE PROUD OF APS: Using in-depth academic and social services, Project GRAD is turning around schools once labeled lowest performing.**



# Atlanta celebrates Blue Ribbon Schools



F.L. Stanton Elementary School was honored as a National Blue Ribbon School this year.

## F.L. Stanton the latest to be honored by U.S. Education Dept.

It's been a good year for F.L. Stanton Elementary, which has been named a National Blue Ribbon School by the U.S. Department of Education.

Each year, the department recognizes schools that show academic excellence or dramatic gains in student achievement. Stanton was one of only 324 schools to receive that designation this year.

"It's awesome, the best feeling ever," said Dr. Marlo Barber, who has been principal at Stanton for six years. "Last year, we were named a Georgia School of Excellence, and we have been working to get to that point. That and the Blue Ribbon designation are a wonderful validation that we're doing it right."

But Barber said there is no secret to Stanton's success. The school simply uses data and technology to improve instruction and professional development.

"The data showed us that our kids were meeting expectations, but not a lot were exceeding them," Barber said. "We looked at the data, analyzed it and realized you can't teach everybody the same way."

One of the strategies employed at Stanton, as part of the school reform model, is differentiated instruction. This approach gives students multiple learning options. It also requires teachers to be flexible in their approach, adjusting the curriculum rather than expecting students to modify themselves for the curriculum, according to Dr. Tracey Hall, senior research scientist at the National Center on Accessing the General Curriculum.

Technology-based and project-based learning also are key initiatives at Stanton. "Students learn better through technology," Barber said. "It helps them stay in touch with real-world situations.

They apply what they learn in the classroom to the real world."

Also, classroom instruction isn't limited to students at Stanton. A comprehensive professional development program allows teachers to stay ahead of the curve on current trends. This year's focus is professional development in math and science.

"Atlanta Public Schools trains us this way," said Barber, a former teacher and assistant principal at Grove Park Elementary. "Based on research, they tell us what we need to do for professional development, and we come back and implement it."

Prior to becoming principal at Stanton, Barber ran the summer school program for four years, so she is very familiar with the staff, students and community.

But when she arrived at the school, Barber probably could not have imagined a day when she would travel to Washington, D.C.,

## Eight schools recognized

For the past 26 years, the U.S. Department of Education has recognized schools that make significant progress in closing the achievement gap or helping students achieve at very high levels.

Fewer than 400 schools receive the prestigious National Blue Ribbon School designation each year. The department has chosen eight APS schools for this honor in the past 13 years: F.L. Stanton Elementary (2008), Venetian Hills Elementary (2007), Capitol View Elementary (2004), Brandon Elementary (2003), Jackson Elementary (2001), Smith Elementary (1998), Inman Middle School (1997) and Bunche Middle School (1995).

"These Blue Ribbon Schools are examples of what teachers and students can achieve," said U.S. Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings. "Now our challenge is to help other schools follow their lead by continuing to measure progress through No Child Left Behind, and by using the knowledge we've gained to replicate effective strategies and help every student improve."

But success comes with certain expectations. APS principals at Blue Ribbon schools say the bar for achievement is set higher each year.

"Being named a National Blue Ribbon School is such an honor; it is the ultimate validation of what we do every day," said Jackson Elementary Principal Dr. Lorraine B. Reich.

"Because of this recognition, however, our school does feel pressure to maintain the highest of academic standards. It is a challenge, but one we welcome. Technology improves every day, and best practices for teaching are defined and refined every year. We have to continue to grow and learn. To whom much is given, much is expected."

Brandon Elementary Principal Karen M. Evans adds, "The school culture and climate have changed over the past six years, but our track record of high academic achievement has remained constant. There is a true sense of pride and school spirit among the staff, students, parents and community due to the accolades given to Morris Brandon."



**Everyone is excited. Now the challenge is to stay there. We have an even higher standard we have to live up to now.**

**Dr. Marlo Barber  
F.L. Stanton principal**

with teacher Christi Giddens to accept the Blue Ribbon award.

"Everyone is excited," Barber said. "Now the challenge is to stay there. We have an even higher standard we have to live up to now."





Carver High School student Jobias McLester, right, runs in a cross country meet.

# Jobias McLester sets example for success

MCLESTER: From Page 1

There are 438 students in the School of Health Sciences and Research and about 1,200 students overall in Carver's four schools.

"Jobias has flourished in a smaller learning environment," Jones said. "He is a model citizen and an ambassador for our school."

Currently, McLester is ranked ninth in his graduating class and takes challenging courses, such as AP Psychology, AP Biology, economics, calculus, journalism and Spanish. He is captain of the chess club and cross country team; a member of the track and field team; he manages the school band; and he played football last year.

"I just try to stay focused," McLester said. "A lot of days, I'll run six miles, then go to band practice, so I try to make time for studying in between. I make sure my grades are where they need to be."

A leader among his peers, McLester joined six young men who founded a club called Ubuntu, which seeks to recreate bonds within the African-American male community. Group leaders recruit speakers,

organize events and design polo shirts for members.

In August of this year, Carver's unofficial ambassador became an APS ambassador when he took center stage at the annual State of the Schools address. McLester described his journey to an audience of 400 business, civic and community leaders.

"It was such a great opportunity. I was more excited than nervous," said McLester. "For me to come from where I did and to be standing up there, it touched me in so many ways. I wouldn't have imagined that in my lifetime. It just shows that if you put in the hard work, people will notice."

The student who originally struggled at Carver also has a new dream. McLester plans to attend college, where he hopes to pursue a degree in media production, journalism or sports medicine.

"Jobias is what's important to me about education," said Jones of his star pupil. "He is going to be an awesome African-American male who contributes to his family and society, and always does the right thing. He's always a true gentleman."

# Derrick Favors is ready for his next move

FAVORS: From Page 24

Reddick sees no reason to believe his star center won't be even better this year.

"With the work Derrick puts in, I expect he will keep progressing," said Reddick, who is in his 11th year at South Atlanta and also has coached a Mr. Georgia Basketball (Vincent Banks in 2003). "I'm sure he'll have an even greater season this year."

Favors and his South Atlanta teammates enter this season with something to prove, even after going 27-3 last year and being ranked No. 10 in the nation at one point. The Hornets lost to St. Benedict's of New Jersey, the top-ranked team in the country. Favors fouled out of that game, then South Atlanta dropped 1-point decisions in both the regional and state playoffs.

"We're pretty good this year," Favors said. "I think we're going to make it out of the first round."

By the time the playoffs roll around this year, Favors will have made one college program very happy. After months of being courted by a who's-who of college coaches, he narrowed his choices to the University of Georgia, Georgia Tech,

N.C. State and Memphis.

While he called the recruiting process fun, Favors and his coach look forward to the end.

"It can be a grind on a young man," Reddick said. "I told his mother in the ninth grade I would try to make his high school years as high-school-like as possible. The process has gone smoothly. The coaches have respected his privacy, and he's handled it in stride."

Favors credits his mother, D'Andra, for getting him involved in organized basketball when he was 10. And it pleases Favors to know that a college scholarship will make it easier financially, especially since he has a younger brother in elementary school and an older sister in college.

Favors and his teammates also are happy to be back home at South Atlanta, after spending the past two years across town at Luther Price Middle School while their school was being renovated.

"The community has been waiting for us to come back," Reddick said. "Everybody is very excited about this year."

With Derrick Favors in the middle, why wouldn't they be?

**“**  
Derrick is probably one of the most skilled big guys I've ever seen. He's mobile, agile and quick. He has the mental and physical ability and competitive drive and he's mature beyond his years. He's a special player.  
**Michael Reddick**  
*South Atlanta High coach*



Derrick Favors is the king of basketball in Atlanta.



## Elementary schools

### Adamsville Elementary

To promote lifelong readers and community engagement, Adamsville Elementary School has partnered with Children's Literature for Children (CLC) to introduce table teachers. Each week, volunteers read to small groups of students and encourage them to read every day.

### Beecher Hills Elementary

Thanks to input from faculty, Beecher Hills has been awarded a Laura Bush Foundation Grant. The money will help make Beecher's media center the best possible environment for students to learn, grow and develop a love for reading.

### Mary McLeod Bethune Elementary

Bethune Elementary has met its Adequate Yearly Progress goals for the sixth year in a row, earning the title of Distinguished Elementary School.

### Cascade Elementary

Now in its second year, the Farm 2 School Program offers students first-hand experience developing an organic garden. They use math and science skills to construct a garden bed, order soil, plant, weed and harvest the vegetables that they grow.

### E.L. Connally Elementary

Kindergarten teacher Katie Kross spent the summer outside of Mumbai, working with the India Study Abroad Center. She taught English to about 50 boys at an orphanage, and was excited to bring her experiences back to students at Connally.

### Continental Colony Elementary

Terry Montague, president & CEO of the Atlanta Beltline, Inc., was "Principal For a Day" at Continental Colony, shadowing Principal Sandra Sessoms. Montague toured the

school and was briefed on the school's achievements, enrollment and partnership opportunities.

### Deerwood Academy

Members of the Omega Psi Phi-Eta Omega Chapter returned for the second-annual Omega Manhood Leadership Institute. This mentoring program exposes young boys to speakers and field trips that ensure their success as college-bound African-American men.

### Margaret Fain Elementary

Wings of Eagles Dance Troop from Margaret Fain Elementary School entertained community leaders, faculty and staff during the Principal For A Day celebration lunch at the Omni Hotel.

### Richard N. Fickett Elementary

The Assistance League of Atlanta (ALA) delivered hundreds of new shirts, slacks, skirts, blouses, socks, undergarments, hygiene kits and shoe vouchers to Fickett Elementary. Their donations will benefit 16 APS schools. It's all part of Operation School Bell, in which 120 chapters of the National Assistance League donate clothing to school children throughout the country, including 175 schools in five metro Atlanta school systems.

### William M. Finch Elementary

Fifteen kindergarten students participated in the National Jump Start Read for the Record Program at the Hyatt Regency Atlanta. This program stresses early childhood education with a focus on reading.

### Alonzo F. Herndon Elementary

More than 160 Atlanta business, political and civic leaders learned what it's like to be "Principal for a Day," including Karen M. Kelly, director of exhibits at Imagine It Children's Museum. Kelly visited with excited students, faculty and staff at Herndon.



### M. Agnes Jones Elementary

More than 200 volunteers helped create a play area at M. Agnes Jones. The new Rams' Play Space, which comes through school fund-raising and a \$40,000 grant from KaBoom, features slides, swings and other fun equipment.

### Lucas O. Kimberly Elementary

During its PTA meeting on October 14th, Kimberly Elementary engaged parents and students in a One Academic Fair Workshop to help stimulate participation and increase the rigor of class projects. Parents learned about constructing projects, and collecting data. Students received a project board that they were expected to develop and present in the school's One Academic Fair.

### Leonora P. Miles Elementary

Miles was one of only 12 schools in the nation to receive the Trees for Success Tree Planting Award from the Home Depot and Arbor Day foundations. More than 40 volunteers from The Home Depot Foundation, Trees Atlanta and The National Arbor Day Foundation (NADF) converged to plant 43 trees during the Atlanta Trees for Success Event.

### Thomas Jefferson Perkeron Elementary

They were not old enough to vote in the real presidential election, but Perkeron students did cast a vote. They joined 17,000 students in 70 APS schools in a national mock election Oct. 30, choosing Democratic presidential candidate Barack

Obama over Republican rival John McCain by a margin of more than 17-to-1.

### Peyton Forest Elementary

Parents and students participated in various hands-on activities during the second annual Family Math, Science and Technology night. Students left with a renewed sense of excitement and parents learned new ways to help their children complete school assignments.

### Venetian Elementary

Georgia Gov. Sonny Perdue and State Superintendent of Schools Kathy Cox tapped 17 APS principals, including Clarietta Davis of Venetian Elementary, as 'High Performance' leaders. Her work was recognized based on the school demonstrating academic gains for three years in a row.

### West Manor Elementary

Students from West Manor participated in a summer jazz residency program conducted by the prestigious Julliard School of New York in partnership with North Atlanta High School's Center for the Arts.

## Middle Schools

### Brown Middle School

Brown Middle School participated in the Project GRAD rally held at Washington High School in October. The purpose of the rally is to encourage students to further their education beyond high school by enrolling in college.

### Bunche Middle School

Bunche is under new (student) leadership. Students elected eighth grader Chasity Evans as president of the Student Government Association. Under her leadership, the SGA has planned a restroom beautification project, a canned food drive and a "Pennies for Patients" campaign.

### Kennedy Middle School

Reaching back to help younger students is exactly what is happening between Bethune Elementary and Kennedy Middle Schools. Sixth-grade students from Kennedy tutor two to three kindergarteners or first graders at Bethune four days per week. Many of the tutors attended Bethune Elementary.

### Sylvan Middle School

The Computers for Youth program was instrumental in providing computers to each student at Sylvan, strengthening the home-school connection. Parents and students also received training on hardware, software and computer usage.

### Young Middle School

Students received training as School Wellness Ambassadors and will help promote good health. Ambassadors serve as hosts at health fairs, develop wellness bulletin boards and plant gardens.

## High Schools

### Frederick Douglass High School

The Four Seasons Hotel held an interactive career seminar and culinary demonstration for the Hospitality, Tourism & Marketing Small Learning Community at Frederick Douglass on Oct. 2. Students learned about the skills and knowledge needed to form a career in the luxury hotel industry. Students listened to a presentation on hotel management, operations, sales, marketing, business services, restaurant management, and culinary arts. In addition to learning about the history and operations of the Four Seasons, students also had a taste of the fine dining experience provided to guests of the hotel. Executive Chef Robert Gerstenecker prepared a delicious lobster chili dish and other delicacies that students helped to prepare and serve.

# IN THEIR OWN WORDS

## APS students discuss the 2008 election of Barack Obama as president of the United States.



Grady High School students Stephanie Styles, Michael Robinson, center, and Nick Miller.



Booker T. Washington High School students Sheraye Jenkins and Quamain Ducheine.

### PAUL ASHBY, SENIOR, NORTH ATLANTA HIGH:

"Barack Obama's victory is a symbol of progress. To me, as a black man, it means it's OK to be different. As African-Americans, it's OK to stick together as a group. But when you're running for president, it's OK to step out of that line — race or gender shouldn't hold you back."

### QUAMAIN DUCHEINE, SENIOR, BOOKER T. WASHINGTON HIGH:

"My grandmother's eyes started watering; then she started crying. She always knew the time would come. As a first-time voter, I'm also a part of history."

### SHERAYE JENKINS, JUNIOR, BOOKER T. WASHINGTON HIGH:

"[Obama] won, not because of the color of his skin but because he appeals to everyone."

### NICK MILLER, JUNIOR, GRADY HIGH:

"With Obama winning, there's definitely going to be a lot of change, and I'm actually excited to see what happens. Although he's not the candidate I would have picked for his policies, he does have a way of inspiring the majority of the country. I'm excited to see how much of his personal agenda he succeeds in completing."

### MIKE ROBINSON, SENIOR, GRADY HIGH:

"The U.S. has always prided itself as the land of opportunity, and this really shows that we are the land of opportunity. With the election of Barack Obama, anyone can truly achieve anything in the United States. That is not to say we don't have to make things fair, like the criminal justice system and the national debt, but no matter who you are, no matter what your skin color, you can make something of yourself in this country."

### STEPHANIE STYLES, JUNIOR, GRADY HIGH:

"I'm proud as an African-American and as a female. I was proud to see an African-American on the ticket, and I was proud to see a woman as vice president on the (McCain) ticket."



# ATLANTA DIRECTORY SCHOOLS

## Administration contacts

**Deputy Superintendent for Instruction**  
Kathy Augustine  
130 Trinity Ave., SW 30303  
404-802-2700

**K-8 School Reform Team 1**  
Dr. Sharon Davis Williams  
Executive Director  
404-802-3667

**K-8 School Reform Team 2**  
Michael Pitts  
Executive Director  
404-802-7550

**K-8 School Reform Team 3**  
Dr. Gloria Patterson  
Executive Director  
404-802-3751

**K-8 School Reform Team 4**  
Tamara Cotman  
Executive Director  
404-802-6537

**Executive Director for Operations**  
Abigail Crawford  
404-802-5875

**Associate Superintendent for High Schools**  
Randolph Bynum  
High School Office  
404-802-5875

**Elementary Schools**

**Adamsville**  
Sharon Suitt, Principal  
286 Wilson Mill Rd., SW 30331  
404-802-4300

**Beecher Hills**  
Dr. Robin Hall, Principal  
2257 Bollingbrook Dr., SW 30311  
404-802-8300

**Frederick Wilson Benteen**  
Dr. Diana Quisenberry, Principal  
200 Cassanova St., SE 30315  
404-802-7300

**Mary McLeod Bethune**  
RoseMary Hamer, Principal  
220 Northside Dr., NW 30314  
404-802-8200

**Alfred Blalock**  
Dr. Frances Thompson, Principal  
1445 Maynard Rd., NW 30331  
404-802-8250

**Bolton Academy**  
Laura Strickling, Principal  
2268 Adams Dr., NW 30318  
404-802-8350

**William M. Boyd**  
Emalyn Foreman, Principal  
1891 Johnson Rd., NW 30318  
404-802-8150

**Morris Brandon**  
Karen Evans, Principal  
2741 Howell Mill Rd., NW 30327  
404-802-7250

**Hugh Otis Burgess-Gartha Belle Peterson**  
Robin Robbins, Principal  
480 Clifton St., SE 30316  
404-802-3400

**Capitol View**  
Arlene Snowden, Principal  
1442 Metropolitan Pkwy., SW 30310  
802-7200

**Cascade**  
Dr. Alfonso L. Jessie Jr., Principal  
2326 Venetian Dr., SW 30311  
404-802-8100

**Centennial Place**  
Alison Shelton, Principal  
531 Luckie St., NW 30313  
404-802-8550

**Cleveland Avenue**  
Rhonda Ware-Brazier, Principal  
2672 Old Hapeville Rd. 30315  
404-802-8400

**Elijah Lewis Connally**  
Mimi Robinson, Principal  
1654 S. Alvarado Ter., SW 30311  
404-802-8450

**Continental Colony**  
Sandra Sessoms, Principal  
3181 Hogan Rd., SW 30331  
404-802-8000

**Ed S. Cook**  
LaPaul Shelton, Principal  
211 Memorial Dr., SE 30312  
404-802-8500

**Deerwood Academy**  
Lisa Smith, Principal  
3070 Fairburn Rd., 30331  
404-802-3300

**John Wesley Dobbs**  
Dana Evans, Principal  
2025 Jonesboro Rd., SE 30315  
404-802-8050

**Paul Lawrence Dunbar**  
Betty Greene, Principal  
660 McWilliams Road, SE 30316  
404-802-7950

**East Lake**  
Gwendolyn Benton, Principal  
145 Fourth Ave., SE 30317  
404-802-7900

**Margaret Fain**  
Marcus Stallworth, Principal  
101 Hemphill School Rd., NW 30331  
404-802-8600

**Richard Nathaniel Fickett**  
Anthony Dorsey, Principal  
3935 Rux Rd., SW 30331  
404-802-7850

**William M. Finch**  
Dr. Linda Paden, Principal  
1114 Avon Ave., SW 30310  
404-802-4000

**Garden Hills**  
Amy Wilson, Principal  
285 Sheridan Dr., NW 30305  
404-802-7800

**Charles L. Gideons**  
Armstead Salters, Principal  
897 Welch St., SW 30310  
404-802-7700

**Grove Park**  
Caitlin Sims, Principal  
20 Evelyn Way, NW 30318  
404-802-7750

**Heritage Academy**  
Dr. Yvonne Bernal, Principal  
3500 Villa Cir., SE 30354  
404-802-8650

**Alonzo Franklin Herndon**  
Dr. Betty Tinsley, Principal  
350 Temple St., NW 30314  
404-802-8700

**Charles Walter Hill**  
Yolonda Brown, Principal  
386 Pine St., NE 30308  
404-802-7150

**John Hope**  
Dr. Cassandra Ashley, Principal  
112 Boulevard, NE 30312  
404-802-7450

**Joseph W. Humphries**  
Donald Clark, Principal  
3029 Humphries Dr., SE 30354  
404-802-8750

**Emma Hutchinson**  
Rebecca Dashiell-Mitchell, Principal  
650 Cleveland Ave., SW 30315  
404-802-7650

**Warren Turner Jackson**  
Dr. Lorraine Reich, Principal  
1325 Mt. Paran Rd., NW 30327  
404-802-8800

**Mary Agnes Jones**  
Margul Woolfolk, Principal  
1040 Fair Street, NW 30314  
404-802-3900

**Lucas O. Kimberly**  
Carolyn Hall, Principal  
3090 McMurray Dr., SW 30311  
404-802-7600

**Mary Jane Lin**  
Brian Mitchell, Principal  
586 Candler Park Dr., NE 30307  
404-802-8850

**Leonora Precious Miles**  
Christopher Estes, Principal  
4215 Bakers Ferry Rd., SW 30331  
404-802-8900

**Morningside**  
Rebecca Pruitt, Principal  
1053 E. Rock Springs Rd., NE 30306  
404-802-8950

**Parkside**  
Phillip Luck, Principal  
685 Mercer Street, SE 30312  
404-802-4100

**Thomas Jefferson Perkerson**  
Dr. Mable Johnson, Principal  
2040 Brewer Blvd., SW 30315  
404-802-3950

**Peyton Forest**  
Karen Barlow-Brown, Principal  
301 Peyton Rd., SW 30311  
404-802-7100

**Eretus Rivers**  
David White, Principal  
8 Peachtree Battle Ave., NW 30305  
404-802-7050

**William J. Scott**  
Roxianne Smith, Principal  
1752 Hollywood Rd., NW 30318  
404-802-7000

**Thomas Heathe Slater**  
Dr. Selina Dukes-Walton, Principal  
1320 Pryor Rd., SW 30315  
404-802-4050

**Sarah Rawson Smith**  
Dr. Sidney Baker, Principal  
370 Old Ivy Rd., NE 30342  
404-802-3850

**Smith Kindergarten Annex**  
4100 Roswell Rd., NE 30342  
404-256-3317

**Daniel H. Stanton**  
Dr. Willie Davenport, Principal  
970 Martin St., SE 30315  
404-802-4200

**Frank Libby Stanton**  
Dr. Marlo Barber, Principal  
1625 M. L. King Jr. Dr., SW 30314  
404-802-7500

**Thomasville Heights**  
Janice Kelsey, Principal  
1820 Henry Thomas Dr., SE 30315  
404-802-5750

**Fred Armon Toomer**  
Tonya Saunders, Principal  
65 Rogers St., NE 30317  
404-802-3450

**George Alexander Towns**  
Carla Pettis, Principal  
760 Bolton Rd., NW 30331  
404-802-7400

**Bazoline Estelle Usher**  
Dr. Gwendolyn Rogers, Principal  
631 Harwell Rd., NW 30318  
404-802-5700

**Venetian Hills**  
Clarietta Davis, Principal  
1910 Venetian Dr., SW 30311  
404-802-4550

**West Manor**  
Cheryl Twyman, Principal  
570 Lynhurst Dr., SW 30311  
404-802-3350

**Walter Francis White**  
Tamarah Larkin-Currie, Principal  
1890 Detroit Ave., NW 30314  
404-802-2950

**Whitefoord**  
Patricia Lavant, Principal  
35 Whitefoord Ave., SE 30317  
404-802-6900

**Adam Daniel Williams**  
Mary Harris, Principal  
1065 Wilkes Cir., NW 30318  
404-802-2900

**Carter G. Woodson**  
Viola Blackshear, Principal  
1605 D.L. Hollowell Pkwy., NW 30318  
404-802-7350

**Middle Schools**

**Joseph Emerson Brown**  
Donell Underdue Jr., Principal  
765 Peeples St, SW 30310  
404-802-6800



# ATLANTA DIRECTORY SCHOOLS

**Ralph Johnson Bunche**

Aaron Fernander, Principal  
1925 Niskey Lake Rd., SW 30331  
404-802-6700

**Benjamin S. Carson Honors Preparatory**

Dr. Flora Goolsby, Principal  
2210 Perry Blvd. NW 30318  
404-802-4900

**Sammye E. Coan**

Dr. Andre Williams, Principal  
1550 Hosea Williams Dr., NE 30317  
404-802-6600

**Charles Lincoln Harper - Samuel Howard Archer**

Michael Milstead, Principal  
3399 Collier Dr., NW 30331  
404-802-6500

**Samuel Martin Inman**

Dr. Betsy Bockman, Principal  
774 Virginia Ave., NE 30306  
404-802-3200

**John Fitzgerald Kennedy**

Lucious Brown, Principal  
225 James P. Brawley Dr., SW 30314  
404-802-3600

**Martin Luther King Jr.**

Danielle Brattle, Principal  
545 Hill St., SE 30312  
404-802-5400

**Crawford Williamson Long**

Dr. Elizabeth Harris, Principal  
3200 Latona Dr. SW 30315  
404-802-4800

**Walter Leonard Parks**

Christopher Waller, Principal  
1090 Windsor St., SW 30310  
404-802-6400

**Luther Judson Price**

Sterling Christy Jr., Principal  
1670 B.W. Bickers Dr., SE 30315  
404-802-6300

**Willis A. Sutton**

Audrey Sofianos, Principal  
4360 Powers Ferry Rd., NW 30327  
404-802-5600

**Sylvan Hills**

Gwendolyn Atkinson, Principal  
1461 Sylvan Rd., SW 30310  
404-802-6200

**Henry McNeal Turner**

Karen Riggins, Principal  
98 Anderson Ave., NW 30314  
404-802-6100

**Jean Childs Young**

Thomas Kenner, Principal  
3116 Benjamin E. Mays Dr., SW 30311  
404-802-5900

## Single-Gender Academies

**The B.E.S.T. Academy at Ben Carson**

Curt Green, Principal  
320 Irwin St., NE 30312  
404-802-4944

**Coretta Scott King Academy**

Melody Morgan, Principal  
601 Beckwith St., SW 30314  
404-802-4962

## High Schools

**The News Schools at Carver**

55 McDonough Blvd. 30315

**Carver Early College**

Marcene Thornton, Principal  
404-802-4405

**School of Health Sciences and Research**

Dr. Darian Jones, Principal  
404-802-4420

**School of Technology**

Rodney Ray, Principal  
404-802-4410

**School of the Arts**

Dr. Marvin Pryor, Principal  
404-802-4415

**Frederick Douglass**

J. Austin Brown, Principal  
225 H.E. Holmes Dr., NW 30318  
404-802-3100

**Henry W. Grady**

Dr. Vincent Murray, Principal  
929 Charles Allen Dr., NE 30309  
404-802-3001

**Maynard Holbrook Jackson  
Fine Arts, Media and Communication Academy  
Information Technology Academy  
Engineering/Early College Academy**

Dr. Shirlene Carter, Principal  
801 Glenwood Ave., SE 30316  
404-802-5200

**Benjamin Elijah Mays**

Dr. Tyronne Smith, Principal  
3450 Benjamin E. Mays Dr., SW 30331  
404-802-5100

**North Atlanta**

Mark Mygrant, Principal  
2875 Northside Dr., NW 30305  
404-802-4700

**South Atlanta**

800 Hutchins Rd., SE 30315

**School of Health Sciences and Research**

Termerion McCrary, Principal  
404-802-5050

**School of Law & Social Justice**

Peter McKnight, Principal  
404-802-5045

**School of Computer Animation & Design**

Scott Painter, Principal  
404-802-5060

**School of Leadership & Economic Empowerment**

Dr. Marcus A. Barber, Principal  
404-802-5055

**Daniel McLaughlin Therrell**

3099 Panther Trail, SW 30311  
404-802-5300

**School of Technology, Engineering & Science (STEMS at Therrell)**

Esmie Gaynor, Principal  
404-802-5360

**School of Health Science & Research**

Dr. Eric Parker, Principal  
404-802-5355

**School of Business & Entrepreneurship**

Boris Hurst, Principal  
404-802-5350

**School of Law, Government & Public Policy**

Byron Barnes, Principal  
404-802-5345

**Booker Taliaferro Washington**

Carter Coleman, Principal  
45 Whitehouse Dr., NW 30314  
404-802-4600

## Open Campus High School Program

**Crim Open Campus**

Dr. Angelisa Cummings, Principal  
256 Clifton St., SE 30317  
404-802-5800

## Non-traditional Programs

**Adult Literacy Program**

Jacquelyn Davenport, Principal  
1444 Lucille Ave., SW 30310  
404-756-5153

**Forrest Hills Academy**

Tricia Rock, Principal  
2930 Forrest Hills Dr. , SW 30315  
404-591-7275

**West End Academy (11,12)**

Dr. Vivian Jackson, Principal  
1325 Ralph D. Abernathy Dr., SW 30311  
404-755-7755

## Charter Schools

**Atlanta Charter Middle**

Matt Underwood, Principal  
820 Essie Ave., SE 30316  
678-904-0051

**Charles Richard Drew Charter**

Dr. Nicholas Stapleton, Principal  
301 East Lake Blvd., 30317  
404-687-0001

**Imagine Wesley International Academy, LLC**

James Taylor, Principal  
1049 Custer Avenue SE 30315  
678-904-9137

**KIPP West Atlanta Young Scholars (WAYS) Academy**

Kim Karacalidis, Principal  
80 Joseph E. Lowery Blvd., SW 30314  
404-475-1941

**Neighborhood Charter School, Inc.**


Jill Kaechele, Principal  
688 Grant St., SE 30315  
404-624-6226

**Tech High School**

Elisa A. Falco, Principal  
1043 Memorial Dr., SE 30316  
678-904-5091

**University Community Academy**

Dr. James Harris, Principal  
2050 Tiger Flowers Dr., 30314  
404-753-4050



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# SPORTS

THE ATLANTA EDUCATOR

## BIG SHOT

*Favors ready for next move*

BY PAUL HALLORAN

South Atlanta High School Coach Michael Reddick recalls being impressed by the tall seventh grader who was “really good at blocking shots” for the Crawford Long Middle School basketball team. He could not have imagined, however, that player would be the top college basketball recruit in the country five years later.

That’s how far senior Derrick Favors has come – from a gangly youngster with raw ability to a talented athlete that every college covets. During the opening practice at North Carolina State this year, Favors received a raucous reception from fans.

“That was exciting,” Favors said. “The fans started chanting my name.”

Wherever he ends up, you can be sure Favors will have fans up and cheering for the next four years – unless the NBA comes calling first.

“Derrick is probably one of the most skilled big guys I’ve ever seen,” said Reddick. “He’s mobile, agile and quick. He has the mental and physical ability and competitive drive, and he’s mature beyond his years. He’s a special player.”

Favors also has the statistics to prove it. He almost averaged a triple-double last year, with 24 points, 17 rebounds and nine blocks per game. Those numbers were up slightly from his sophomore season (23 points, 16 rebounds, seven blocks).

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South Atlanta High School basketball standout Derrick Favors with Coach Michael Reddick.

PHOTO: REBA SALDANHA