

The Learning Curve

This page was written and designed by Education First in cooperation with the Bibb County Board of Education, the Peyton Anderson Foundation, and The Telegraph.



Your weekly guide to students, schools, teachers and triumphs in Bibb County's Public Schools

Bibb County New Teachers' Banquet

Education First and the Greater Macon Chamber of Commerce host dinner in honor of new teachers' contribution to the community

"How many of you can name your eight great-grandparents?" asked Education First Board Chair Tred Shurling of more than 100 new Bibb County teachers. "And 'Mr. and Mrs. Smith' doesn't count," he added with a grin.

Letting the question sink in, and seeing the looks on people's faces as they realized they couldn't, he made his point: "now, name each of your teachers from the first grade on." Faces lit up around the room; that question was easy.

Teachers make a significant impact on children that lasts for their entire life, Shurling was telling them. "Thank you for choosing this profession; your contributions to this community are greatly appreciated, and the effects of them will be felt for years to come."

On August 9, Education First hosted Bibb County's New Teacher Banquet at the Macon Centreplex. More than 300 teachers were invited to attend the event which featured guest speakers, dinner, door prizes, and gift bags. Also attending were business and community leaders from around the county, giving them the chance to personally meet and thank the teachers who would be educating their children.

Major sponsors for the event were the Greater Macon Chamber of Commerce, GEICO, The Medical Center of Central Georgia, and MidSouth Federal Credit Union.

"We had an amazing show of support from around the county," said Education First Executive Director Julie Pennybacker. "This speaks volumes for how much the community honors and values their teachers."

Guest speaker Charles E. Richardson, Columnist for *The Macon Telegraph*, continued with Shurling's theme of how much a teacher can

affect a child. He related how he still remembered his most influential teachers for what they did for him, what they made him do, and how they made him grow as a person.

"You have to believe every child can learn," he told them. "We all have different talents, and we all excel in certain areas. It's up to you to find the talent in each child."

He also let them know they were not alone. Not only was the community behind them, but they should not be shy about asking for help. It's a tough job, he told them, but others have been there before and are willing to help. "Hang together; share ideas and techniques; seek mentors who can help you over the bumps ahead; don't be bashful; share your thoughts with your principals and administrators."

At the end of the event, door prizes donated by local businesses were raffled off to the teachers. They received items like coupons for massages, rolling book bags, coolers, umbrellas, smoothie makers, tote bags, Atlanta Braves' tickets, a DVD player, and a television. Every teacher was given a tote bag full of donated items like pens, pencils, pads, coupons, and memo pads.

"What an amazing event," commented Pennybacker. "It was a great opportunity for the teachers to relax, enjoy some good food, and feel appreciated."

"Twenty years from now, you'll have students like me come back and tell you about the impact you've had in their lives. When those students come flowing back to you...you'll know it was worth all of the blood, sweat, and tears," Richardson told them. "You have your charge. Go out and change the course of history."



(left) Superintendent Sharon Patterson welcomes the new teachers to the South.



(below) New teachers meeting with members of the business community.

THANK YOU FOR THE SUPPORT!!

The New Teacher Banquet was a success thanks to the outpouring of support from the community. Local businesses, organizations, and even individuals donated

items to the gift bags (which every teacher attending received), donated items to be raffled off as door prizes, and even sponsored educators to attend the event.

It was an amazing show of support by the county for this new class of teachers, and it was a great event to honor and welcome them to this community.

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We want your feedback! Please e-mail your comments and suggestions for "The Learning Curve" or information about events in the Bibb County school system to: chris@education-first.org or call 743-0023