

School district's volunteer coordinator wins state award

Alachua County Public Schools' volunteer coordinator Liz Stark has been named the 2014 winner of the Adele Graham Award, sponsored annually by the Florida Association of Partners in Education (FAPE).

Starke was presented with the award during the most recent school board meeting by Dorothy Spradley and Linda Morris, both of whom are FAPE board members and previous winners. The award is presented to recognize an individual volunteer coordinator who has given tirelessly to build the state's school volunteer program.



"Liz is an outstanding example of the award named in honor of Adele Graham," said Spradley. "Like Mrs. Graham, Liz is a focused, committed and consistent supporter of public school volunteerism and community involvement here in Alachua County and throughout Florida."

The award is named after the wife of former Florida Governor Bob Graham, who during his tenure persuaded the governor and legislative leaders to provide state resources to promote school volunteer programs. Adele Graham continued her advocacy for school volunteers when her husband was elected to the Senate.

Starke is currently in her 10th year as the School Volunteer Coordinator for the district. For nine of those years she has also been active in FAPE, serving in a number of leadership roles. She is currently serving her second year as president of the organization. In that capacity she has worked to maintain FAPE's viability despite the state's economic downturn, including organizing the organization's first drive-in workshop at Legoland in Orlando.

Under Stark's leadership, Alachua County Public Schools' boasted more than 24,000 school volunteers who contributed more than 750,000 hours of service during the 2013-14 school year.

"We are so proud of the recognition that Liz has received," said Superintendent Dr. Owen Roberts. "Her efforts to recruit, train and retain volunteers here in Alachua County and throughout Florida are critical to the success of our students and schools."

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