



## Thomas County Board of Education Newsletter

### Envision Grant Helps Students “Bee’come” Their Best



Superintendent Dr. Lisa Williams, Hand-In-Hand Counselor Whitney Robertson, and Envision representatives Kellie Merck and Lee Bryant.

Envision Credit Union recently awarded a \$2,000 grant to Hand-In-Hand Primary School “to help students become their best versions of themselves.”

Funds from the grant will be used to purchase supplies for a Conscious Discipline program the school has been implementing. Hand-in-Hand Counselor Whitney Robertson applied for the grant with hopes of enhancing a child’s emotional development by strengthening the skills of both students and staff, all of which have a profound effect on school climate and learning.

The benefits of Robertson’s project, entitled “Bee’coming Our Best Through Social Emotional Learning,” will be carried into a child’s future years of school by helping students become successful students and citizens.

Robertson said, “As

the Hand-In-Hand School Counselor, I am working to grow our staff in knowledge, understanding, and scrupulous practice of the Conscious Discipline powers of self-control and skills of self-discipline in order to become more emotionally regulated adults. In turn, these adults can teach the necessary skills of self-regulation to children in order to enhance social, emotional, and academic learning.”

The \$2,000 will purchase supplies such as self-regulation toolkits which students can use to help label and manage their emotions, language literacy packs to help develop social and emotional skills and “greeting aprons” to help set the tone for a positive day of learning.

“If a child can do advanced math, speak three languages or make top grades, but they can’t

handle their emotions, then none of the other stuff really matters,” Robertson said. “That’s why this is so important to us.”

Robertson plans to also develop six “calm-down” centers in each of Hand-In-Hand’s hallways to provide a safe place for students to work through their emotions.

“It is hard for a student to learn to read and write if they can’t regulate how they feel,” Robertson added. “This has a vertical progression which, if continued, will one day help these individuals enter the workforce with the ability to learn financial literacy, use technology,

and serve their community. Ultimately, children and teachers will have an opportunity to learn new skills that will help alleviate conflicts and contribute to improved mental health which will prove beneficial in and to our community.”

Envision has been instrumental in improving education through grants to local schools. The credit union has donated more than \$60,000 in classroom grants since the program’s inception, and teachers from Thomas County Schools have been fortunate to benefit from Envision’s commitment to education.



**REACH SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED** - Five Thomas County Middle School (TCMS) students recently signed to be part of the Realizing Educational Achievement Can Happen (REACH) Georgia program, a needs-based scholarship designed to promote academic success and expand access to higher education. Students signed contracts to agree to meet attendance and behavior requirements, maintain a certain grade point average, participate in REACH related activities, and meet weekly with a mentor. Their parents or guardians also signed contracts to support their student through their education. Upon graduation from high school, the scholars will receive up to \$10,000 to be used at a HOPE eligible Georgia two or four-year college. Pictured are TCMS REACH Scholars Jesus Altamirano, from left, Mariyha Davis, Jenyla Johnson, Malachi Thomas, and Nicholas Whigham.

## Creech Receives Outstanding Assistant Principal Award



Allen Thomas, AIG award sponsor, TCMS Assistant Principal Todd Creech, and Dr. Ann-Marie Gleason, NAESP Zone 4 Director, pose at the awards ceremony.

Thomas County Middle School Assistant Principal Todd Creech received the 2019 Hal Beaver Georgia Outstanding Assistant Principal Award at the annual GAESP/GAMSP Fall Conference on November 3.

The award's namesake, Mr. Hal Beaver, was a long time Georgia elementary principal and a past National Distinguished Principal. He started and conducts the GAEL Aspiring Principals Program and has helped to develop many outstanding assistant principals in the state through his leadership.

Creech was nominated for the award by Dr. Bob Heaberlin, Executive Director for The Georgia Association of Middle School Principals.

"Todd has demonstrated the leadership skills as an assistant principal at Thomas County Middle School that exemplifies the best of Georgia's administrators," Dr. Heaberlin said. As an assistant principal, he not only has to be an instructional leader, but

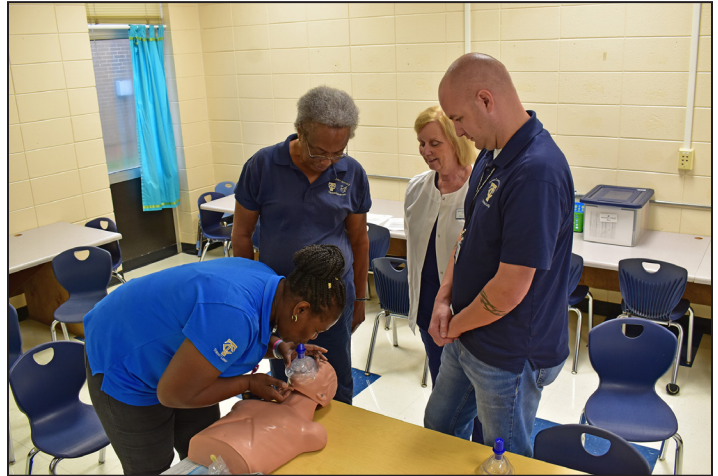
must also provide for the safety of students, faculty, and staff. In addition, he works with maintenance and custodial staff to ensure a properly maintained facility. Mr. Creech's actions have demonstrated his compassion for the TCMS staff, students, and community. He has also worked with other colleagues in his district to help grow the Georgia Association of Middle School Principals."

A product of the Thomas County School System, Creech has served as assistant principal at Thomas County Middle School for four years.

"I'm honored to be recognized by my colleagues," Creech said. "It is a privilege to accept an award from an organization that promotes high professional standards and to be acknowledged for my leadership skills."

Creech was one of the five honored for this award from across the state of Georgia.

## County Bus Drivers Learn CPR



Bus driver Marion Jackson practices CPR as Gladys Favors, bus driver, Charlotte McCann, Hand-In-Hand nurse, and Reece Yarbrough, bus driver, observe.

Marion Jackson has been driving a school bus in Thomas County for five years. While she has never had a medical emergency on any of her buses, she feels confident in her ability to perform CPR on a student in need.

Jackson attended a CPR training session recently taught by nurses in the Thomas County School System. She walked out of the session feeling confident.

The training allows for bus drivers "to have a good start" on knowing CPR, Jackson said.

Dr. Scott James, Associate

Superintendent for Student Services, who oversees the transportation department, said he wants bus drivers to have CPR training and awareness as well as comfort in administering it.

Bus drivers have between 50-70 children on their buses during routes, Dr. James said.

Last year, the fire department trained bus drivers in Stop the Bleed, a national awareness campaign that encourages bystanders to become trained to help in a bleeding emergency before professional help arrives.



Bus drivers Samantha Benford and Reece Yarbrough watch as Randall Wilcox receives instruction from Bishop Hall nurse Shae Lee.



**INTRO TO AMERICAN INDIANS** - Students in Holly Hurst's and Melissa O'Neal's classes at Cross Creek have been learning about American Indians. Knowledge was shared about the American Indian culture, daily life, and contributions. These third-grade students selected a tribe and created a display highlighting aspects of the tribe's daily life. Pictured are Nathaniel Mendoza, left, and Ma'Zyah Bean showing off their American Indian habitat display.

## Rehberg Awarded Flanders Scholarship

Erin Rehberg, Digital Learning Coordinator for Thomas County Schools, has been awarded the Flanders Scholarship which is given annually to a member of the Georgia Association of Curriculum and Instructional Supervisors (GACIS) who is pursuing a higher degree in the area of Educational Leadership. Rehberg is in the process of completing her doctoral degree at Valdosta State University and will use the funds to pay expenses incurred for tuition and books.



REHBERG

Rehberg was nominated by Thomas County's GACIS district and was chosen by the Flanders Scholarship Committee. The award was presented to Rehberg

during the recent GACIS fall conference.

"It was an honor to receive the Flanders Scholarship from GACIS, but it is an even bigger honor to work for the Thomas County School System," Rehberg said. "I am always incredibly proud to be a part of a fantastic team of educators who work hard to make sure the students in Thomas County receive a world-class education."

Beginning her educational career as a high-school English teacher with the Thomas County School System, Rehberg has worked as a media specialist and currently serves as the system's digital learning coordinator.

## Garrison-Pilcher Holds Reading Rally



Garrison-Pilcher student Mya Copeland is all smiles as she navigates through the line of cheerleaders and football players who greeted all the students with high fives to kick off the Reading Rally.

Garrison-Pilcher Elementary School students recently celebrated their reading victories with a Reading Rally at school.

"This is a tradition that was started before I arrived, and I wanted to keep the tradition going," said Elexis Griffin, Garrison-Pilcher Media Specialist. "It is such a fun time that promotes reading and literacy for our students and staff."

Students from Thomas County Central interacted with the younger students in a positive way, the band provided upbeat music, and the athletes and cheerleaders encouraged first and second grade students to read daily, work hard, and take pride in being a Yellow Jacket.

"We could not have this event without TCCHS Principal Trista Jones allowing the

students and staff to come and celebrate with us," Griffin added. "The students at Garrison-Pilcher think it is super cool to have the high school students hang out with them."

The event begins with students choosing a free book that is provided by proceeds from recently held book fairs. The students then proceed to the track where they celebrate, eat popcorn, take photos, receive autographs by the athletes, and, of course, read books. Community volunteers help with all these activities.



Coach Ashley Henderson and his son, Charlie, enjoy a little hiatus with players Jobia Kerbo and AJ Stephenson.

## A Top Coordinator

### Miranda shines at CTAE WBL conference

Thomas County Central High School Work-Based Learning and Youth Apprenticeship Coordinator Brandi Miranda's expertise and skills have won her distinctive region recognition.

Miranda earned Top Gun status during the Career Technical Agricultural Education Work-Based Learning & Youth Apprenticeship



**MIRANDA**

Conference in October. Only three coordinators from each region receive Top Gun class status.

"I was surprised and excited to be chosen as a part of this year's Top Gun class," Miranda said. "Top Gun is a program where the top WBL coordinators from Georgia participate in a specialized training opportunity and are given a chance to compete and show their skills off. Participants will learn to use marketing and public relations toolkits for marketing their programs more effectively. I know I will learn a lot to bring back to benefit our WBL program."

The yearly CTAE WBL conference gathers coordinators, counselors, administrators, and business and industry professionals to network and gain ideas, Miranda explains.

Miranda attended the

conference as a presenter. The state's WBL program manager, Dwayne Hobbs, asked her to represent the southwest region. Her topic was building and maintaining

beneficial partnerships and why these are helpful to schools and communities.

"The presentation included why partnerships are important, how to build these

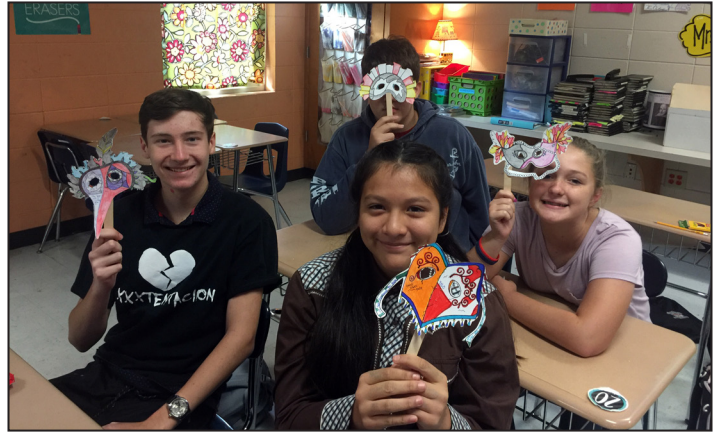
partnerships, and how to maintain them," she said.

Miranda anticipates implementing conference knowledge gained in marketing the TCCHS WBL program.

"I will take the information I received to help not only market our program to students here on campus but also our local businesses and parents," she said.

TCCHS CTAE Director Beth Adams is excited about Miranda's recognition and thankful for her leadership.

"I am glad that others recognize in Brandi what we have always seen in our school system - she is always looking for ways to grow as a professional and is committed to finding ways to support others," Adams said. "I look forward to the new ideas she will bring back once she completes her Top Gun training."



**REVEALING MASKS** - Students in Nancy Rogers' eighth-grade MERIT class at Thomas County Middle School created masks using color symbolism to describe themselves. Students first selected words that described themselves and then used colors associated with those words to construct a mask to reveal their "true selves." Caden Gasque, Logan Bell, Nayelli Badillo, and Taylor Bracewell unmask their true personality.

## Holiday Concerts

### Thomas County Central Chorus

Thursday, December 5, 7:00 p.m., BOE Auditorium

### Thomas County Central Band (Victorian Christmas)

Thursday, December 12, 6:30 p.m., Jazz Ensemble, Remington Avenue

Friday, December 13, 6:30 p.m., Blue Band, Historic Courthouse

Friday, December 13, 7:30 p.m., Gold Band, Historic Courthouse

### Thomas County Orchestra Concert

Monday, December 16, 6:30 p.m., BOE Auditorium

(Cross Creek, TCMS, & TCCHS students performing)

### Thomas County Middle Band

Tuesday, December 17, Beginning Band, 6:30 p.m.

Thursday, December 19, Blue and Gold Band, 6:30 p.m.

### Thomas County Middle Chorus

Friday, December 20, 8:30 a.m. & 10:00 a.m., TCMS Gym

(during Canned Food Drive Assembly)

# HAPPY thanksgiving

CLOSED NOVEMBER 25 - 29



200 North Pinetree Boulevard  
Thomasville, GA 31792

the **Buzz** is a publication of Thomas County Schools

Send suggestions or comments to  
Melanie Hester  
229.225-4380, ext. 115 or  
mhester@tjackets.net

the **Buzz** is available online at  
tjackets.net, Departments,  
Public Relations

Contributions by Teresa Williams and  
TCCHS journalism students

CPR and First Aid will be offered from 4:00 - 8:00 p.m. at Hand-In-Hand Primary School on the following dates:

January 28, 2020 CPR

Please sign up on PExpress to attend this class or to see others offered!

