



PROOF POSITIVE

Honoring Lexington County School District One students and staff receiving state, national and international awards



2016–2017 South Carolina 4-H Wildlife Food Plot Project Winner

A Gilbert Elementary student proved he has what it takes to care for creatures great and small. Fourth-Grader **Wilson Boyd Oxner** recently won the South Carolina 4-H Wildlife Food Plot Project after also winning at the regional level.

During the Wildlife Food Plot Project, students plant, maintain and observe a wildlife food plot for approximately six months. Participating in the junior division for ages 9 to 13, Oxner carefully chose a suitable site for his plot, tilled the site, tested the soil and adjusted it accordingly with lime and fertilizer. He then planted a variety of seeds, which would yield plants for the enjoyment of wildlife.

Oxner's motion-sensing camera captured a bobcat, a fox, rabbits, multiple coyotes, deer and birds all visiting the plot for a snack.

Oxner kept a detailed data record about the project, wrote several essays reflecting on the project's success and what he would do differently if he repeated it, provided photographs of various wildlife he observed in the plot, and included his own research about the impact of the recent floods and weather patterns on wildlife in South Carolina.

Judges from the Quality Deer Management Association and South Carolina 4-H examined Oxner's plants and interviewed him about the project. In addition to winning first place on the regional level, Oxner won first place for the state for his plot and thorough record of his observations.

2017 National Merit Scholarship Program Finalists

Eight Lexington One students are still in the running for significant college scholarships.

Lexington High's **Sergei Olegovich Alexeev**, **James Morgan Clayton**, **Jessica Noel Fields** and **Ratna Himansu Patel**; River Bluff High's **Mehmet Emre Cakir**, **Mihir Dutta** and **Sydney Jo Womack**; and White Knoll High's **John Michael Clemens** are finalists in the 62nd annual National Merit Scholarship Program.

As finalists chosen from among approximately 16,000 semifinalists, they continue to compete for a share of 7,500 National Merit Scholarships — worth about \$33 million. According to the National Merit Scholarship

Corporation, half of these finalists will win a National Merit Scholarship and earn the title of Merit Scholar.

Students must submit a detailed application which includes information about their academic record, participation in school and community activities, and demonstrated leadership abilities. They must also carry an exceptional high school academic record, submit an endorsement/recommendation by a high school official, write an essay and earn an above-average SAT score.

The National Merit Scholarship Corporation will announce Merit Scholars beginning in April and concluding in July.

2017 South Carolina Band Directors Association All-State Senior Band Members

Students must be at the top of their game when auditioning for the South Carolina Band Directors Association All-State bands. Judges listen for technical proficiency, overall technique, tone and styling to determine who makes the roster.

Lexington District One students earning a spot on the SCBDA All-State Senior Band include Gilbert High's **Lezlie Tyann Guess, Bailey Andrews Johnson and Jeremy David Rish**; Lexington High's **Akeem Saed Dysard, Jack Alexander Hoog and Andrew Furman Thomason**; Pelion High's **Sky Travis Aaron Powell**; River Bluff High's **Benjamin Philip Brandes, Gabriel Nossar Carrilho, James Walter Overbay, Benjamin Thomas Tidwell and Sydney Jo Womack**; and White Knoll High's **John Isaac Hyer**.

Students participated in and performed at the SCBDA All-State Band Clinic held March 10–12, 2017.



2017 South Carolina Music Educators Association Elementary Honor Choir

Hundreds of students nominated by their music teachers audition each year for the South Carolina Music Educators Association Elementary Honor Choir. This year, 11 Lexington District One students earned a nearly perfect scores from the audition judges and were asked to perform with the 2017 Honor Choir.

Honor Choir members include Deerfield Elementary's **Skylar Melyn Esbensen**; Lexington Elementary's **Dakota Jessie Blake**; Midway Elementary's **Makenzie Monét Duckson, Zoe Renee Hinson, Mary Kathleen Westbrook and Kylie Elizabeth Wilson**; Pleasant Hill Elementary's **Emmeline Claire McKelvey, Amanda Clark Nicholson and Callie Elizabeth Schrodt**; and Rocky Creek Elementary's **Olivia Parris Bussell and Emma Clare Stephenson**.

Students performed in a concert featuring pieces sung in a second language, complex rhythms and harmonies during the South Carolina Music Educator's Convention held in Columbia on February 2–4, 2017.



Music for All 2017 Honor Band of America Member

Lexington District One Band Student **Ian Merlin Jones** brought his drumsticks to a prestigious national band this month.

Music for All, one of the nation's largest music education organizations, invited the River Bluff High senior to participate in the 2017 Honor Band of America.

Jones plays percussion for the RBHS band, which is under the direction of Kenneth D. Turner, Joshua V. Hinkel and Aaron G. Railey.

The 2017 Honor Band of America performed at the Music for All National Festival held at Butler University in Indianapolis on March 9–11, 2017.

Jones previously earned the position of first chair percussion in the South Carolina All-State Band and won the National Association for Music Education Student Composers Competition in 2015.

NATEF All-Star Automotive State Champion

During an event held at Midlands Technical College, Gilbert High Senior **Austin Michael Hicks** won a unique state championship and became the South Carolina All-Star Automotive Technology Winner.

Hicks, a senior in Lexington Technology Center's automotive technology program, earned a spot in the hands-on challenge after a high score on the written test during the elimination round. Only 12 students from South Carolina competed in the hands-on portion, and Hicks scored the highest to become LTC's first NATEF state winner.

"Austin spent extra time preparing himself and it paid off," said LTC Automotive Engineering Technology Master Instructor Raymond Roland.

During the hands-on portion of the competition, Hicks had to correctly inspect, troubleshoot and verify vehicle systems, correctly time a belt drive system, install a drive shaft, demonstrate the ability to diagnose electrical and mechanical problems, and submit his findings.

Hicks won \$5,000 for LTC's Automotive Technology program and \$2,500 in tools for his personal use.

MTC hosted the 2017 National Automotive Technicians Education Foundation All-Star Automotive Technology Competition on Thursday, February 23. NATEF accredits automobile, medium/heavy truck and collision repair and refinishing technology programs at secondary and post-secondary schools.



South Carolina Department of Education Social Studies Review Panel Member

Carolina Springs Elementary Fifth-Grade Teacher **Tamela D. Jett** recently took part in an important process benefiting students.

On January 31 and February 1, 2017, Jett participated in the South Carolina Department of Education's Social Studies Standards Review Panel which evaluates current standards and makes recommendations for improvement.

To be eligible for the review panel, educators must be recognized as leaders in the field of social studies and have taught for at least three years.

2017 Cohort of Literacy and Engagement with Historical Records Project

Lexington District One educator, **Alva A. Suggs**, heads back to college this summer to improve the learning of students statewide.

Invited by the University of South Carolina, the Midway Elementary Fourth-Grade Teacher will explore the university's digital collection and create document-based questions designed to captivate a student's interest. With these new document-based questions, students will use historical records to develop digital literacy skills.

The project, featuring three cohorts of 15 teachers, is made possible by a federal grant from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission and is a partnership between the South Carolina Department of Education and USC.

Suggs meets with fellow educators July 10-13 and July 17-18, 2017, for six days of document-based question training and writing.



DonorsChoose.org Funding Recipients

Teachers from three schools combined to raise more than \$10,000 for their classrooms and students by submitting projects to DonorsChoose.org and receiving funding to support innovative projects, purchase new reading materials and keep their students excited about learning.

Deerfield Elementary's Rachel Booth, Lauren S. Dasher and Jennifer Dwight submitted projects using science and social studies exploration, and puppets to encourage Spanish conversation and replace worn classroom books.

Eleven Lake Murray Elementary teachers — Ashlyn Ancone, Kenzie L. Clarke, Meghan H. Free, Katherine J. Handell, Gail Harries, Barbra L. Hubbard, Tricia M. Huff, Kimberly T. Nunnery, Katie Silvanic, Jenni N. Smith and Blair B. Wells — purchased new books, sensory items to aid autistic students and materials to better research the Revolutionary War.

Rocky Creek Elementary Teachers Katie P. Crapps, Leslie S. Crocker, Cheri Dickinson, Erin E. McQuade, Jennifer M. Ringo and Sarah L. Simms raised funds to make their classrooms more welcoming and comfortable for students. They purchased flexible seating such as wobble chairs, cushions, pillows and stools to give students a choice of where to sit and work out their wiggles.



2017 National Athletic Trainers' Association Athletic Trainer Service Award Recipient

White Knoll High Head Athletic Trainer **Sheila C. Gordon** recently added another accolade to her lengthy list of career achievements.

Gordon received the 2017 Athletic Trainer Service Award given by the National Athletic Trainers' Association. NATA gives this honor to NATA members for their contributions to the athletic training profession as a volunteer at the local and state levels.

A WKHS teacher for 12 years, Gordon serves as head athletic trainer, assistant athletic director and sports medicine instructor. She is also president of the South Carolina Athletic Trainers' Association, a voting member of Mid-Atlantic Athletic Trainers' Association and an ex officio member of the South Carolina Medical Association's Medical Aspects of Sports Committee.



Fellowship of Christian Athletes Art Baker Coach of the Year

The regional chapter of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes honored not one, but two Lexington District One coaches: Gilbert High Assistant Football Coach **Mark Cagle** and River Bluff High Interim Athletics Director **Gary D. Smallen** with Art Baker Coach of the Year awards. The Carolinas FCA represents athletes in both North and South Carolina.

Cagle is new to the Gilbert Indians. He was, however, the first head football coach at White Knoll High and coached at Lexington High in the late 1990s.

Smallen, a veteran coach with numerous years in South Carolina, joined RBHS in 2013 after a stint at Coastal Carolina University.

NAAE Ideas Unlimited Award

The unconventional and thought-provoking use of a common grocery store item garnered national recognition for Lexington Technology Center Agricultural Science Instructor **Robert A. Bollier**. Only six educators nationwide received an NAAE Ideas Unlimited Award this year.

During the National Association of Agricultural Educators Convention held December 3, 2016, Bollier received the Ideas Unlimited Award for a series of lab experiments involving eggs.

Using affordable materials, Bollier incorporated mathematics, science and critical thinking to give students a real-world, hands-on experience. Agricultural science students studied the quality, including porosity and permeability, of ordinary eggs. They also inspected fertilized chicken eggs to determine what made some eggs not hatch properly and how the chick's growth affected the weight of the egg.

Bollier presented a 30-minute workshop on his award-winning concept during the 2016 NAAE Convention in December.



South Carolina Daughters of Colonial Wars State History Teacher of the Year

The South Carolina Daughters of Colonial Wars recognized **William Derrick Price** for his outstanding encouragement of students' interest in American heritage by presenting him with the State History Teacher of the Year award on Thursday, February 23, 2017.

The Meadow Glen Middle Social Studies Teacher tries to make his class a little out of the ordinary.

After losing interest in social studies as a student himself, he decided to give his students unusual and stimulating content. He focuses on creation and analysis rather than lecture and note-taking; dresses up as historical figures and challenges students to create something new from historic material; and invites local veterans to speak to students about their experiences.

Price competes against other educators across the country for the national Outstanding American History Teacher award.

Southern Conference on Language Teaching Board Member

A Lexington District One teacher recently joined the board of the Southern Conference on Language Teaching, a regional organization dedicated to creating global-minded learners.

Members elected Meadow Glen Middle French Immersion Teacher **Delandris K. Jones** to serve a four-year term. The

organization's mission is the advancement of the study of modern and classical languages, literature and culture at all levels of instruction.

A teacher at MGMS since its inception, Jones also serves as co-president of the South Carolina Foreign Language Teachers' Association.

President's Project Donation

A member of the local community gave back to **Gilbert High School** in an effort to support ongoing learning.

As president of the Lexington County Bar Association, local attorney, **Bryn C. Sarvis**, selected Gilbert High as the recipient of the President's Project donation, a \$750 donation to GHS for law-related education purposes.

With the donation, government and AP government teachers sponsored a trip to the South Carolina General Assembly, where students observed important votes and met with their local senators and house members.



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