



**The 2013 Georgia  
Parent Leadership  
Award Winners**

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**February 15, 2013**



**The 2013 Georgia Parent Leadership Awards**  
***Many Talents. One Purpose. Student Success.***



**Congratulatory Message**  
**from Georgia's State School Superintendent**

It is a privilege and an honor to have the opportunity to announce the six winners of the 2013 Georgia Parent Leadership Awards. This is truly a special day not only for our parent winners, but for the Georgia Department of Education and our collaborative partner, Georgia PTA, as it is always such a pleasure to recognize our state's remarkable parents with this annual statewide award.

Parents, schools, and communities working together create meaningful partnerships that ultimately lead to significant gains in student achievement and success. The parents honored today have spent countless hours strengthening our public schools and enhancing the lives of all children in their school community by serving as parent-teachers, advocates, organizers, learners, decision-makers, motivators, and liaisons. It is amazing to see the results when parents take on these roles and are empowered with the tools needed to effectively work alongside our educators to ensure that students have what they really need: educators in the home and in the classroom.

While this award only recognizes six of Georgia's finest parent leaders, I want to say a big thank you to all of the parents and families across our state who lead by example, taking on the full-time job of being engaged in their children's education. It is my hope that this award will inspire all parents to use their unique talents, no matter how big or small, to pave the way for *making education work for all Georgians*.

Congratulations to our Parent Leadership Award Winners!

Best regards,

John D. Barge, Ed.D

**Georgia State**  
**Board of Education**

Barbara Hampton, *Chair*

Helen Odom Rice, *Vice - Chair*

Linda M. Zechmann

Elizabeth J. Ragsdale

Kenneth Mason

Mike Royal

Wanda Barrs

Brian K. Burdette

Scott Johnson

Allen C. Rice

Mary Sue Murray

Larry Winter





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### About the Georgia Parent Leadership Awards

**The Georgia Parent Leadership Awards are annual awards that recognize parents for their outstanding leadership in creating a foundation of support for student achievement and success.**

The Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) and the Georgia Parent Teacher Association (GA PTA) created the award to recognize parents across Georgia who utilize their various skills and talents to strengthen our schools and positively impact the lives of our children. The award also hopes to inspire all parents to use their unique talents, no matter how big or small, to **lead** the way in building positive outcomes for all children.

The award recognizes the many skills and talents of Georgia's parents, particularly as they exhibit their leadership through any or all of the National PTA Standards for Family - School Partnerships found on the following page. Parent Leadership Award winners are chosen not only based on their demonstrated talents, but also on how their work has benefitted the entire school community on behalf of all children.

Parent leaders are nominated each November during Georgia's Parent Engagement Month by Georgia's public school personnel. Any caregiver who assumes the responsibility for nurturing and caring for a child's entire well-being consisting of educational, emotional, spiritual, and physical health can be considered. Six Parent Leadership Awards are given each year and parents representing both Title I schools and Non-Title I schools, are eligible to be nominated. While all of the six state winners for 2013 represent the elementary school level, schools are encouraged to nominate parents from all school levels: Elementary School, Middle School, and High School as research shows parents make a difference in student achievement no matter the age of their child.

Winners of the Georgia Parent Leadership Award are afforded opportunities throughout the year to share their many recognized talents by promoting and assisting with parent engagement activities at the state level.





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### What is Parent Leadership?

The essence of parent leadership is that the work is **SUSTAINABLE**.

It will continue to impact the school, its children, and their families once the initial parent leader is no longer at the school leading the way.

Winners of the award are parents or caregivers who have contributed to the school community in a way that is bigger and beyond themselves.

### The National Standards for Family - School Partnerships



National PTA. (2008). National Standards for Family-School Partnerships. Washington DC: Author



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**The Many Skills and Talents of Our Parents**

A parent exhibits leadership through any or all of the following National Standards for Family-School Partnerships:

**1. WELCOMING ALL FAMILIES** - Welcomes all families into the school, recruits others to be a part of the life of the school, participates in school events and activities, and connects to what students are learning and doing in class.

**Examples:** Develops personal relationships, creates a welcoming environment, provides opportunities for all to volunteer, removes economic obstacles to school participation, respects all families and sees the value in what they can offer...

**2. COMMUNICATING EFFECTIVELY** - Engages in regular, two-way, meaningful communication about student learning and other events in the school community.

**Examples:** Facilitates connections among school families, provides information on current issues, uses multiple communication paths to reach all...

**3. SUPPORTING STUDENT SUCCESS** - Collaborates to support student learning and healthy development both at home and at school, and takes advantage of regular opportunities to strengthen their knowledge and skills to do so effectively.

**Examples:** Develops families' abilities to strengthen learning at home, helps families to become engaged in the classroom, uses school and student data to mobilize parent action and student support, shares school progress...

**4. SPEAKING UP FOR EVERY CHILD** - Empowers others to be advocates for their own and other children to ensure that students are treated fairly and have access to learning opportunities that will support their success.

**Examples:** Helps others understand the school district in addition to parental rights and responsibilities, builds families' capacities to be effective advocates...

**5. SHARING POWER** - Participates in decision - making that affects children and families and informs, influences, and creates policies, practices, and programs within the school or educational community.

**Examples:** Inspires other parents to be leaders, has a voice at the table in school and community decisions that affect children...

**6. COLLABORATING WITH THE COMMUNITY** - Collaborates with community members to connect students, families and staff to expanded learning opportunities, community services and civic participation.

**Examples:** Partners with community groups to strengthen student support, organizes support from community members, links to resources...





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### **Tilwana Anderson**

**Partee Elementary School, Gwinnett County Schools**

**Title I School**

**Her leadership and presence at the school reminds us of the importance of parent partnerships on a daily basis. Such leadership helps make our school better for all stakeholders.**

***Cherie Ameyaw  
Parent instructional  
Support Coordinator  
Partee Elementary  
School***

When looking for a parent advocate, you do not have to look much further than Tilwana Anderson. Whether it is her work on the local school council, Title I planning team, PTA, or Gwinnett County's Parent Advisory Committee, she is always putting students first and at the center of every discussion. School staff and parents credit her, alike, for her collaboration skills as well as her ability to actively engage and empower others to think critically on behalf of students.

Tilwana is seen as a change agent who understands the power of parent and community engagement. When the school data showed a concern with students beginning school below grade level, she sprang into action developing a plan to assist first grade students who needed assistance in acquiring basic reading skills. While her children were not in the first grade, it was still common to see her observing first grade classrooms and learning teacher reading strategies so she had the knowledge to work with the students. When the school's Parent Center coordinator went on medical leave last year, Tilwana volunteered her time to manage the Parent Center so it could remain open in her absence. She wanted to ensure parents at the school still had a place of support, could talk with a liaison, and receive needed materials that could support their child's learning at home.



Knowing that her role as a parent leader was to motivate and inspire others to support students, she graduated from levels one and two of Gwinnett County's Parent Leadership Academy to refine her own skills to empower others. Since graduating, she continually opens doors for other parents to get involved by welcoming them into the school and finding ways for their talents and interests to be utilized on behalf of the students. She co-leads parent programs with school staff and delivers keynote speeches at parent events, challenging parents to get and stay involved in their child's education.

It is certain that Tilwana's hard work, dedication, and commitment is making a difference in the lives of Gwinnett County's students and their families!





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### **Electria Barnes**

#### **Sanders Elementary School, Cobb County Schools**

#### **Title I School**



Every morning and many afternoons it is no surprise to see Electria Barnes in the halls of Sanders Elementary greeting children and parents as well as helping them navigate many areas of the school building. This is just one of the many ways she feels called to support and sustain parent engagement efforts at Sanders Elementary, as she is a staunch supporter of Sander’s children, their school, and the greater community.

As president and founder of the M.O.M.'s Club (Moms On A Mission), Electria carries out its mission to serve the students, and she recruits, trains and helps integrate parents into the school culture through volunteerism and developing community relationships with support projects. She also serves as a member of the Community Task Force and in this role actively links community resources to the school community, helping families to become engaged and empowered. She also has developed a communication mechanism where school and community information is disseminated to parents through texts, emails and school postings. Thanks to Electria, parents know where to locate the most current resources to help support families when it comes to student achievement and success.

Electria finds time to volunteer weekly in her child's classroom to help not only her child, but others. You can find her reading to children, helping students with math, and securing donations for classroom activities. Electria is an active member of the school's Title I Parent Action Team, participating in decision-making plans that help close the achievement gap of students. She also takes advantage of educational opportunities and workshops offered through Title I to stay on top of the most current reading and math strategies. She is an avid recruiter of other parents to these learning events, this ensuring that all students at Sanders are getting the support they need to succeed.

Electria works tirelessly for the students and community of Sanders Elementary as a dynamic mother, leader, volunteer and decision-maker. Sanders Elementary is forever changed because of her commitment to parental engagement!

**Walter Lippmann said,  
"The final test of a leader is that he leaves behind him in other men the conviction and will to carry on."  
Electria has prepared others to carry on, and this is what parent leadership is all about!**

*Linda Nelums,  
Parent Liaison &  
Teacher  
Sanders Elementary  
School*



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**Debra Mainor**

**Hillcrest Elementary School, Dublin City Schools**

**Title I School**

**Debra is an asset to our school and community. She is a dedicated person who is willing to go above and beyond to do what is needed to better the school for our future.**

***Sherrell Edmond, School Improvement Specialist  
Hillcrest Elementary School***

With a positive attitude and a smile on her face, Debra Mainor has been an active and involved parent at Hillcrest Elementary School. It is common to see her greeting and assisting parents in the mornings and if she is engaged in a conversation with them you can be sure it is about how they can assist in their child’s education. She has used her enthusiasm for public education and the Dublin City Schools to help reach out and involve other families in the school and community. She participates in system level parent meetings and activities to further expand opportunities and collaboration, knowing that it takes a community to support student achievement and success.



Debra was an integral part of the strategic planning committee that restructured the school’s educational programming and the essential elements for its charter school conversion. She now serves as the secretary on the Governance Council and works diligently to research and understand initiatives to ensure that any actions taken are in the best interest of all students. Beside participating actively in the decision-making of the school, Debra is an involved parent who is always ready to lend a helping hand. She regularly assists in the front office, helps to facilitate activities for the students, and provides support for the teachers.

This year, Debra shared her passion for advocacy directly with the students. She took on a leadership role in developing and implementing the Student Leadership Council. She worked collaboratively with assigned staff to ensure that the process was relevant for students and that they had a solid structure in place to be true leaders in their school. Due to her efforts, the students’ public speaking and leadership skills improved.

Debra is a dedicated parent willing to go above and beyond and she has proven herself to be an asset to her entire school community!



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**Kellie Martin**

**Elcan-King Elementary School, Decatur County Schools**

**Title I School**

Known for her willingness to help and her ability to find creative solutions, Kellie Martin is a valuable member of the Elcan-King Elementary School family. Her thoughtful input and sound ideas make her an integral part of several school teams and committees that steer schoolwide activities and determine policies. Kellie believes in the power of parent engagement so much that she assumes the voluntary role of a Parent Involvement Coordinator at the school, working alongside the district's Parent Involvement Coordinator teaching classes to other parents, being a leader in school reform, an advocate for student achievement, and a community liaison.

As a parent leader at Elcan-King Elementary, Kellie serves as a beacon of light to guide and lead other parents. It did not take long for the interim principal to recognize Kellie as a resourceful parent and describes her as "a visionary...(who) takes the steps necessary to complete the vision". Her vision to develop meaningful parent engagement that helps parents and students has been a guiding force behind her schoolwide efforts. Kellie turns this vision into a reality by motivating and enlisting other parents to utilize their time and talents to help the school. Not only does Kellie understand that many hands make light work, but she also knows the benefits of increasing parent involvement in the school. Therefore, thanks to Kellie's skills and energy, Elcan-King Elementary has been able to train and certify a knowledgeable group of over 30 volunteers who provide extra support in the classrooms. This coordinated network of parent volunteers serves not only as a testament to Kellie's influence as a leader, but also her ability to impact change.

It is very fitting that the Elcan-King Elementary School motto is "Be Their Best Together" and "Climbing to Greater Heights" because thanks to the commitment and dedication of Kellie Martin, there is no doubt that this school, will continue working to reach great heights!



**Aside from being a great visionary, Kellie is passionate about promoting the education and the positive experiences that each child encounters while attending Elcan-King Elementary School.**

*Jennifer Wilkinson, Interim Principal  
 Elcan-King Elementary School*





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### Capucine Pansy

**Eastside Elementary School, Douglas County Schools**

**Title I School**

Capucine has embraced Eastside Elementary School as her second home, often seen in the halls, classrooms and various school events promoting student achievement and parent involvement.

*Tammi Love  
Parent Outreach facilitator  
Eastside elementary School*

It is hard to imagine how Capucine Pansy finds the time and the energy to successfully manage her different roles and countless projects at Eastside Elementary School. As the co-president of the Parent Teacher Association, a member of the Parent Advisory Council, a volunteer for Parents Informing Parents, and a room mom for her daughter's class, Capucine truly wears many different hats and she wears them extremely well. One thing that is clear about this caring and passionate mother is that she will do everything in her power to find a solution whenever she sees a problem. More often than not, that solution is Capucine.

Described as a welcome marquee board personified, Capucine, without question, embodies the definition of a parent leader through her amazing ability to motivate other parents to work together to make a difference at Eastside Elementary School. It was her vision and charge for the Parent Teacher Association to focus the group's collective efforts on what is truly important, which is helping student learning. Capucine understands the importance of learning in the home and therefore recognizes the essential role that parents play in positively influencing their child's education. To this end, Capucine was instrumental in bringing hundreds of parents through the doors of her school to participate in workshops focused on math and reading skills development. Whether she is providing school supplies for children as rewards for classroom participation, bringing extra books for parents to read to their children, or working with community organizations to provide civic services for families, Capucine continuously strives to improve the connection and strengthen the partnership between the families, the school, and the community.

Capucine has undoubtedly made a lasting impact in the lives of the children at Eastside Elementary School and this thankful community will continue to accomplish great things with her help and hard work!



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### **States Wing**

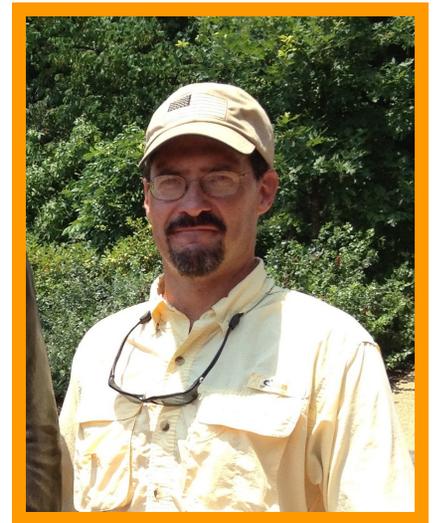
### **Sharon Elementary School, Forsyth County Schools**

Sharon Elementary School principal Amy Bartlett calls States Wing “an absolute visionary with a unique way of taking a seed idea and transforming it into reality” and by all accounts he has gone above and beyond for this school community, all while focusing on how to best meet the needs of students. As an active dad and owner of a landscape business, he volunteered his time and expertise in planning, creating and developing the Sharon DIGS (Discover. Inspire. Grow. Succeed). With his vision and skill, this project gained great momentum and community support.

The DIGS, a beautiful, serene courtyard provides unique educational opportunities for the students at Sharon Elementary. Through parent, student and community collaboration, the DIGS integrates instructional standards with hands-on learning in a truly exciting and inspiring way for all Sharon Elementary students. This 15,000 square foot state-of-the-art outdoor learning environment was specifically designed to integrate outdoor learning with classroom curriculum. Within this real world setting, all students are provided hands-on inquiry-based learning opportunities about native plants, life-cycles, rock formations, and colonial farming.

Throughout the yearlong process, States was on the campus daily overseeing each phase of the project he masterminded. More importantly, he invited all of the students, families and community members to join him and take part in this project. Together under State's guidance over 100 students, families and businesses spent hundreds of hours volunteering to bring this project to life, bringing a real sense of community and ownership to the DIGS.

Thanks to States, his work on this project has inspired the teachers, parents, and students at Sharon Elementary School, and he has created an environment for students to learn for years to come!



**I understand that it takes parent involvement to have a successful learning environment for our children. States is a parent who never backs down when asked to be involved. He always goes above and beyond in everything he does for the students at Sharon.**

***Jeff Bowling, Parent/Head Watch DOGS Dad  
Forsyth County Schools***



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# What are Your Talents?

For more information about the Georgia Parent Leadership Awards please visit the Georgia Department of Education's Parent Engagement Website at:  
[http://public.doe.k12.ga.us/tss\\_title.aspx?PageReq=ParentEngagement](http://public.doe.k12.ga.us/tss_title.aspx?PageReq=ParentEngagement)



*Dr. John D. Barge, State School Superintendent*  
*"Making Education Work for All Georgians"*

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