

# F PARTNERS IN EDUCATION FOCUS

Connecting Communities and Classroom

FLORIDA NEWSLETTER

Summer 2006

## Still Revved from Conference 2006!

### President's Message

Dear FAPE Members,



The checkered flags are packed away, but our engines are still revved up from the great experiences we had and the wonderful people we met at the FAPE Conference in Daytona Beach this past April. We'd like to thank all of our terrific partners: Department of Education, PAEC, Communities in Schools, SunSpra, the Florida Education Consortium and Florida Association of District School Superintendents. They each contributed something special and unique from outstanding keynote speakers, to special events, to fantastic audio visual materials, to great workshop presenters.

A special thanks also goes to our Board and Conference Planning Committee Members. Speaking of Board Members, Donna Houchen was honored for her many years of service to FAPE as Treasurer. We'll certainly miss her great energy and enthusiasm, but fortunately she has already agreed to Co-Chair the Program Planning Committee for next year's conference so she won't be going too far.

Most of all, we want to thank the hundreds of you who participated in the FAPE conference!! You shared such awesome ideas. But now I'm going to ask for your help again. Our Board meets August 3rd and 4th for a strategic planning retreat. Any input you could provide prior to the beginning of August would be



Doretha Jackson, representing Pinellas County, receives the FAPE Membership Award from FAPE Executive Director Pam Lastowski.

greatly appreciated. We will be concentrating our efforts on three important goals:

- Ways to increase advocacy for volunteerism at the state level
- Training with an emphasis on regional support
- Membership development

Here's my promise to you . . . next year's conference will be better than ever as we usher in the "Winds of Change" in Pinellas. Thanks for sharing your time, talent, energy and enthusiasm.

Judi Miller, President

## Big Brothers Big Sisters: Making a *Big* impact on a child's life through a *Little* mentoring

**B**ig Brothers Big Sisters (BBBS) has been the nation's premier youth mentoring organization for more than 100 years, helping children reach their potential through one-to-one mentoring relationships. BBBS of Pinellas (serving Pinellas, Hernando and Citrus Counties) served 1,118 children last year – 647 through the community-based program and 471 through the school/site-based program.

Independent national and state research and evaluations prove that BBBS programs work. A Public/Private ventures study conducted in the late 90's confirmed that children matched with a Big Brother, Big Sister or Big Couple for at least one year were 46 percent less likely to use illegal drugs, 27 percent less likely to use alcohol, and 37 percent less likely to skip school. Dramatic changes detected in BBBS student behavior were also confirmed by Dr. Philip Gris  in the Florida State University *Mentoring in Florida 2003-2004* report. The students were 33 percent less likely to receive disciplinary action compared to average students and disruptive behaviors resulting in suspensions/expulsions have been cut in half. BBBS Reading gains for FCAT were 10 percent higher for fourth graders than average student gains. These gains were also present for Math and similar results occurred for seventh graders.

Last year, the Program Outcome Evaluations conducted by BBBS of Pinellas showed more than 90 percent of children matched in the community-based and school/site-based programs displayed improvements in self confidence, their ability to express feelings, relationships with family and peers, and attitudes toward school. School Report Cards determined that 98 percent of the children matched maintained or improved academic performance and 89 percent maintained or improved school attendance. Over a ten year trend, 90 percent of children that were once matched in the Pinellas BBBS programs for at least one year have avoided involvement with the Department of Juvenile Justice. Additionally, the



Susan Rolston, CEO of BBBS serving Pinellas, Hernando, and Citrus Counties, is a Big Sister to 4<sup>th</sup> grader Morgan. As a school-based Big for three years, Rolston says the best hour of her week is the one she spends with Morgan. They are working together to pass FCAT this year and are looking forward to being in the 5<sup>th</sup> grade.

impact of our life-changing mission is demonstrated time and again in the personal stories of *Big* and *Little* matches made years ago, which created friendships that still thrive today.

“Not surprising is that the mentor's life, not just the child's, is enriched as a result of the relationship,” said Susan Rolston, CEO of BBBS Pinellas. “We have received an enormous amount of positive feedback: from the families who publicly recognize the *Big* that had made such a difference in the life of their child, to the *Littles* who became *Bigs* themselves because of the impact their mentor had on them.”

In an effort to serve more families of the children matched, BBBS of Pinellas also offers two family service programs. Kinship Services Network (KSN), a collaborative effort with The Children's Home and Catholic Charities Diocese, gives support to any relative caregiver – such as a grandparent, aunt, or sibling – through areas such as counseling, economic assistance, mentoring and access to community services. KSN is making great strides toward their goal of 280 families served by Sept. 2006. IMPACT is another unique support program in which our staff licensed mental health counselor serves as a Big Sister to the entire family. By assisting the whole family to become self-sufficient and stable, our mentoring programs for the children are more effective. IMPACT serves 20 families each year, graduating families as they meet their goals.

BBBS of Pinellas anticipates a 25 percent growth in the number of children served in the Pinellas, Hernando, and Citrus areas during 2006. This is partly due to the increased partnerships with Pinellas, Hernando, and Citrus County school boards and after-school child care programs such as the YMCA, R'Club, and Boys and Girls Club.



Dean Brunk, a third-year Stetson Law student, has been matched with Little Brother DiQuez for over a year. DiQuez's father, stepfather, and grandfather, who have all been incarcerated, commend Brunk's relationship with DiQuez – one that is giving tremendous signs of hope for breaking the family cycle of incarceration.



Special thank you to David Mosrie and FADDS for their support and participation in this event!



# Thank You

for making our 2006 Florida Partners in Education Conference a Success!

Your support benefits literacy in education and celebration of citizen volunteers in our schools.

## Conference Sponsors

### Diamond

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Ensure Success for Florida's Students



The Florida Association of PARTNERS IN EDUCATION



Special thank you to the Panhandle Area Education Consortium for our audio-visuals!

## NEWS from DOE ...

# Florida Outstanding School Volunteer

### REGION I

**Lisa LeMaster**, Leon County



In her 350-plus hours of volunteer time this year, Lisa LeMaster has served as yearbook chairperson, student directory chairperson, book fair chairperson, co-volunteer coordinator, accelerated reading parent and homeroom parent at Gilchrist Elementary. She also worked as a volunteer for the silent auction, Jump Rope for Heart, Walk-A-Thon for Technology, Grandparent's Week, Spelling Bee, kindergarten orientation and on school picture day. She has handled many of these undertakings for several years and is a proven, reliable and faithful volunteer at Gilchrist. She responds to whatever need may arise at the school and her value is understood and appreciated. "Lisa is one of those wonderful parents who truly gives 110 percent of her heart, time and effort to Gilchrist Elementary," Principal Scotty Crowe said. "She is a special parent who makes volunteering at her child's school a priority!"

### REGION II

**Janet Griswold**, Duval County

What is 20 (hrs) multiplied by 52 (weeks), multiplied by 6 (years)? Janet Griswold could tell you in a flash. That's how many hours she has been tutoring math to students at Fletcher High School. She volunteers during the day and after school, teaching students in subjects from Algebra to AP Calculus. She helps students prepare for the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test and conducts all-day comprehensive reviews for math students who have not passed the High School Competency Test, which is required for a diploma. Janet makes herself available to students by encouraging them to call her in the evenings or weekends if they need extra help. She is willing to meet them at the library, or at the school and has even welcomed them to her home for tutoring sessions. Students truly know that she cares for them. Janet relates to the students on their level so they understand and really learn the material. Janet also helps the school guidance office organize materials, coordinate scheduling and works with them on special projects. We think she's a perfect 10!



### REGION III

**Steven Gulash**, St. Lucie County

Steven Gulash is creating a metamorphosis at Mariposa Elementary with his contagious personality and selfless dedication. He is the father of four, including two who attend Mariposa, but all children there benefit from his involvement. He serves as SAC chairperson, DAC representative, Martin Luther King committee member, PTO president, cafeteria volunteer, guest speaker and student mentor. He donates his time, money and efforts to ensure all students, especially those who are less fortunate, are able to attend field trips and have school supplies. He organized a pumpkin sale fundraiser to put money back into the classrooms and a "Bowl for Kids Sake" fundraiser to support the Boys and Girls Club. In addition, he sponsors and coaches a Little League team. Steven's contribution and legacy is seen every day as students and teachers enjoy the professionally landscaped school entrance that he designed and planted. His humble spirit is surpassed only by his integrity, humor and compassion. He has impacted the lives of our greatest resource – the children at Mariposa Elementary.



## REGION V

### Vicki Hewett, Palm Beach County

Vicki Hewett has volunteered her time and talents at five different Palm Beach County Schools during an uninterrupted 16 years of service. Sandpiper Shores Elementary, Loggers' Run Middle School, Eagles Landing Middle School, Olympic Heights High and West Boca Raton High have all been touched by her contributions on each school's PTA and SAC. Her leadership shines through in the various committees and positions she's contributed to, including business partnerships, fundraising, volunteer coordination and treasurer. Vicki has tirelessly campaigned for business partners, which resulted in at least \$215,000 in donations and national recognition on behalf of Target Stores. Her relentless fundraising efforts have enabled countless students to participate in activities including band and school athletic teams. Truly the volunteer's volunteer, Vicki's generosity, spirit and compassion make her a valuable and treasured asset to West Boca Raton High and Palm Beach County Schools.



## REGION IV

### Tonya Hunter, Manatee County

Tonya Hunter truly personifies the saying "*if life hands you lemons, make lemonade!*"

Tonya became involved in the school system because she felt her family was victim to new school boundaries and was unhappy with the changes. From the beginning Tonya was not going to be an unreachable parent. She was on campus every day volunteering. By her example, parents have begun showing an interest in what is taking place in their child's school. Not only did she bring the PTO back to life, she actively recruited parents to participate in educational, social and fundraising activities. She is a true parent advocate and has become a leader in all school activities. She has organized a Tillman reunion, a Tillman Dinner Theater, teacher appreciation luncheons and much more. Her skills extend from organizing special events, fundraising and being an advocate for quality education. Tonya is more that willing to make personal phone calls or contacts to get others involved. With more than 600 hours volunteered, Tonya is always available to help and has re-introduced fun and excitement to the learning experience. She is dedicated to making Tillman a better place for all students and parents.



## REGION IV

### Donna McMann, Pinellas County

Donna McMann volunteers in some fashion every day at Bauder Elementary. Though Donna has three children of her own--a preschooler, a second-grader, and a special education student in fourth grade-- she always finds time for all the students at Bauder. She donates her time as a room mom, popcorn popper, president of the Bauder Boosters, and School Advisory Council member, but her greatest impact is the Bauder Effective Student Techniques (B.E.S.T.) mixers. The B.E.S.T. mixers assist parents whose children may be struggling in behavior or academics. She has been instrumental in organizing a gathering place for parents to learn and share together on techniques to help their children with academic success. She is an advocate for parents and has brought parent participation to the forefront. In addition, Donna coordinates and volunteers with fundraising activities, spirit events, summer camps, guest speakers and any other event where there is a need. She takes the time to share her knowledge and compassion with others and has really made a difference to the parents, students and staff at Bauder Elementary.





# *Superintendent Winners*

## **2005-2006 Superintendent's Award for Volunteer/Community Involvement**

### **Region I**

**Bay County**  
**James E. McCalister, Sr.**

**Escambia County**  
**Jim Paul**

**Gadsden County**  
**Reginald C. James**

**Jackson County**  
**Daniel G. Sims**

**Leon County**  
**William J. Montford, III**

**Walton County**  
**Carlene H. Anderson**

### **Region II**

**Alachua County**  
**Dr. W. Daniel Boyd, Jr.**

**Citrus County**  
**Sandra Himmel**

**Dixie County**  
**Dennis W. Bennett**

**Nassau County**  
**Dr. John L. Ruis**

**Putnam County**  
**David Buckles**

### **Region III**

**Brevard County**  
**Dr. Richard A. DiPatri**

**Lake County**  
**Anna P. Cowin**

**Martin County**  
**Dr. Sara A. Wilcox**

**Orange County**  
**Ronald Blocker**

**Osceola County**  
**Blaine Muse**

**Seminole County**  
**Dr. Bill Vogel**

**St. Lucie County**  
**Michael Lannon**

**Sumter County**  
**Richard A. Shirley**

**Volusia County**  
**Dr. Margaret A. Smith**

### **Region IV**

**DeSoto County**  
**Adrian H. Cline**

**Hernando County**  
**Dr. Wendy Tellone**

**Highlands County**  
**Wally Cox**

**Lee County**  
**Dr. James W. Browder, III**

**Pinellas County**  
**Dr. Clayton Wilcox**

### **Region V**

**Broward County**  
**Dr. Frank Till**

**Monroe County**  
**Randy Acevedo**

**Palm Beach County**  
**Dr. Arthur C. Johnson**

# Daytona 2006



**More fun from  
conference!**





This is our new FAPE brochure cover with new slogan and logo!

***Pretty slick!***

**Hold the Date!**

**Annual Fall Leadership Training**

September 28/29  
Tallahassee, FL

Details in next newsletter.

**2005-2006 FAPE Board of Directors:**

- Judi Miller**, President  
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- Doretha Jackson**, President Elect  
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- Rick Everitt**, VP Govern. Technology & Business  
Panhandle Area Educational Consortium
- Pat Lancaster**, Interim Secretary  
Citrus County School District
- Connie Wotton**, Treasurer  
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- Jane Lane**, Past President  
Seminole County Public Schools
- Susan Walton**, DOE Representative  
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**Become a FAPE Member!**

Individual membership: \$25  
Institutional membership (10 members): \$200  
Visit [www.flpie.net](http://www.flpie.net) or contact Pam Lastowski:  
850-514-FAPE (3273)  
[pamlastowski@comcast.net](mailto:pamlastowski@comcast.net).

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