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District Honors Teachers and Employees of the Year Announces Houston County Teacher of the Year ~ MAES Kathy Releford



HOUSTON COUNTY, GA – The Houston County School System honored 38 Teachers of the Year and six Employees of the Year during the system’s Opening Session on July 25, 2019. The systemwide Teacher of the Year and four finalists were announced for the first time. **Dr. Kathy Releford** (pictured) of **Matt Arthur Elementary School** is the **2019-2020 Houston County Teacher of the Year**.

Dr. Releford teaches special education and has taught in the district for 10 years. Raised in Millen, Ga. and a graduate of Jenkins County High, she has earned three degrees. Dr. Releford has an accounting degree from Georgia Southern University, a master’s in education from the University of Phoenix, and a doctorate in curriculum and instruction from the University of Phoenix.

Born to Robert and Harriet Pierce, she is the baby of 10 children and the first to pursue education beyond high school. She is married to Lewis Releford and has four children and one grandchild.

The four finalists for systemwide Teacher of the Year (TOTY) are:

- ★ Bonaire Middle ~ Brenda Taylor
- ★ Lake Joy Primary School ~ Tamra Andrews
- ★ Tucker Elementary School ~ Susan Jolly
- ★ Warner Robins High ~ Nicholas Sostillio.

The 2019-2020 Employees of the Year (EOTY) were honored during the ceremony. Congratulations to:

- ★ **Bus Driver of the Year:** Tonya Grant
- ★ **Bus Monitor of the Year:** Terrence Kendrick
- ★ **Custodian of the Year:** Marcus Hayes, Veterans High School
- ★ **Distribution Center Employee of the Year:** Daniel Rice

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- ★ **Maintenance Employee of the Year:** Adam Isbell
- ★ **School Nutrition Program Manager of the Year:** Jennifer Howard, Lake Joy Primary School

Many thanks are expressed to the companies that provided event sponsorship. The 2019-2020 sponsors are:

- ★ Premier level: Flint Energies, HEA Federal Credit Union, Houston Healthcare, Parrish Construction, Southside Baptist, Totem Solutions, VALIC Financial Advisors and Yancey Bus Sales;
- ★ Gold: Cox Communications, Golden Key Realty and Horace Mann Companies;
- ★ Silver: Central Georgia Technical College, Georgia Military College and Synovus Bank;
- ★ Bronze: Advanced Eyecare Center, Herff Jones - Randy Roderick, Keller Williams Realty Middle Georgia - Sharon Lunceford and Walker Law Firm - Jay Walker & C. J. Walker; and
- ★ Friends of the HCBOE: Davis Oil Company.

Honorees received gifts from the community valued at about \$91,000, as well as congratulatory letters from Senator Johnny Isakson, Senator David Perdue, Congressman Austin Scott, Governor Brian Kemp and Houston County's state legislators. As the Houston County Teacher of the Year, Dr. Releford received gifts valued at approximately \$20,000, to include \$3,200 in cash awards from the HEA Federal Credit Union, Houston Association of Educators, Professional Association of Educators, Robins Regional Chamber, Sonny's BBQ, Southside Baptist Church and Synovus Bank. She was also awarded a new 2020 Honda for the year by Hughes Honda.

Southside Baptist hosted the event and provided free coffee and water. Southside volunteers also assisted with the event setup and takedown, audiovisuals, and rides to and from cars. In addition, Coca-Cola provided beverages, which district maintenance staff distributed as teachers left the event.

The school system greatly appreciates the following companies that provided gifts:

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| ★ Ace Hardware of Perry | ★ Dr. William Freeman |
| ★ Advanced Eyecare Center | ★ Fried Green Tomatoes |
| ★ Applebee's of Perry | ★ Frito-Lay |
| ★ Ashley Marie's Boutique | ★ Georgia Military College |
| ★ Belk | ★ Georgia National Fairgrounds & Agricenter |
| ★ Dr. and Mrs. Alex Bell | ★ Georgia Theatre, Houston Lake |
| ★ Bodega Brew | ★ Gottwals Books |
| ★ Mr. Tyler Bryant, WRHS graduate | ★ Hammer & Stain, Middle Georgia |
| ★ Burger King | ★ Harris Trophies |
| ★ The Butcher Shop | ★ Hayneville Hostess, Jenny McClintic |
| ★ C&C Photography | ★ HEA Federal Credit Union |
| ★ Chamber of Commerce, Perry Area | ★ Houston Association of Educators |
| ★ Chamber of Commerce, Robins Region | ★ Houston County Development Authority |
| ★ Cherokee Pines Golf & Fitness | ★ Houston County Family Connection |
| ★ Chick-fil-A | ★ Houston Lake Country Club |
| ★ Clean Control | ★ Hughes Honda |
| ★ Coca-Cola | ★ Ibalz Marketing & Signs |
| ★ Collective Goods | ★ Kerri Moore Interiors |
| ★ Cracker Barrel | ★ LongHorn Steakhouse of Perry |
| ★ Dark Horse Fitness, Stephanie Phillips | ★ Mr. Bill Loudermilk |
| ★ Davis Oil Company | ★ Lumber Liquidators |
| ★ Del Taco | ★ McCall's Sandwich Shop |
| ★ Dolly James Boutique | ★ McDonald's Horse Supply & Western Wear |
| ★ Edge Fitness | ★ Middle GA RESA |
| ★ James Farmer, Inc. | |
| ★ Fire Starter Fab Lab | |
| ★ Float Robins | |

- ★ Miss Dottie's
- ★ Mossy Creek Natural & Soap
- ★ Museum of Arts and Sciences
- ★ Museum of Aviation
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- ★ O'Charley's
- ★ Occasions at Lake Joy
- ★ Office Depot
- ★ Olive Garden
- ★ Outback Steakhouse
- ★ Pampered Chef, Jenny McClintic
- ★ Parrish Construction
- ★ Perry Chiropractic
- ★ Perry Taekwondo
- ★ Professional Association of Georgia Educators
- ★ Publix
- ★ Red Lobster
- ★ Reflections Salon, Doreen Winkler
- ★ Roots, Turf & Ornamental
- ★ Shane's Rib Shack of Warner Robins
- ★ Simply Southern Sweets
- ★ Mr. Phil Smith
- ★ Soul Pepper Designs
- ★ Southside Baptist Church
- ★ Stone Mountain Park
- ★ Subway of Perry
- ★ The Swanson House
- ★ Sweet Charlie's
- ★ Synovus Bank
- ★ Target
- ★ Theatre Macon
- ★ Tidal Wave Auto Spa
- ★ Timeless Treasures, Antiques & Collectibles, Barbara Griffin
- ★ Vine Boutique
- ★ Walker Law Firm, Jay Walker and C.J. Walker
- ★ Walmarts of Houston County
- ★ Warner Robins Supply
- ★ Wild Adventures Theme Park
- ★ Yelverton's Jewelry
- ★ Zaxby's of Middle Georgia
- ★ Zoner's Pizza, Wings & Waffles of Warner Robins

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