



Charles R. Nagle
Superintendent of Schools

Sandra Carraway
Deputy Superintendent of Schools

COLUMBIA COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM
4781 Hereford Farm Road
Evans, Georgia 30809
(706) 541-0650
www.ccboe.net

BOARD OF EDUCATION
Regina N. Buccafusco, Chairman
Roxanne Whitaker, Vice-Chairman
Wayne Bridges
Micheal N. Sleeper
Mildred R. Blackburn

For Immediate Release-October 2, 2008

Columbia County School System Teacher of the Year Announced *Business Community Shows Support for Excellence in Education*

At its annual Teacher of the Year Awards Dinner, the Columbia County School System honored each Teacher of the Year from the county's 29 schools, along with the county's Media Specialist of the Year. This year, Mrs. Michele Rigsby, a 4th grade teacher at Bel Air Elementary School, was named the County Teacher of the Year for 2008-2009 and Mrs. Jane Roupe of Cedar Ridge Elementary was named Media Specialist of the Year.

A graduate of Lakeside High School, Mrs. Rigsby earned her bachelor's degree in elementary education and her master's degree in special education from Furman University, and she recently completed her specialist's degree in Educational Leadership from Augusta State University. Not only does Mrs. Rigsby excel in the classroom, she takes a very active leadership role in the school by serving on the school leadership team and as the chairperson of her school council. In addition to teaching the last four years in our system, Mrs. Rigsby is a member of Alpha Delta Kappa and is working with students at the Augusta State University Literacy Center. As Teacher of the Year, Mrs. Rigsby will represent our county in the State Teacher of the Year Program.

As the Columbia County Teacher of the Year, Mrs. Rigsby receives the use of a new C300 from Mercedes-Benz of Augusta for the year, insurance on the vehicle provided by ACHS Insurance Group, \$1,000 of gasoline from M.B. Jones Oil, Inc. (Sprint), a \$500 cash award and a gift bag filled with contributions from our area businesses.

"Mercedes-Benz of Augusta is honored to present a new Mercedes-Benz C300 to the Columbia County Teacher of the Year. I can think of no profession more deserving of our support. Teaching is truly an investment in our future, one that pays dividends without end. I remember several influential teachers in my own life that motivated me to become a better person and showed me the importance of sharing our knowledge with others. Everyone certainly contributes a large portion of their success to the efforts of these wonderful educators. We, at Mercedes-Benz, are proud of our heritage as the world's leading automobile manufacturer and we are glad to be able to share our knowledge of engineering excellence with the world, as well as with the Columbia County Teacher of the Year," said Ed Luckey, Mercedes-Benz of Augusta's General Manager.

Each school has its own selection process for Teacher of the Year. From these 29 teachers chosen by their peers, county educators then closely review and choose five finalists. Then, a three-judge panel of educators from outside the county interviews and observes each finalist, selecting the County Teacher of the Year.

Also honored this evening is the Columbia County School System Media Specialist of the Year, Mrs. Jane Roupe, a media specialist at Cedar Ridge Elementary. In the school's first year of existence, Mrs. Roupe developed a media center that has a family-oriented environment that promotes a love for reading. Mrs. Roupe has served in the Columbia County School System for the past seven years. She earned her undergraduate and master's degrees in Special Education from the Georgia State University, along with Media Certification from Georgia Southern University. Mrs. Roupe was selected as Media Specialist of the Year through a nominating and judging process. In recognition of this honor, she receives a laptop computer, a \$250 cash award, and a gift bag filled with contributions from our area businesses.

In describing this evening, Superintendent Charles Nagle said, "We look forward each year to this special occasion, celebrating and honoring educators who have been identified by their peers as possessing the qualities that define excellence in teaching. We congratulate Mrs. Rigsby, Mrs. Roupe, and all of our teachers for their contributions to student success, in and out of the classroom. Also, we greatly appreciate the support of our system-wide business partners and the generous contributions of all our business community that help us make this event so special."

The 2008-09 Teacher of the Year program can be found at www.ccboe.net/community.

####