



MAPE

# Partners

Mississippi Association of Partners in Education Newsletter

December 2009

## Nominations Open for Governor's Awards Deadline: Feb. 12, 2010

Make sure your partnership gets the recognition it deserves and nominate it for a Governor's Award for outstanding school-community partnerships.

A nomination form is available at [www.mapie.org](http://www.mapie.org) and explains criteria for nominations and submittal instructions. The deadline for nominations is Feb. 12, 2010.

## State Seminar and Governor's Awards Luncheon Thursday, April 8, 2010 Jackson Hilton

Register now at  
[www.mapie.org](http://www.mapie.org)

*Discounts offered for early registration!*

Attention Teachers!

## Apply for a Ferris Scholarship

Grey Ferris Scholarships are available to provide financial assistance to teachers to attend MAPE's State Seminar on April 8, 2010. The scholarship application is posted at [www.mapie.org](http://www.mapie.org).



**MISSISSIPPI'S EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION STAR.** Cathy Grace (wearing medal) is surrounded by staff members of the Early Childhood Institute at Mississippi State University after receiving the Winter-Reed Partnership Award on Sept. 21. See more photos from the award ceremony on page 2.

## MAPE Gets 'Back to Basics' at 2010 State Seminar

The MAPE State Seminar, in conjunction with the annual Governor's Awards recognition, will get "Back to Basics" at an April 8 day-long event to be held at the Jackson Hilton.

The Seminar will open with a poster showcase of partnership activities and breakfast followed by a panel of last year's Governor's Awards winners.

Beto Gonzalez, superintendent of the Mercedes Independent School District in Texas, will be the keynote speaker. Born into a migrant family of farm workers, his early life was spent migrating each year from California to Nebraska following seasonal crop harvests. During those years, effective education programs and caring principals, teachers and coaches played vital roles in his academic development, eventually leading him to the completion of several degrees and credentials in education.

Gonzalez served in the George W. Bush administration with the departments of Labor and Education. More information about him is featured on page 4.

Following the Governor's Awards luncheon, the afternoon session will introduce a new Partnership Training Curriculum developed by Rebecca Starling and Nadine Gilbert, both members of the MAPE Board of Directors.

A grant from State Farm Insurance will provide copies of the curriculum for participants who desire to develop or enhance business, community, or school partnerships.

For more information about the State Seminar, including online registration, visit [www.mapie.org](http://www.mapie.org).

# Winter-Reed Partnership Award

Sept. 21, 2009 - Mississippi State University



**Dr. Richard Blackburn, Dean of the College of Education at MSU**



**Dr. Marty Wiseman, Director of the John Stennis Institute at MSU and Master of Ceremonies**



**Gov. William Winter and Jack Reed Sr.**



**Dr. Peggy Emerson, retired, former Chair of the Department of Curriculum and Instruction, School of Education, the University of Mississippi**



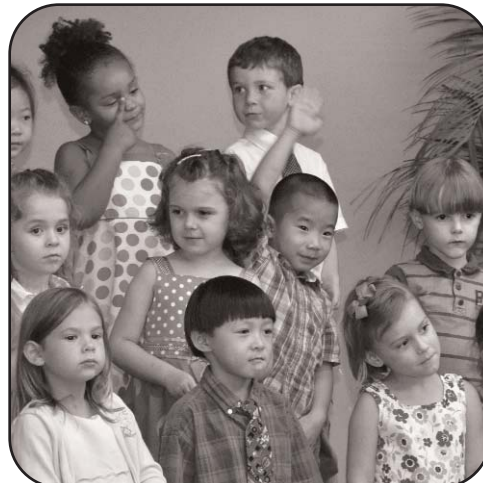
**Cathy gets a congratulatory hug from Oleta Fitzgerald, Director of the Children's Defense Fund's Southern Regional Office.**



**Rev. Anjohnette Gibbs, long-time Early Childhood Educator and Methodist Pastor**



**Pete Smith, Communications Director, Mississippi Department of Education**



**Students from Aiken Village Preschool entertained the audience with a selection of songs.**



**Cheryl Comans MAPE President**

# 'They Know Our Heartbeat'

## Woodley Elementary Students Benefit from Active Partnership

**By MAPE Board Member Danette McAlexander, Hattiesburg Public School District**

In the Hattiesburg Public School District, we are continuing to build and maintain effective, strategic school/community partnerships, and we are very happy to report that we are reaping some very positive benefits!

Under the direction of our superintendent, Dr. Annie P. Wimbish, our district is actively seeking school/community partnerships that will make additional investments into the lives of our students. Our formalized process of seeking adopters and partners is known as Hattiesburg's Ambassadors for Learning Opportunities, or HALO, which is in its first year of implementation.

We have many outstanding partnerships in our district, one of which is Parkway Heights United Methodist Church, DREAM of Hattiesburg and Woodley Elementary School. The partnership has been in existence since 2005. Woodley is under the leadership of Felica Morris, principal, and her assistant principal, Renada Singleton.

Although Felica is serving her first year as principal, she's had the opportunity to be a part of this wonderful partnership since its inception. She has seen it grow, strengthen, and thrive over the years and views Parkway Heights United Methodist Church as an integral part of the teaching and learning process that happens each and every day at Woodley.

"It's hard to imagine Parkway not being a part of us," Felica said. "Parkway is just as committed to the process of educating our students at Woodley Elementary School as we are! Members provide proactive, relative assistance on an as-needed basis. They know our heartbeat."

Dr. Eddie Rester is lead pastor of Parkway United Methodist Church. He and Rev. Julie Collins, who is appointed to DREAM of Hattiesburg, along with Rev. Julian Davis, outreach pastor, facilitate the partnership process each year. All stakeholders participate in a planning meeting for the upcoming school year every May.

According to Rev. Collins, Parkway Heights initiated the partnership with Woodley as a way to invest in the neighborhood, faculty, staff and students at Woodley. It's obvious that this relationship has been cultivated over time, and the commitment to the partnership seems surpassed only by the claims from all involved of the tremendous benefits received. In fact, partners insist that they are the ones profiting most from this productive, beneficial partnership!

Rev. Collins was elated to report that she and the rest of the congregation experience tremendous satisfaction in partnering with Woodley Elementary due to the availability of local mission opportunities. She noted that members of all ages in the Parkway congregation are able to participate in the partnership.

The following are some of the ways that DREAM and Parkway Heights assist students, faculty and staff at Woodley:

- Donate school uniforms, clothing, and school supplies for students and teachers, as well as eyeglass - whatever the need might be.

- Sponsor three book distributions a year as a part of DREAM's Reading is Fundamental, a non-profit literacy program. By year's end, each student at Woodley receives a total of three books to keep.

- Send volunteers to the school on a daily basis to assist with reading curriculum in K-2 classrooms.

- Church members assist with individual teacher needs when supplies may be needed for particular projects.

- Members serve as reading and science fair judges.

- Provide Thanksgiving assistance to an adopted family.

- Adopt several families at Christmas for food and wish lists.

- Host teacher appreciation luncheons, gifts, events, etc. on a yearly basis. They give cards of encouragement written by parishioners of the church to faculty and staff.

- Provide tutoring sessions at the DREAM Center, located behind Hattiesburg High School.

- DREAM has trained volunteers from Parkway to go into classrooms to teach students about how to make good choices about abstaining from the use of alcohol, tobacco, and drugs.

For more information regarding this partnership or others in the Hattiesburg School District, contact Danette McAlexander, HALO coordinator, at [danette.mcalexander@hpsd.k12.ms.us](mailto:danette.mcalexander@hpsd.k12.ms.us) or 601-582-6672.

### School Partnership is a Plus for Students, Community



**Members of Parkway Heights United Methodist Church are familiar faces at Woodley Elementary School, where they often volunteer in classrooms.**

# Mississippi Association of Partners in Education

*Keeping Children at the Center*

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## MAPE

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## Gonzales to Deliver Keynote Address at State Seminar



Beto D. Gonzalez, superintendent of schools for Mercedes Independent School District in Texas, will deliver the keynote address during MAPE's State Seminar on April 8 at the Jackson Hilton.

Gonzalez has received extensive praise for his keynote speeches and has addressed topics such as dropout prevention, student and leadership development, and overcoming adversity in public service. In addition, he has contributed to publications centered on educational reform topics, paths to degree completion from high school, and the meaning of schooling.

A native of Bakersfield, Calif., Gonzalez served as dean of students and student services at Bakersfield College and as a lecturer and instructor at the Graduate School of Education of Fresno Pacific University. From 2004-2006, Gonzalez served in the George W. Bush administration with the departments of Labor and Education.

Most recently, Gonzalez has served on the Select Committee on Public School Accountability and currently is a policy advisor for the Texas Institute for Education Reform. In his new role as superintendent of schools for Mercedes ISD, he will support the mission to ensure that all children are equipped with the skills necessary to be successful in postsecondary education, the workforce, and life.

Gonzalez has a bachelor's degree in English and Spanish and a master's degree in educational administration from California State University at Bakersfield. He has also completed doctoral coursework in educational leadership at the University of California at Los Angeles and intends to complete the doctoral program at the University of Mary Hardin-Baylor.