

PAGE ONE

Professional Association of Georgia Educators

November/December 2003

Paraprofessionals

The Unsung And Indispensable

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CONTENTS

FEATURES

- 4 **Paraprofessionals—The Unsung and Indispensable**
by Lee Raudonis

DEPARTMENTS

- 2 **From the President:** My Cheese Is Where?
3 **From the Executive Director:** Leadership, Courage And Creativity Needed to Get Through Revenue Crisis
8 **Foundation News**
PAGE Foundation Board of Trustees Annual Meeting
Honor Your Favorite Teacher
PAGE Foundation's "Banking" Grants for Advanced NBC Candidates
PAGE Foundation Names New State Coordinator for PAGE STAR Program
NBPTS News
Foundation Volunteers Needed
2003 Year End Giving Opportunities
18 **Legal:** Persistently Dangerous Schools
18 **PAGE Letters**
19 **Words of Wisdom:** School Bus Safety
20 **Professional Insights:** The State of the Arts
26 **PAGE Members in the News**
27 **PAGE Planner**
- ### NEWS & INFORMATION
- 13 2003 Legislative Rallies
24 New Employee
25 PAGE Membership Services Staff
27 Macon Educator Wins a National Award for Innovative Teaching



The articles published in each issue of **PAGE ONE** magazine represent the views of the contributors and do not necessarily represent the views of PAGE, except where clearly stated.

You are invited to submit articles dealing with current education issues. The editor reserves the right to determine the appropriateness of articles for publication. Articles may be edited to meet space requirements. Georgia educators are encouraged to submit photographs for use as the cover for **PAGE ONE** magazine and other photographs to illustrate story subjects. Send manuscripts and photographs to: Tim Callahan, Editor, **PAGE ONE** magazine; PAGE; P.O. Box 942270; Atlanta, GA 31141-2270.

Notice to Members

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My Cheese Is Where?

How to keep an eye on your teaching goals

Most of you in the education field can probably relate to the headline above, particularly if you have read Spenser Johnson's book, "Who Moved My Cheese?" I bought the book this summer after being required to move my classroom into a trailer about half the size of last year's lab room. What an upheaval! After all, I had grown comfortable and complacent in my old space. It felt as though my cheese was moving and that was quite unsettling.

Fortunately, in addition to reading the book, I participated with other educators and business representatives in the bus trip for the Georgia Partnership for Excellence in Education. It was wonderful! It was truly inspiring to see firsthand the incredible efforts teachers put forth for the children around the state. I saw awesome teachers and paraprofessionals who were making huge changes in student academics and test scores. I saw superintendents, community leaders, administrative personnel and parents working together to bring about relevant and focused experiences for students.

It made me proud to be a part of Georgia's education system. It also made me wonder why Georgia has gotten such bad press when so many good things are happening in the state. The techniques I saw implemented helped me realize how important it is to do something positive in your classroom and for yourself everyday. I was rejuvenated. Most importantly, it made me realize how fortunate I am to have my trailer.

This is the time of year when your stockpile of cheese is moved or your cheese pile is changing due to local, state and federal mandates. Instead of feeling overwhelmed or discouraged, put on a pair of comfortable shoes and learn to move with the times. Just understand—your cheese will be moved often in your life. So, when the buses arrive late or

class sizes seem too large and supplies are short or new teachers need to be hired, it is incumbent on us to sharpen our teaching skills or learn better techniques or even

When the buses arrive late or class sizes seem too large and supplies are short or new teachers need to be hired, it is incumbent on us to sharpen our teaching skills or learn better techniques or even become a mentor to a new teacher in the building.

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Take advantage of your membership in PAGE to help you through this time. You can increase your awareness and involvement by sending e-mails or voicing your concerns at legislative rallies or the Fall Retreat. Letters can be written or phone calls made to those who influence or make the changes in your cheese. Through your involvement in PAGE you can make a difference at the local, county or state level. As we all know, the squeaky wheel gets the oil. We can't be whiners. We must learn to voice our concerns and suggestions in a positive, professional manner.

Recently, I received an anonymous gift for my dedication and work in my field. It made me think: just when your cheese has been moved, someone offers you a huge chunk of gratitude, humility and appreciation. Do something for yourself and your profession by getting involved. Put your tennis shoes on and get to work! ♦



DEENA HOCH

Leadership, Courage and Creativity Needed to Survive Revenue Crisis

Georgia is facing a serious revenue downturn just as we have launched an unprecedented program of school improvement. The co-existence of these two factors are the essence of the challenge facing political leaders, educators and the taxpaying public. It will take strong leadership, courageous action and creative approaches at every level if public education is to weather this storm.

We are fully aware of the economic situation facing state leaders. We appreciate the difficult choices facing our state school board, state school superintendent, our legislative leaders and our governor. If there is any good news, it is that the state budget will not be finalized for several months and revenues for the most recent months show an increase. Further monthly increases may follow, improving the outlook during the budget process next spring.

However, no one should count on that being the case, and prudent leaders must plan for all contingencies.

It will be extremely difficult, if not impossible, to meet the standards and timelines being imposed by the federal law No Child Left Behind. We are at a critical juncture. For the first time, educators are being challenged to disaggregate test data, report on the progress of all students and tailor instructional methods that promote the educational achievement of all students. It will be a tragedy and a wasted opportunity if we lose the momentum of the past few years.

PAGE has always believed that education must be a budgetary priority and that funding reductions to schools must always be a last resort. We are disappointed in the leaders who have already ruled out state level tax increases. To rule anything out at this point does not exemplify leadership, creativity or courage.

No one should think that educators have

been immune from previous budget cuts. No one should think that they consider themselves a privileged class, unwilling to endure their share of the hardships that everyone in the state is subject to during the current economic situation.

This school year educators across the state are “tightening their belts” in many ways. Due to the absence of a state salary increase in the current school year and increases in their health insurance premiums, many educators are working this year for less net salary than last year. They are working with increased class sizes and are enduring reductions in force which increase their work loads in countless ways when school systems do not fill positions that have become vacant.

We have been working with our membership throughout this fall to discuss our legislative priorities in light of the current economic situation. Those discussions have been candid and grounded in reality, but we are not prepared to simply abandon our legislative priorities in the face of difficult economic times. Persistent attention to our priorities, over many years, during various economic climates and with a succession of political leaders, has taught us our goals can be achieved.

In the coming months we will also be working with legislative leaders to review funding options that are available, advising them as they consider budget reductions that these cuts must be made with as much precision as possible, with the least harmful effect on our students and those who educate them.

When the General Assembly meets in January 2004, PAGE, through consultations with our members and legislative leaders, will be in a position to support legislative and budget initiatives that meet the educational and financial challenges without undermining the bedrock of our economy—the education of our children. ♦

If there is any good news, it is that the state budget will not be finalized for several months and revenues for the most recent months show an increase.



ALLENE MAGILL

Paraprofessionals



The Unsung and Indispensable

By Lee Raudonis
Photos by Rod Reilly

Ask the average man or woman on the street what a paraprofessional is and he or she might very well answer, “A pair of what?”

But ask the same question of a classroom teacher fortunate enough to work with one of these dedicated men or women and the answer is likely to be, “indispensable,” “a life saver,” “my right hand,” or “worth his/her weight in gold.”

Although there are many unsung heroes and heroines in the field of education, perhaps none are as under-recognized and under-appreciated among the public-at-large as the women and men who work as paraprofessionals. These “parapros” as they are commonly known, perform so many valuable services—for extremely modest remuneration—that it is difficult to imagine how some of Georgia’s schools could operate without them.

“I don’t know how we could function without them, because they play such a vital role in our educational program,” says Lamar Scott, principal of Doves Creek Elementary School in Elbert County. “We have 15 paraprofessionals working in grades K–5, and they are worth their weight in gold. I just wish we could pay them what they are worth to us.”

Scott believes that his school’s successes are in no small measure due to having an outstanding group of paraprofessionals. “This school is only five years old and our students came from four different schools when we opened. Since then, one of our main areas of focus has been on improving reading scores, and we have raised our fourth-grade scores by 24 percent. There is no doubt in my mind that we could not have made this much progress without our paraprofessionals, and I know our teachers feel the same way.”

The Georgia Professional Standards Commission (GAPSC) officially describes a paraprofessional as “an assistant to a professional teacher who performs non-instructional, guided instructional, tutoring and/or assistance assignments and tasks under the supervision of the teacher.” In 2001-2002 the number of paraprofessionals in Georgia was nearly 25,000, approximately 95 percent of whom were women.

Miriam Wink (opposite page) was a stay-at-home mom until she became a parapro in Carol Percy’s classroom. She says becoming a parapro was one of the best decisions she ever made.

For a number of years the GAPSC licensed paraprofessionals by establishing broad guidelines that were implemented through local control. Requirements included 50 clock hours of job-related training and 20 clock hours for renewal, but there was no mention of hiring eligibility criteria. Based on those guidelines, local school systems developed their own specific training curriculum, maintained all records and issued a GAPSC-produced license form.

With the implementation of the No Child Left Behind guidelines, Georgia’s old paraprofessional licensing system was replaced with a new certification system. The guidelines require paraprofessionals with instructional duties to have two years of college education, possess an Associate degree, or pass an assessment test developed by the Educational Testing Service (ETS). Paraprofessionals with instructional duties employed in a school system prior to Jan. 8, 2002, have until Jan. 8, 2006, to meet the new requirements. Paraprofessionals hired on or after Jan. 8, 2002, must meet the new requirements immediately.

Thousands of Georgia paraprofessionals have already met the new certification requirements,



Willie Howell (left) says he loves being a parapro so much that he came out of retirement to help in Claire Hall’s (right) classroom.

Educator Colleen Etheridge (below center) says her parapros Julyie Smith (left) and Sharon Hill (right) are critical parts of her class’ learning process.



Parapro Tammy Chesser (right) says she believes that paraprofessionals are crucial to the one-on-one interaction that curious students need.



thanks in part to notification from PAGE's legal department that the GAPSC was administering an assessment test at no cost from August to December last year. The free GAPSC test has now been replaced by the ETS test (at a cost of \$40 each). To find out more visit ets.org/parapro/index.html.

The tasks performed by Georgia's paraprofessionals are as varied as the individuals who perform them, but the common goal is to make it easier and more manageable for classroom teachers to help their students succeed.

"I feel that my job is to help children succeed and reach their goals by making the teachers' jobs easier," says Tammy Chesser, a paraprofessional at Dalton High School who works primarily in a learning lab for college-bound students with specific learning disabilities. "I work one-on-one with students who come to the lab for help, and quite often I can give their teachers feedback regarding the types of activities the students are having trouble with so that the teachers can take corrective action."

Just how important are paraprofessionals to teachers?

"They are absolutely critical as far as I am concerned," says Colleen Etheridge of Weaver Middle School in Bibb County, whose paraprofessionals, Sharon Hill and Julyie Smith, assist her in the daily education of four autistic students. "The way I work, kids must see all of us as equals and respond to all of us."

Hill, who has been with Etheridge for three years, first became interested in working in special education because her own child had some emotional problems. "People tell me I have a lot of patience, and I am thankful that I do," she says. "These children

need patience, and I am glad I can help them."

Smith came to Weaver specifically to assist a student with whom she had worked in elementary school. "I worked with him for six years at Union Elementary and came with him when he moved to Weaver because I know him so well, and we are comfortable with each other. I have learned a lot from all the children. It has been extremely rewarding to see them grow and develop."

For those unfamiliar with autism, Etheridge explains why it is necessary to have three adults in a class of four children. "When I first came here, the children had severe behavioral problems. It could easily take over two hours of my time just to get one child under control," she says. "There is no way that I could actually teach all four of these children without Ms. Hill and Ms. Smith. I literally could not do this job without them. After three years together, Ms. Hill and I are on the same wavelength—I don't have to say anything, and she always knows what to do. And Ms. Smith does an outstanding job with David and works well with all of the children. Autistic children need routine to keep everything under control, and I could not provide that routine without these paraprofessionals. They truly are indispensable."

In the room next door, Claire Hall teaches a class of students with emotional behavior disorders. She says she could not do it without the help of Willie Howell, who became a paraprofessional after spending 20 years in the military in places as diverse as North Dakota, France, Vietnam and England.

"Mr. Howell is an outstanding role model to these students," says Hall. "He has a great work ethic and does whatever he is asked to do. He is the first one here each morning and by helping individual students with their problems, he makes it possible for me to do things to help the rest of the class. He also has incredible patience and understands that these children have unique problems and need special help."

So why does Howell, a retiree who could be spending his leisure years doing other things, get

"If it weren't for Ms. 'K,' I couldn't handle this class the way I need to. Our students all have specific learning disabilities, and they learn far better with hands-on activities."

**—SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER
GERRIE STROBEL**



Special education teacher Gerrie Strobel (standing right) of Appling Middle School says that if she had to choose between no paraprofessional and fewer kids, or more kids and a paraprofessional, she'd choose her paraprofessional Agnes Koonce (left) every time.

up early every morning to work with these special needs children?

“My philosophy has always been the same as the General Electric slogan, ‘Progress is our most important product,’” says Howell. “When I see a student advancing, it makes me feel good. For example, there was one young man who always wanted to strike out at others, because he didn’t know any other alternatives for solving disagreements. I think I was able to help him see that he really hadn’t proven anything by hitting other children. He learned to reason things out better.”

Across town from Weaver at Appling Middle School, Agnes Koonce is yet another retiree who is spending her golden years helping children rather than watching television or playing bingo.

“One of the many amazing things about Ms. Koonce—and there are many—is that age is no barrier to her,” says special education teacher Gerrie Strobel. “She just celebrated a birthday that puts her well up into her golden years, but she will do and try almost anything.”

“Two years ago, my 74-year-old scoutmaster father, Ms. Koonce and I took the



Dove's Creek Elementary School First Grade Teachers and Paraprofessionals: (L to R): Debra Eaton, Carla Childs, Christy Hart, Beth Oglesby, Laura Albertson, Dawn Hill, Yvette Sanders and Amber Carter.



Dove's Creek Elementary School Kindergarten Teachers and Paraprofessionals (L to R): Sheryl Thornton, Tara Brown, Teresa Harris, Jean Crowe, Sharron Darracott, Tracey Hood, Patsy Seymour and Martha Jones.

kids on a camping trip,” says Strobel. “It was a tremendous experience and invaluable learning activity for the students—one they will remember for a long, long time.”

Koonce, who was a nurse for 40 years, became a paraprofessional in 2000, shortly after her husband passed away. “I just love being with children and want to be a mentor to them as long as I can,” she explains.

Strobel makes no secret of her admiration for the woman the children call Ms. “K.”

“If it weren’t for Ms. ‘K,’ I couldn’t handle this class the way I need to. Our students all have specific learning disabilities (SLD) and they learn far better with hands-on activities. One teacher simply can’t help 23 students using that approach,” says Strobel. “She keeps all of the records and is extremely well organized. Even more importantly, she demands respect from the students and they both respect her and love her. If I need to be away from the classroom for a few minutes or for a day, she knows what each student should be doing and can either take over the class or help a substitute step in.”

If Strobel had the choice to teach one-half the number of students she has without

Continued on page 15



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PAGE Foundation Board of Trustees Annual Meeting



PAGE Foundation trustees (above L to R) Dr. Diane Ray, Cooper Middle School; William Hare, The William B. Hare Company; Margaret Hylton Jones, Margaret Jones & Associates; and Elliott Dunwoody III, Dunwoody/Beeland Architects Inc., study program data presented at this year's annual meeting.

Trustees of the PAGE Foundation learned during their annual meeting that contributions to the PAGE Foundation Endowment Campaign now exceed \$900,000 toward the Phase One goal of \$1 million.

Carolyn Lovett of BellSouth, Ben Boswell of Wachovia and Margaret Hylton Jones of Margaret Jones & Associates were elected to serve as officers of the PAGE Foundation during the Board of Trustees' Annual Meeting. Lovett, who was elected vice chair, is the senior director for external affairs at BellSouth Corporation.

Boswell, a former Ohio history teacher and currently Wachovia's senior vice president and manager of community affairs for Georgia, was elected treasurer, and Margaret Hylton Jones, who worked in 1996 to help give Georgia communities an opportunity to vote on Special Purpose Local Option Sales Taxes (SPLOST) for school improvement purposes, was elected secretary. Curley M. Dossman Jr., the president of the Georgia-Pacific Foundation, will continue for another year as chair of the Board of Trustees.

"We definitely have a strong team at the helm of the PAGE Foundation," said Foundation President Tom Wommack. "These individuals are leaders within their corporations and widely respected within the business



New PAGE Foundation Trustee Betsy Palmer of AT&T (left).

Board chair and president of the Georgia-Pacific Foundation Curley M. Dossman Jr. (below) looks over financial information regarding the Foundation.



community; it is a great compliment to the PAGE Foundation that Carolyn, Ben and Margaret want to commit even more of their time to our efforts on behalf of students and teachers."

In addition to electing new officers, the Board of Trustees elected new members

to the board including Betsy Palmer, regional vice president of public relations for AT&T. Among Palmer's many career achievements is her service in Washington, D.C., where she served on the personal staff of three U.S. Secretaries of Energy and on the White House staff of Nancy Reagan. Prior to joining AT&T, Palmer has volunteered as a judge for the PAGE Georgia Academic Decathlon. She has had a long career in science technology education, including extensive work with Georgia Tech and the AU Center. As an AT&T officer, Palmer advocated for increased donations to the PAGE Foundation resulting in a recent \$10,000 gift.

Trustees of the PAGE Foundation learned during their annual meeting that contributions to the PAGE Foundation Endowment Campaign now exceed \$900,000 toward the Phase One goal of \$1 million. As the first phase of the endowment campaign is completed successfully, the PAGE Foundation intends to launch its first Honor Your Favorite Teacher Annual Fund Campaign in 2004. Trustees reviewed and approved plans to expand Future Educators of America in Georgia to all 180 school systems by 2006 and marketing plans to significantly raise the visibility of the PAGE Foundation. The board also voted to create a new planning committee charged with the immediate responsibility of establishing a three-year plan. ♦

Honor Your Favorite Teacher

Lee Hughes, President, Hughes Public Affairs, Savannah, Ga.

MarthAnne Calvi

For the first 16 years of my life, I went exclusively by my middle name, rather than my first. The only exception was the annual ritual of the first day of school when my teachers would call out “Jennings Hughes” before I had a chance to set them straight. “Jennings,” is a real mouthful, and tough to live up to, especially for a teenager trying to survive in a competitive social scene at a new school in south Georgia. So it was to my significant dismay that I learned that my new homeroom teacher, MarthAnne Calvi, would be sticking with “Jennings.” She called on me often for the next two years as my teacher for psychology, American history and AP European history in addition to her duties as my homeroom teacher. I didn’t mind though, because she opened my eyes to so much as a student.

It was the 1980s in Savannah, and the plentiful distractions from schoolwork included such things as football and other sports, video game arcades, rock and roll music, the new rock videos on MTV, and of course those other distractions, those of the female persuasion, that often make teenage boys lose focus on schoolwork and everything else. There was also more than a little peer pressure to display mediocrity as a student, which is where Mrs. Calvi was most influential.

MarthAnne Calvi would not tolerate mediocrity, especially when she saw through it as part of the act of trying to be cool. With uncanny insight she could spot underachievers even when they didn’t want to be spotted. She was relentless in pushing me to strive for my potential rather than allowing me to coast along. She breathed new life into the old stories of our nation’s history by attaching personalities to the characters, and I genuinely looked forward to her classes.

That was what turned me on to what eventually became my college major. She taught us to appreciate the differences between our own culture and the cultures of other countries, which made European history suddenly so fascinating. She also skillfully guided us through the study of psychology, which was her true passion, at a time in our lives when it was inherently valuable to understand more about the way our minds supposedly worked.

If she ever had bad days as a teacher, I don’t remember them. She always appeared to be enjoying herself; and while she taught our class with firm discipline, she often interspersed it with some fun and games. I still remember that if we performed up to her

lofty expectations during the week, Fridays meant “The Game” in her history classes—basically a precursor to Trivial Pursuit and “Who Wants To Be A Millionaire?” In an otherwise strictly structured school, we appreciated her flare for the dramatic and the unorthodox. By making it competitive and dramatic, she created an incentive to be proud that you knew the answer.

She also taught us the value of applying our knowledge rather than simply regurgitating memorized facts. Some students, used to simple success through memorization, were often frustrated by Mrs. Calvi’s probing questions during class or by her demands for thorough explanations for test answers. I also remember that she was one of the first teachers who urged me and my classmates to share our opinions about our studies, a remarkable revelation in my lifelong learning curve.

When it came time to get my yearbook signed my senior year, Mrs. Calvi is the only teacher or coach that I approached for words of wisdom, and she did not disappoint. In her efficient, but stylish cursive she wrote, “Stay loose, but try a little harder. You can be what you want to be.” The message, so simply worded, but so appropriate for me at that point in my life, really did inspire me to focus more and to try harder. I’m grateful for her earnest and sincere effort to inspire us during that brief window of time.

Last year my class held their 20th reunion. A lot had changed on campus and with the people that populated my life in the 1980s.

It was especially fun to see Mrs. Calvi for the first time in 20 years. She lives in Louisiana now, and she’s no longer teaching; but she remains a delightfully engaging woman with a sparkle in her eye. I was glad to see her, and of course, she enthusiastically greeted me by my first name that no one else has called me before or since. I appreciated her making the trip for the reunion. I’d like to think that she was also pleased to learn that she had inspired me to call my oldest son by his first name—“Jennings.” ♦



MarthAnne Calvi



Lee Hughes

PAGE Foundation's "Banking" Grants for Advanced NBC Candidates

The PAGE Foundation offers one-time \$300 grants to PAGE members who must retake a portion of their National Board Certification (NBC) requirements. The intent of this grant program is to assist PAGE members who need financial aid to complete the National Board Certification process. Grants will be awarded competitively with all funds paid directly to the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS).

To compete for the "banking" grants, candidates must complete the grant application form and submit it to the PAGE Foundation by the specified deadline. Grant applications that fail to arrive by the deadline will not be considered. The application is available for download at pagefoundation.org. Only PAGE members in good standing with the organization (membership current) will be considered. Candidates pursuing the grant must agree to attend at least one PAGE Foundation banking workshop prior to being evaluated again by the NBPTS.

The most significant determinant in the awarding of banking grants will be the perceived likelihood that a candidate will successfully earn NBC. Indicators that a candidate is likely to achieve NBC include their initial score, their history within the PAGE organization and the frequency with which they sought help through PAGE Foundation or other qualified workshops. Banking grants are available to candidates for up to two consecutive years from the date of their initial score notification.

Candidates who accept a banking grant will automatically become involved in ongoing research and evaluation efforts undertaken by PAGE and the PAGE Foundation for the purpose of program improvement and the surfacing of new knowledge regarding National Board Certification. Candidates who do not want to join in the research and evaluation effort should not apply for a banking grant. Data on individuals will be kept confidential in all research and evaluation efforts. ♦

PAGE Foundation Names New State Coordinator for PAGE STAR Program

Lee Raudonis, who has a long history as a consultant with PAGE, has accepted a contract to coordinate the PAGE Student Teacher Achievement Recognition (STAR) program, succeeding Harris Mynatt who retired earlier this year. In this capacity, Raudonis will work with Juliana Naleway of PAGE to oversee the state's premier student and teacher recognition program, which is sponsored by the PAGE Foundation, the Georgia Chamber of Commerce and the Georgia Department of Education. During its 46-year history, STAR has honored more than 19,000 outstanding students and teachers at the county, region and state levels.

"We are delighted to welcome Lee into this role," said PAGE Foundation Director John Varner. "Lee understands how local schools work, and he has considerable experience working with community leaders throughout the state. These professional credentials combined with his personal strengths make him an outstanding new leader for STAR." ♦



NBPTS News

The Digital Edge

The Digital Edge: Accomplished Teaching with Technology project is an initiative of NBPTS in collaboration with the International Society for Technology in Education, Apple and the AT&T Foundation. The project addresses technology's role in the classroom and the role of accomplished teachers as models for their peers. More than 50 exhibits are available for viewing. The exhibits show NBCTs teaching, assessing and reflecting in their classrooms. Laura Jones, lead coordinator, says, "This free resource encompasses everything an experienced teacher-mentor, a new teacher or teacher-in-training could want." nbpts.org/news.



Highly Qualified Teachers

No Child Left Behind requires that a highly qualified teacher will be in every classroom by 2007. The federal government is requiring that states verify teachers are highly qualified using a High Objective Uniform State Standard of Evaluation (HOUSSE). HOUSSE is required if a veteran teacher meets all the requirements to be fully certified to teach in Georgia, but does not meet either the content or testing requirement to be considered "highly qualified." School district staff was trained in the rubric during August and early September. NBPTS is working with the federal government to ensure that it meets the definition of highly qualified. To learn more go to gapsc.com. Click on the No Child Left Behind icon. In the left-hand column under Resources, click on HOUSSE Rubric and Instructions for Veteran Teachers. ♦

FOUNDATION VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

PAGE Foundation programs that promote academic excellence among Georgia students and teachers include the PAGE Student Teacher Achievement Recognition (STAR) program, the PAGE Georgia Academic Decathlon (GAD), the PAGE Academic Bowl for Middle Grades and PAGE Scholarships for current and future teachers. These programs would not be possible without the assistance of many dedicated volunteers.

PAGE Georgia Academic Decathlon

Volunteers are needed to serve as judges for Speech and Interview. Volunteers are also needed to serve as Proctors for Essay, Testing and Super Quiz. Judges serve in groups of three (3) for Speech and Interview presentations. Proctors work with a student assistant in a testing homeroom of nineteen (19) or more students. Super Quiz proctors monitor individual student responses during the course of the Super Quiz Oral relay. A judges' training session is conducted prior to the competition. Volunteers can choose Friday, Saturday or both days. Friday's session lasts from 3:45 to 9:30 p.m. Saturday's session begins at 7:30 a.m. and continues until 1 p.m. (Super Quiz proctors are on site from noon until 3 p.m.)

PAGE Academic Bowl for Middle Grades

The Academic Bowl takes place in January and February. Regional competitions will be held across the state on Saturday, Jan. 10, 2004, during the morning and early afternoon. Each region will need a minimum of 20 volunteers to assist with reading questions, judging and timekeeping during the competition. This opportunity will require a time commitment of 4-6 hours. Approximately 40 volunteers are needed for the State Semi-finals to be held on Saturday, Jan. 24, 2004, in Macon. This competition will require a time commitment of about six hours.

Please complete and return the form below if you are interested in volunteering for one or more of these PAGE Foundation programs.

PAGE Foundation Volunteer Form

Name: _____ Home phone: _____

Home Address: _____ Work phone: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Company: _____ Title: _____

E-mail: _____

Area of Interest: Academic Bowl - Saturday, Jan. 10 Decathlon - Friday, Feb. 27
 Academic Bowl - Saturday, Jan. 24 Decathlon - Saturday, Feb. 28

Returning this form in no way obligates you to a particular event. It just lets us know of your interest in volunteer opportunities.

Respond to Michelle Crawford by:

Mail: PAGE Foundation • P.O. Box 942270 • Atlanta, GA 31141-2270

Phone: 1-800-334-6861 • 770-216-8555

Fax: 770-216-9672

E-mail: mcrawford@pagefoundation.org

2003 Year-End Giving Opportunities

It's that time of year again to consider year-end charitable donations that could lighten your 2003 tax liabilities. There are some key items in the 2003 Tax Act regarding income taxes for individuals and businesses that should be discussed with your financial advisor. Changes affecting individuals occurred in tax rates, capital gains taxes, dividends, child tax credits, alternative minimum tax and marriage penalty relief. If you own a business, you need to evaluate the changes regarding small business expensing and bonus depreciation.

Charitable donations are always an option for reducing tax liabilities and can provide tax saving alternatives for your beneficiaries. Consider including the PAGE Foundation as a beneficiary as you prepare for the current and future



Lamar Scott, principal, Doves Creek Elementary School Chair Planned Giving, 2003-04 Honor Your Favorite Teacher Annual Fund

"I was delighted to learn that my gift to the PAGE Foundation does not diminish what I want to leave family members and other heirs."

disbursements of your assets.

Lamar Scott, principal at Doves Creek Elementary School and former PAGE president, has included the PAGE Foundation in his will. An excerpt from a planned giving letter that Scott is sharing with retired educators is included for your consideration.

"As I reflect on my career, I recall the selfless contributions of educators now either retired or no longer living who influenced my life and nurtured my

interest in teaching. Sadly, I can never repay the debt I owe those wonderful people or even say thank you in some cases, but I can honor them by following their example of commitment to others. With the help of my attorney, I have altered my will to provide a significant gift to the PAGE Foundation, which works diligently to recruit, develop and retain capable and caring teachers for Georgia's young people.

I was delighted to learn that my gift to the foundation does not diminish what I want to leave family members and other heirs. Tax laws are such that bequests reduce the taxes donors owe the government. I receive a great deal of satisfaction knowing that as a result of my estate planning I can continue to help students and teachers for many decades to come. The PAGE Foundation is helping me create a legacy that reflects the values and priorities of my life, and they can help you, too.

I encourage you to consult your attorney and your accountant about your estate and the benefits of directing some of your assets to the PAGE Foundation." ♦

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The purpose of the PAGE Foundation is to recruit, develop and retain extraordinary teachers for Georgia classrooms and to raise student achievement through challenging and competitive academic programs that instill in students a love of learning and an appreciation for hard work in the pursuit of educational excellence.

For more information on making a planned gift or a donation, please contact Linda Griffin, Development Manager:

Phone: 1-800-793-9886
Fax: 770-216-9672

Website: pagefoundation.org
E-Mail: plannedgiving@pagefoundation.org

Mail: PAGE Foundation
Attn: Executive Director
P. O. Box 942270
Atlanta, GA 31141-2270

2003 Legislative Rallies

Focus on Impact of Budget Cuts on Schools, Systems and PAGE Members

This fall at five sites across the state, PAGE members gathered for traditional legislative rallies—key opportunities to meet with legislators, discuss education policy and establish priorities for the upcoming legislative session.

“We knew that our members were very concerned about budget cuts and the impacts on their classrooms and schools,” said Tom Wommack, PAGE’s director of legislative affairs. “They are also concerned about issues of salary, retirement and the increasing costs associated with their state merit health care.”

The 2003 series of meetings began in Thomson, and was followed by meetings in Hall County, Jesup and Moultrie. The final rally was held on Saturday, Oct. 25, in Bonaire and featured comments by Senator Saxby Chambliss and Rep. Johnny Isakson. A morning panel included state Senator Joey Brush who chairs the Senate Education Committee, Rep. Barbara Mason-Reese, vice-chair of the House Education Committee, Wanda

Implementation of No Child Left Behind among Key Topics

Barr, who chairs the state board of education and Ben Scafidi, education policy advisor to Governor Sonny Perdue. The governor, who was on an economic development trip to Asia, addressed the PAGE audience via a pre-recorded videotape.

Rep. Isakson, a member of the House Education Committee, and one of No Child Left Behind’s authors, said he understands the need for changes in the legislation, particularly with regard to special education students.

“It’s wrong to assess a child who is at the fourth grade level developmentally on an eighth grade test,” he said to applause from the PAGE members in attendance. Isakson also said the federal government is working to fulfill its commitment to fund 40 percent of the education of special-needs students by 2010. The government made that commitment in 1975 when it passed the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA). Since then school systems have struggled to make up the gap in federal funding, which is currently at about 20 percent. ♦



During the Southwest Georgia Legislative Rally held at Colquitt High School in Moultrie, PAGE Foundation Director John Varner (far left) and PAGE Foundation President Tom Wommack (far right) presented WALB-TV, Channel 10 in Albany, with the PAGE Media-at-Large Award as the station that provided the greatest level of support in airing Public Service Announcements produced by the PAGE Foundation. The PSAs encouraged people to consider a career in teaching and raised awareness about the Foundation and its programs. Accepting the award on behalf of WALB-TV were Promotions Producer Bonnie Hill and Promotions Manager Don Norman.

From top: PAGE President and Bibb County educator Deena Hoch presided over the legislative rally. Immediate Past President Preston Howard, a Marietta City Schools’ superintendent, introduced the morning panelists. Senator Saxby Chambliss; Representative Johnny Isakson.

2003 LEGISLATIVE RALLIES

Continued from page 13



Deputy State School Superintendent Stuart Bennett (left) talked with State Board of Education Chairperson Wanda Barr. Both participated in the morning presentations.

Houston County's Ron Burton (left), Ben Scafidi, education policy advisor to Governor Perdue, (center), and Houston County school Superintendent Danny Carpenter (right).



Sen. Chambliss (left) was greeted by PAGE President-Elect Dr. Diane Ray, principal at Cobb County's Cooper Middle School as Danny Carpenter looks on.

Rep. Barbara Massey-Reece, vice-chair of the House Education Committee speaks with two participating PAGE members.



Rep. Isakson was greeted by Bibb County PAGE Chapter President Connie Wildmon.

A crowd was present for the panel discussion and presentations by Sen. Chambliss and U.S. Rep. Johnny Isakson.



Rice Elementary School teacher Nancy Killen was among the participants.

Following his presentation, Ben Scafidi responded to questions.



PARAPROFESSIONALS

Continued from page 7

Ms. Koonce or the number she currently has with her parapro, which would she choose?

"There's no contest. I would much rather have 23 kids with Ms. 'K' than half that many by myself. She is a calming influence on the kids—and on me," says Strobel. "Her nursing background enables her to handle all kinds of situations and keep people calm. Also, having two adults in the classroom makes it possible to teach different kids in different ways. We are a great team."

Every teacher interviewed for this article answered that question the same way. Without exception, they said they would rather have more children with their parapro than fewer children without them.

Hollie Shepard, a kindergarten teacher at McDonough Elementary School in Henry County, explained her feelings about working with Angie DeWeese, this way.

"With this age child, something always comes up—nose bleeds, bathroom accidents, etc. If I have to leave the room to take care of one of these problems, what happens to the rest of the children? And there's also the fact that Angie contributes things to the class that I can't. For example, she can draw really well and that just isn't my forte.

"The fact is that without her, the kids would be shortchanged. I can't do as many hands-on activities by myself as I can with Angie," concludes Shepard.

DeWeese, a parapro for 11 years, was an Early Childhood Education major at Georgia State University until she married and had children. "Then I was a stay-at-home mom until my youngest child started school," she says. "That's when I started work as a parapro. I get tremendous satisfaction watching the little light bulbs go off when the children learn new things."

Tasha Huffschmidt, a second-year kindergarten teacher at McDonough also sees a tremendous advantage in having an assistant rather than having fewer children to teach alone. "With a smaller class, you still have the same amount of planning and preparation, which are things that Nancy (Joiner) helps with. She also works one-on-one with the student which means that they get more individual attention."

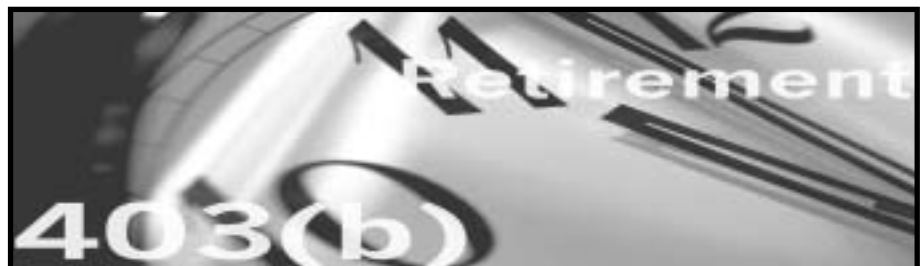
Joiner has been a paraprofessional for 15 years, working at various times with kindergarten and first-grade students. "I



Hollie Shepard (left) says her students would be "shortchanged" without parapro Angie DeWeese (right).

Below: Tasha Huffschmidt (left) and parapro Nancy Joiner (right) both say that having a classroom helper around can benefit children immensely.





403(b) Retirement

It's time to make an important decision.

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“The students relate well to Ms. Meek, and it is an added benefit that she is a native Spanish speaker. That has greatly improved communication with students and parents.”

**—MCDONOUGH ELEMENTARY TEACHER
ZEOLA TERRY**

started when my children started here, because our schedules were the same. It has been a great experience, because I love working with young children,” says Joiner.

Another former stay-at-home mom is Carmen Meek, who works in an Interrelated K-5 class at McDonough. One of the teachers she assists is Zeola Terry, who explains why Meek’s contributions are so important.

“It is extremely important in an Interrelated class situation to have more than one adult present, because the children are on so many different levels. They are not reading the same stories or working on the same projects,” says Terry. “The students relate well to Ms. Meek, and it is an added benefit that she is a native Spanish speaker. That has greatly improved communication with students and parents.”

Meek, who has worked as a parapro for four years, says she enjoys working with special needs children. “For me, the greatest satisfaction is to help a student who really needs my help,” she explains. “It makes me feel good to know that I have helped children get ready for the larger world around them.”

The enthusiasm that teachers have for their paraprofessionals says volumes about the contributions that they make.

In describing Miriam Wink, her paraprofessional of nine years, teacher Carol Percy of Westwood Elementary School in Dalton, has this to say, “Because of her, every child in my room is touched by a caring and loving adult every day. And because of her, every child has more opportunities to learn. The more encouragement these children get, the harder they work.”

Wink, who was a stay-at-home mom until her youngest child left for college in 1996, says that she became a paraprofessional, “because I just have to have children in my life.”

She sees her primary role in the classroom as “double dosing.”



“I love working with children on reading, particularly, and enjoy reinforcing the lessons they get from the teacher, which we call double dosing. The most enjoyable part of this job is seeing the light go on after going over something for what seems like 300 times,” shares Wink. “I also love to see children who have almost no confidence or self-esteem come to realize that they can do something if they try, whether it is to read, do math or something else.”

One of the most valuable contributions that paraprofessionals can make, Wink believes, is to work one-on-one with children. “I work with lots of small groups and also one-on-one with the children,” she explains, “and this would not happen in a room with a teacher alone. She would not have the time or opportunity to do it.”

There are literally thousands of outstanding paraprofessionals touching the lives of children everyday in Georgia’s schools—but are their contributions really understood and appreciated?

“I believe paraprofessionals are under-appreciated by almost everyone except for teachers and some administrators,” says Sandra Vines, a paraprofessional at Cass High School in Bartow County. “I am fortunate that I do not depend on my salary, because my husband and I could manage without it, but a lot of paraprofessionals are not in that position and what they make is appallingly low. Also, a lot of systems are reducing the number of paraprofessionals, due to changes in state policies and budget cuts.” Cuts in the education budget having a direct impact on the classroom, such as reductions in the number of paraprofessionals, have been high on the list of items discussed in PAGE’s fall legislative rallies.

Vines, who has an undergraduate degree in Marine Biology and is the mother of two girls, ages 12 and 13, spends time with whales in the summer months, but enjoys working with children with severe emotional behavior disorders during the school year.

“This is my fifth year working in a transitional class. Our job is to prepare these students to move out of their self-contained classroom into regular classes,” she says. “This is my calling right now. I get tremendous satisfaction helping make these students’ lives better. Most of them are starting out at such a disadvantage, that I really want to help them get an edge. I help to cheer them on when they do something well and help to provide encouragement and direction when attention is drawn to problems and things they don’t do well.”

Another paraprofessional who has a four-year degree, in music, is Jean Johnson of Dalton High School. “I worked at AT&T before my father died and then started as a paraprofessional at the Junior High

The fact that paraprofessional Carmen Meek (above right) is a fluent Spanish speaker is a huge help to Zeola Terry’s (above left) bilingual students.

Jean Johnson, paraprofessional (right), with Ed Hoy (left), ESOL world geography teacher at Dalton High School.



Persistently Dangerous Schools

At its July meeting this year, the State Board of Education voted in favor of the Unsafe School Choice Option rule.

This rule defines “persistently dangerous” schools and allows students to transfer from these schools. Under the federal law No Child Left Behind each state was required to develop their own definition and rule regarding “persistently dangerous” schools.

In Georgia, the definition includes any public school in which for three consecutive years there has been:

- At least one student that has been found by official tribunal action to have violated a school rule related to violent offense on campus or at a school function. This includes: aggravated battery, aggravated child molestation, aggravated sexual sodomy, armed robbery, arson, kidnapping, murder, rape and voluntary manslaughter,
- At least 2 percent of the students or 10 students, whichever is greater, who have been found to have violated school rules related to criminal offenses including: non-felony drugs, felony drugs, felony weapons or terroristic threats.
- Any combination of the above categories.

Though school choice is not an option until the third year a school meets these definitions, a student victim of a violent crime may transfer immediately.

In an effort to prevent making the persistently dangerous school list, the Georgia Department of Education (DOE) will begin working with schools that have met the criteria for one year.

The State Board of Education has said they will offer

professional development and technical assistance for schools to improve. Additionally, local school systems are to work with law enforcement and community agencies to address the issues that put the school on the list.

Schools that have been labeled persistently dangerous will be required to develop a school plan to address the problems, and must remain on the list for one full year. After completing the one-year corrective action plan, the local school system can apply to be removed from the list of persistently dangerous schools.

The list of persistently dangerous schools will be available annually on July 1 of each year. To compile that report, the DOE is using records of student discipline tribunals and hearings conducted by disciplinary officers held by schools over the last three years.

Definitions can be found on the Department of Education website at doe.k12.ga.us. Click on Rules and then click on Current Rules, scroll down to Rule #160-4-8-.16 (Unsafe School Choice Option)

Once a school has been notified by the DOE that it has met the criteria of a persistently dangerous school, the local school system is required to send out a letter within 10 days to notify all parents/guardians. This letter must specify the process to be used for the transfer of a student to a safe school. This transfer must take place within 30 days of the request.

PAGE continues to monitor the changes occurring in Georgia as a result of the No Child Left Behind law. If you have questions, call the PAGE legal department at (866)-254-0178. ♦

PAGE Letters

GREAT NATIONAL BOARD MENTORING SESSIONS

I attended the Columbia County NBCT mentoring session in Grovetown today and will attend all the other ones that I can. Several things that I was confused about were cleared up. I am excited about, and not as intimidated by, the whole process now.

Thanks to PAGE for making these sessions and wonderful mentors available to us.

Marian Laurie Maddox

THANKS FOR THE SCHOLARSHIP AND MORE

Please extend my thanks to the board of trustees of the PAGE Foundation for awarding

me the Graduate Scholarship this year. I am grateful for not only the financial reward but for the honor of being selected from an outstanding group of Georgia professionals.

I joined PAGE 20 years ago when we had less than 1,000 members, and I am proud to be a member of this growing professional organization. PAGE has offered me and many others wonderful support through the National Board Certification program. The scholarship program sponsored by the PAGE Foundation is a wonderful way to encourage educators in their pursuit for higher education.

Sincerely,
Anna R. Brown



School Bus Safety



I would like to touch briefly on a subject that is occurring all too often—children being left on the school bus.

A recent incident this fall took place on Sept. 26. The school bus picked up a 4-year-old preschool child at 8:50 a.m. The bus arrived at school, and the child did not get off. The bus driver then parked at the bus garage. Two drivers were walking through the lot 30 minutes later, when they heard a boy crying and beating on the windows of the bus.

Think about what could have happened if this had been August in Florida or January in Nebraska! In that length of time or in those temperatures it could have spelled tragedy.

This situation can be avoided by simply taking a moment to walk through to the back of your bus at the end of each route. No driver should ever receive a call asking if little Johnny was on the bus today and then have to check their bus at the next school or

stop. When called, you should be able to say with confidence, "I walked my bus, and there was nobody left on it."

Isn't it worth two minutes of your time to save a child's life?

Shawn Wooten
School Bus Driver
Henry County Schools

Words of Wisdom is a new column to *PAGE ONE*. It is written by paraprofessionals, support professionals and retired educators in order to provide helpful pointers, advice or items of interest to their peers. If you would like to contribute to a future column, please send your comments or ideas to edriver@pageinc.org.

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Or you can visit the PAGE website at www.pageinc.org and click on the insurance option.

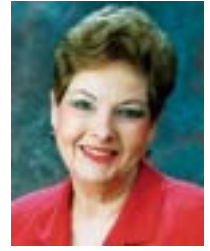
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The State of the Arts

With the increase in science and mathematics and the energy crisis, "auditoriums were gutted and turned into cafeterias, music practice rooms were reconfigured as office spaces, and art classrooms disappeared, to be replaced by 'art on a cart.'"

There are two perspectives on the inclusion of the arts as a component of the core curriculum. One view is that the arts have intrinsic value and portray the most humanistic life experiences; therefore, through the arts students learn about themselves and about humanity. A complementary view is that the arts are the common thread among all civilizations. Every culture manifests its creativity in the forms of dance, song, drama, and visual arts; thus, the universality of the arts provides the best vehicle for studying the histories, languages and cultures of the world.

Another view is that the arts make contributions to the cognitive, affective and creative skills. Numerous articles and studies correlate high achievement with participation in the arts. There are increasing data to support the significant contributions the arts make to the overall and specific intellectual development of students.

ARTS HISTORY

According to educational specialist Donovan R. Walling, governmental support for the arts began to diminish after WWII and significantly decreased with the launching of Sputnik in 1957. With the increase in science and mathematics and the energy crisis, "auditoriums were gutted and turned into cafeterias, music practice rooms were reconfigured as office spaces, and art classrooms disappeared, to be replaced by 'art on a cart.'" (Donovan Walling, *Rethinking Visual Arts Education: A Convergence of Influences*, Phi Delta Kappan, 82, No. 8, 626-631).

During the 1980s a new conceptualization of arts education was originated to put the arts back into the school curriculum and culture. Efforts centered on all teachers becoming involved in the teaching of the arts as part of regular classroom instruction. Disciplined Based Art Education (DBAE), a conceptual framework for integrating the arts into any course of study, was developed. In Georgia the DBAE was incorporated into the Quality Core Curriculum (QCC). The DBAE/QCC strands are:

Artistic Skills and Knowledge—creating, producing, performing and developing skills

and organizing knowledge for creating, producing, and performing the fine arts;

Historical and Cultural Context—examining the fine arts as creative expressions of humankind's relationship to historical, cultural, and social contexts;

Critical Analysis and Aesthetic Understanding—discovering the nature and philosophy of the arts and making informed judgments about the arts; and

Connections—identifying and expanding connections within the fine arts and other disciplines.

A basic tenet of DBAE is to include visual art, music, theatre and dance in regular instructional activities using regular classroom teachers.

During the 1990s, the arts began to receive more attention from both the federal and state governments. However, one of the problems in generating a picture of the status of the arts was that there were no national data sources. With the passage of the Improving America's Schools Act (1994), arts educators, artists, critics, historians and many others began to call attention to the need for the arts in the curriculum, propose ways of teaching the arts and the need to collect data. Data collection on the arts began in 1998. As a part of the educational standards movement and the need to conceptualize arts education for the arts educator, non-arts educator and citizen, the "National Standards for Arts Education: What Every Young American Should Know and Be Able To Do in the Arts" (1994), was published by the consortium of National Arts Education Associations. The standards were written for dance, music, theater and the visual arts. In addition, Goal 3 of the Goals 2000 legislation was changed to include the arts as challenging subject matter thus requiring students to demonstrate competencies.

ARTS RESEARCH AND COGNITIVE AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

The arts have long been recognized for their contribution in developing creative abilities and cultural literacy, but a growing body of research also corroborates that the arts contribute significantly to student's learning and social development.

In 1999, the research findings of the Arts Education Partnership and the President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities were published in *Champions of Change: The Impact of the Arts on Learning*. The major purpose of this study was to investigate the impact the teaching of arts had on students' learning. A team of noted researchers over several years studied established models of arts education and arts education in out-of-school settings. Their major findings support the significance and impact the arts have on students' learning and cognitive development. They are:

Students with high levels of arts participation outperform arts poor students.

The arts have a measurable impact on students in high poverty and urban settings.

The arts after school programs guide disadvantaged youth toward positive behaviors and goals.

Learning through the arts has significant effects on learning in other domains. Arts experiences enhance critical thinking abilities and outcomes.

The arts enable educators to reach students in effective ways.

In "Critical Links: Learning in the Arts and Student Academic and Social Development" (2000), James Catterall stated, "Research on the arts and learning has far transcended the need to test whether or not the arts have impact with potential manifestations beyond direct learning in the art forms." Catterall further states, "We [have] established a neuro-function argument supporting learning through the arts—the cultivation of capabilities and understandings that occur as 'by products' or 'co-developments' of the changes in the cognitive and affective structures brought about by experiences in the arts. More directly, the argument suggests that experiences in the arts create capabilities or motivations that show up in non-arts capabilities." The chart on the following page summarizes the state of the research on the impact of the arts on academic and social development.

SUPPORT FOR THE ARTS

Listed below are some promising financial avenues of support for the fine arts.

Ameritech Foundation Grants: The foundation supports multi-state and national programs in education, specifically elementary and secondary educa-

tion and the arts and culture. Priority is given to grant requests that advance the applications of technology in ways that improve these program areas e.g. use of the computer in teaching the visual arts. Using the Ameritech home page, click on Teacher to review information concerning previously funded projects. ntlf.com/html/grants/6693.htm

Charles A. Dana Foundation New Arts Education Grants: The grants program has targeted the improvement of teaching the performing arts in public schools. The four areas of emphasis are: (1) classroom teachers who integrate the arts into standard public school curriculum; (2) prospective classroom teachers with an interest in arts integration, (3) specialists who teach in various fields of the arts in public school; and (4) professional artists working with teachers and students in schools or school-related settings. Initially the foundation is placing emphasis on projects in New York, Washington, D. C. and Los Angeles, but it is anticipated that this will be broadened. The grant application deadline closed Aug. 31, 2003

for the 2004 awards, but letters of intent received after August 31, 2003 will be considered for 2005 awards. dana.org. Click on Grants.

Knight Foundation: The Knight Foundation was established in 1950 as a private foundation independent from the Knight newspaper enterprises. Its four major areas of emphasis are: community initiatives, journalism, education, and arts and culture. Go to knightfdn.org, click on Research, then click on Vitality of Cultural Life. Grants must address the goals of providing access to a wide variety of artistic and cultural pursuits and nourish creativity in children, youth and adults.

Mary Lou Anderson Reflections Arts Enhancement Grant Program: Matching grants are awarded each year to local PTAs for student-centered programs focused on arts education. Special consideration is given to programs that reach large numbers of students who are at risk. At risk students are students whose environmental, familial, and/or socio-economic situation may affect their academ-

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Compendium Summary: The Arts and Academic and Social Outcomes

ARTS LEARNING:	COGNITIVE CAPACITIES AND MOTIVATIONS TO LEARN:	ARTS LEARNING:	COGNITIVE CAPACITIES AND MOTIVATIONS TO LEARN:
Visual Arts		Dance	
Drawing	Content and organization of writing	Traditional dance	Self-confidence
Visualization training	Sophisticated reading skills/ interpretation of text		Persistence
Reasoning about art	Reasoning about scientific images		Reading skills
Instruction in visual art	Reading readiness		Nonverbal reasoning
			Expressive skills
			Creativity in poetry
			Social tolerance
			Appreciation of individual/group social development
		Creative dance	General creative thinking – fluency
			General creative thinking – originality, elaboration, flexibility
Music		Multi-Arts Programs	
Early childhood music training	Cognitive development	Integrated arts/academics	Reading, verbal and mathematics skills
Music listening	Spatial reasoning		Creative thinking
	Spatial temporal reasoning		Achievement motivation
	Quality of writing		Cognitive engagement
	Proximity of writing		Instructional practice in the school
Piano/keyboard learning	Mathematics proficiency		Professional culture of the school
	Spatial reasoning		School climate
Piano and voice	Long-term spatial temporal reasoning		Community engagement and identity
Music performance	Self-efficacy		
	Self-concept		
Instrument training	Reading		
	SAT verbal scores		
Music with language learning	English skills for ESL learners	Intensive arts experience	Self-confidence
			Risk-taking
			Paying attention
			Persevering
			Empathy for others
			Self-initiating
			Task persistence
			Ownership of learning
			Collaboration skills
			Leadership
			Reduced dropout rates
			Educational aspirations
			Higher-order thinking skills
		Arts-rich school environment	Creativity
			Engagement/attendance
			Range of personal and social developments
			Higher-order thinking skills



ic success or ability to learn. The application is available online and is due May 1, 2004. Go to pta.org, click on Parent Involvement.

Rural School and Community Trust: The Rural Challenge provides grants to rural schools striving for educational reform. A grant from J. Paul Getty Foundation has provided the impetus for a new initiative aimed at helping rural schools and communities redress the lack of or limited availability of arts in their schools. Go to ruraledu.org, click on Programs.

Target Arts in Education Grants: In the 2002-2003 school year, Target offered grants in the arts to create opportunities for students to explore, experience, and create visual art, music and drama. Each Target store has the authority to make Target Arts in Education Grants in its community. Watch for the new announcement about this program. Go to target.com and click on the guidelines.

National Foundation for the Advancement of the Arts (NFAA): Twenty-two years ago, NFAA began a national search for young artists. Each year in January the Arts Recognition and Talent Search (ARTS) program brings together teenagers from all of the U.S. for a week of workshops, master classes, auditions, and scholarship opportunities. The deadline to apply is Oct. 1, 2004 for the 2005 awards. Go to artsawards.org.

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Our New Employee

Margaret Chappell Price joined PAGE in September as legislative services manager and staff attorney. Price was born in Atlanta and raised in Statesboro, Ga. A recent graduate of Mercer Law School, she has already been initiated into PAGE through her travels around the state for PAGE's legislative rallies. She will be a part of the legislative lobbying team at the next session of the General Assembly and will also serve as liaison to Georgia's congressional delegation in Washington, D.C. ■



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Oops!

In the last issue of *PAGE ONE* (September/October) the cover story, "Why They Keep Coming Back," mentioned two people teachers but incorrectly listed their school's affiliation. First was Michael Perry, a National Board Certified business education teacher from Douglas (not Cobb) County's Chapel Hill High School; and Michelle Bodie, now in her fourth year of teaching at A.L. Burruss Elementary (not Marietta High School). We apologize for the error.



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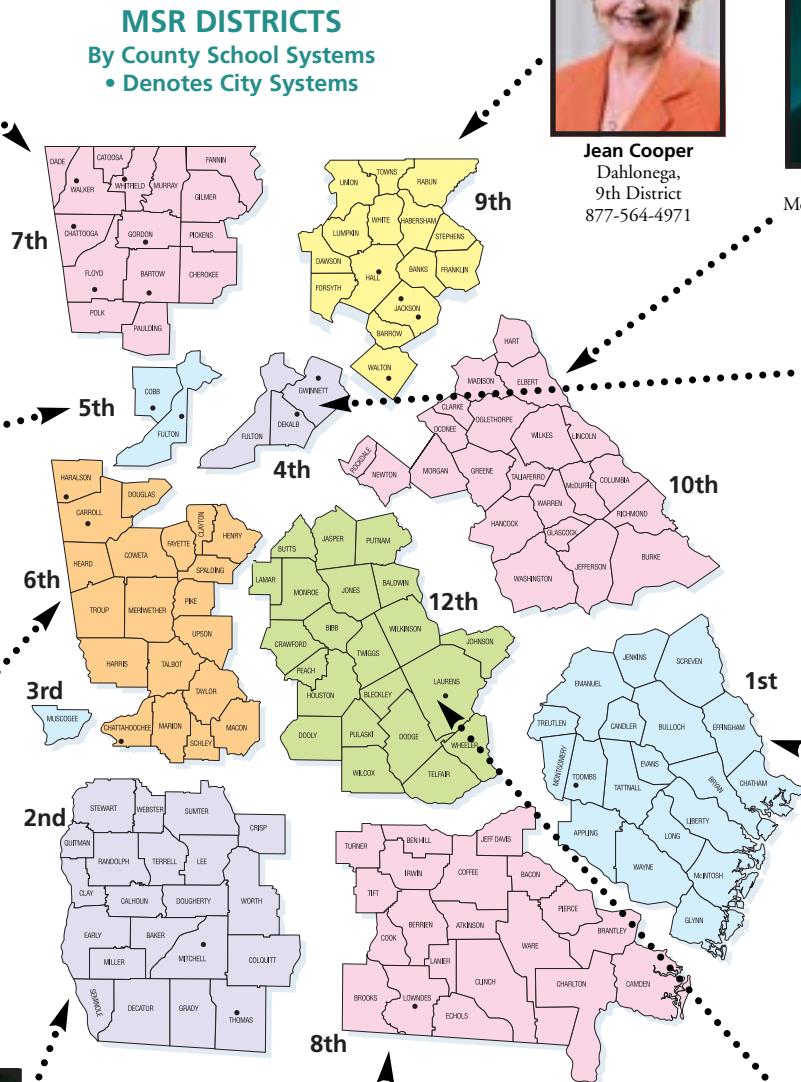
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Members in the News

PAGE MEMBER NAMED FLAG TEACHER OF THE YEAR 2003

PAGE member, **Sandra Lee Hunt** was named Georgia's Foreign Language Teacher of the Year 2003 at this year's Foreign Language Association of Georgia (FLAG) Annual Conference held on March 1st in Atlanta.

Hunt currently teaches Spanish IV, V/VI at Tift County HS and has taught Spanish, French, Italian and German for 32 years. She received a B.S. in Education from Kent State University and has add-on certificates in French, German, Italian and ESOL. She also holds an M.A. from Trinity College and is working toward completion of National Board certification.

Professional recognition and activities include the following: Tift County High School's "Best All-Around Teacher" and "Most Dedicated Teacher" 2001, 2002; The Atlanta Journal Constitution's Honor Teacher Award 2001; Teacher of Excellence Award - Tift Education Foundation 2001; "Be Your Best" Teaching Award (one of 10 national recipients) 2001; National Board Certification Scholarship winner; Georgia's Teacher of the Year Finalist 1998; Teacher of the Year - Douglas County (GA) School System 1997; South Carolina's Spanish Teacher of the Year 1994; Teacher of the Year Georgetown County (SC) School System 1990; Jennings Scholar (Ohio's highest teaching honor) 1973; "Who's Who Among America's Teachers" (numerous entries).

Of all her accomplishments, Hunt says she is most proud of being able to offer Spanish IV, V and VI to her students.

SIX GEORGIA SCHOOLS HONORED AS BLUE RIBBON SCHOOLS

Six Georgia public schools have received the Blue Ribbon Schools Award, an honor given only to America's most successful schools. Among the 219 outstanding schools to receive national recognition for their efforts to raise student achievement are DeKalb County's Meadowview and Vanderlyn Elementary Schools (Principals Zandra Sherwood and Charlene Burger, respectively), Atlanta City's Morris Brandon

Elementary School (Principal Karen Evans), Cobb County's Dickerson Middle School (Principal Melba Fugitt), Richmond County's Johnson Magnet School (Principal Dorothy Gandy), and Fulton County's Mountain Park Elementary School (Principal Aaron Moore).

"These schools and their principals," State Superintendent of Schools Kathy

Cox said, "are models of excellence for Georgians to follow as we work to end the achievement gap that too often divides our children into those who have the capacity to fulfill their dreams, and those who don't."

The No Child Left Behind-Blue Ribbon Schools Program, established by U.S. Secretary of Education Rod

Paige, honors public and private K-12 schools that are either academically superior in their states or that demonstrate dramatic gains in student achievement while adhering to the core principals of the federal No Child Left Behind Act. The program requires Blue Ribbon recipients to meet either of two assessment criteria: dramatic improvement of at least 40 percent of the school's disadvantaged students in state math and reading assessments (for which Meadowview Elementary was nominated), and overall student achievement in the top 10 percent statewide on reading and math assessments. Brandon Elementary, Dickerson Middle, Johnson Magnet School, Mountain Park Elementary and Vanderlyn Elementary were nominated under the second criterion.

"The president has made it a priority to ensure that no child is left behind, and we are working to make that goal a reality in Georgia," Cox said. "The Blue Ribbon Schools have shown that we can end the 'soft bigotry of low expectations' that has left too many students with an inferior education. They exemplify the philosophy that Governor Perdue and I share about education in Georgia: every child can learn, and every child will learn. No child in Georgia will be left behind. These schools have made that belief their consuming passion, and for that I commend them."

THREE GENERATIONS OF TEACHERS IN TURNER COUNTY SCHOOLS

Few families can boast of having three generations of educators, and even fewer have educators from the same family in the same school at the same time. But Turner County High School (TCHS) has a mother, daughter and granddaughter as faculty members on their staff for the 2003-04 school year.

Marlyn Wilson Nelson (mother) has been a teacher of students with special needs for 23 years. She began her teaching career in 1981 at the Sycamore Elementary School as a Special Education teacher of K-4 grades. She continued teaching in this position for 12 years. In fact, she explained that it really seemed like coming home because she returned to the same classroom as a teacher where she'd spent her sixth and seventh grade years. In 1993, she transferred to Turner County High School where she has taught for the past 13 years.

Nelson completed her undergraduate degrees at ABAC and Valdosta State University and received an Associate of Science Degree from ABAC in 1979 majoring in Special Education and received a Bachelor of Science in Education (Mental Retardation) in 1981, and a Master of Education (Interrelated) in 1984. In 1988, she earned a Specialist Degree in Education from Valdosta State College, graduating with honors.

Nelson grew up in a farm family where her life was centered on farming until she went to work in the manufacturing industry. At the age of 39, Nelson decided to do something different with the rest of her life.



Sandra Lee Hunt



Marlyn Nelson, Theresa Williamson and Amy Williamson are three generations of Turner County residents to teach in Turner County schools.

"I have always had a strong desire to work with children with special needs. I wanted to help these students and make a difference in their lives by helping them realize they are important to society, as well as to themselves. I love to see their eyes sparkle when they discover that they can solve a difficult problem or complete a difficult task. It makes all the hard work worthwhile," said Nelson.

She was named "Teacher of the Year" in 1991-1992 at Sycamore Elementary School and was a very active member of Turner County Special Olympics for over 15 years. During those years she held a variety of positions, ranging from bus driver to local coordinator, and she served on the Area 12 Advisory Board. She received many honors, including the "State Volunteer Coach of the Year" award for 1994-95. She was a representative on the Turner County School System Sick Leave Committee for several years. She has been a PAGE member since the early 1980s.

Theresa Nelson Williamson (daughter) has been teaching for 26 years—most of them at Turner County High School. Her educational background includes master's degrees from Georgia Southern University and Valdosta State University and a Specialist degree from the University of Georgia. In addition to her classroom responsibilities, Williamson is a Family, Career and Community Leaders of America advisor.

"I have always wanted to be a teacher.

The subject matter changed several times before I entered the classroom. I love working with students and want to see them succeed. To know that you have made a difference in someone's life is the most gratifying feeling," says Williamson. "When a former student tells you how you helped them to make a career decision because of a class you taught, or even how something that you did in class helped them out of a difficult situation, you know you have touched their lives in a positive way." In 1998, Williamson was awarded "Teacher of the Year" at TCHS.

Amy Williamson (granddaughter) is the newest to the profession. She began her teaching career at TCHS this semester. She attended ABAC and completed her degree work at VSU where she majored in English and minored in Spanish and had the opportunity to study in Spain for a semester. Her plan is to continue her education by completing her Master's degree in the near future.

"I thought I was prepared for anything that could be thrown my way as a first year teacher, but I had no idea of what the job actually entailed," says Amy. "I'm really enjoying the learning process, and I definitely have a new appreciation for the hard work and patience of my co-workers. A teacher must stay inspired and pass the inspiration onto their students daily."

All three teachers received their education from the Turner County School System. Both Williamsons are alumni of TCHS. ♦

PAGE Planner 2003-2004

November 2003

22 FEA in GA Fall Conference (Savannah)

January 2004

10 PAGE Academic Bowl Regional Competition
24 PAGE Academic Bowl Semi-finals

February 2004

9 PAGE Academic Bowl State Finals
10 SPAGE/PAGE Day on Capitol Hill
13-15 FEA National Conference – (Dallas)
27-28 PAGE GAD State Competition (Test C)

March 2004

9 FEA in GA Day on Capitol Hill (Atlanta)

April 2004

14-17 USAD Competition – Boise, Idaho
30 Deadline for PAGE/SPAGE Scholarship Applications

June 2004

7-9 FEA in GA Summer Institute (Milledgeville)

Macon Educator Wins \$2,000 National Award for Innovative Teaching

Jennifer Doss, a teacher at Alexander II Magnet School in Macon, has been recognized as one of the nation's most innovative educators in the 2003 Education's Unsung Heroes Awards program, presented by ING. One of 100 winners, Doss now will vie with other winners for one of the top three prizes—an additional \$5,000, \$10,000 or \$25,000.

Education's Unsung Heroes Awards recognize kindergarten through 12th-grade educators nationwide for their innovative teaching methods, creative educational projects, and ability to make a positive influence on the children they teach. Now in its eighth year, the program has awarded nearly \$2 million to more than 700 educators across the United States.

Doss' "Making Math Matter" project provides teachers with the materials they need to support student learning by adequately stocking the Math Resource Lab and providing regular after-school tutoring opportunities for struggling students. The

program also provides workshops, check-out materials for parents and a summer learning program that gives children extra support and encourages them to aim high. These additional opportunities positively affect children's understanding, performance and attitudes about math. The project represents a renewed focus on hands-on teaching by extending efforts beyond the classroom to ensure the academic needs of students are met. Doss is a resident of Macon.



Jennifer Doss

"There are so many teachers today who consistently go above and beyond to meet the needs of their students. They are creative, focused and innovative in their teaching strategies and in how they engage students. One of the great joys we experience in our work with educators is getting to see these remarkable programs first-hand," said ING Senior Vice President Bill Jasien. "We believe strongly in supporting our nation's educators, both in their professional and personal lives." ♦

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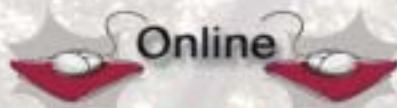
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