

Hickory Public Schools



Week in Review

May 6, 2016

"A snapshot of HPS good news"

HICKORY DAILY RECORD • www.hickoryrecord.com

HPS announces Teacher of the Year

BY JOHN BAILEY
jbailey@hickoryrecord.com

HICKORY — Erica Greer was surprised when she heard her name called as Hickory Public School System's Teacher of the Year during the annual luncheon on Wednesday at Warehouse 18.

"Are you sure?" she asked HPS Superintendent Robbie Adell as she stepped up to receive her plaque.

She also received a check for \$1,000 from Vanguard Furniture, a full year family membership to Catawba Science Center and a brand new Toyota car to drive for a year from Mike Johnson's Hickory Toyota.

"I was not expecting it at all," said Greer, who is a third-grade teacher at Jenkins Elementary. "It is such a huge honor to be thought of by my peers as a teacher of value. It's just a very big honor."

The superintendent pointed to how much she cared for every one of her students as the key characteristic that helped her stand out in a field of "great" teachers.

"Anytime you have the opportunity to celebrate good teaching, it just makes for a magical moment, and I'm more than happy with the quality of teaching that's going on here at Hickory Public Schools. And I'm excited for our winner," Adell said.

Greer was one of nine teachers nominated for the new Teacher of the Year award, one from each of the system's schools. They were all nominated by fellow teachers with input from students and parents as well. The winner was chosen by a special panel of judges.

Jordan Caldwell, a teacher at Hickory Career and Arts Magnet High (HCAM), was the second-place winner and received \$500 from Vanguard Furniture. Nicole Beam, Oakwood teacher, received \$350 from Vanguard Furniture for finishing third.

All other nominees received \$250 with Vanguard Furniture contributing all of the funds. The furniture company also paid for the luncheon.

The other nominees for Teacher of the Year included: Caroline Brown from Longview Elementary, Nicole Beam from Oakwood Elementary, Lisa Doyle from Southwest Elementary, Alison Milstead from Viewmont Elementary, Amy Shurtliff from Grandview Middle, Sally Ross from Northview Middle, Martha Martin from Hickory High and Jordan Caldwell from Hickory Career and Arts Magnet High.

The judges for the award included Steve O. Hunt, CVCC Office of Multicultural Affairs; Jennifer Lindsay, Catawba County Public Health and Chief Thurman Whisnant, Hickory Police Department.

While it was a big day for everyone, it was a day that came close to not happening for the winner. Greer at one point thought about stepping away from teaching after having another child last year.

"For me it's important for my girls to see it's good to have a mother with a career," Greer said. "It's good to have a mother out there who is making a difference in somebody's life, so seeing me staying employed as a teacher may encourage them to set certain goals for themselves."

Greer was drawn to the education field about 10 years ago because she wanted a chance to make a difference in the lives of children.

"The kids, they're so much fun. They're my energy every day," Greer said. "They're what makes it fun to come to work."



PHOTOS BY JOHN BAILEY/HICKORY DAILY RECORD
Jenkins Elementary teacher Erica Greer (top) was chosen as Hickory Public Schools New Teacher of the Year Wednesday. HPS recognized all nine of their teachers nominated for Teacher of the Year (above) during the annual luncheon Wednesday.

Jenkins Elementary principal John Black said he's always been impressed with that family atmosphere Greer creates in her classroom.

"She just has such a passion for the kids," Black said. "When she's there, that's her life. She gives everything to them.

"I think she treats them like her own kids at home... it's just a wonderful surprise."

Craig Weaver, a fellow third-grade teacher at Jenkins Elementary, didn't hesitate when it came to nominating Greer.

"When you enter Mrs. Greer's classroom, you automatically notice the inviting atmosphere of the themed room," Weaver said in her nomination letter. "Her bubbly enthusiasm for learning is one of the reasons that the children are eager to come to school each day."

Jenkins Elementary student George Neal got to experience that fun atmosphere Greer created in the classroom.

"I was new to Jenkins last year, and she helped me feel comfortable and safe from the first day of school," Neal said in his letter. "She even introduced me to my future best friend because she knew we had so much in common."

After accepting her award, Greer had some advice to all those new teachers entering the field.

"One day at a time, my dad's advice to me every morning getting out of the car was do your best and the Lord will do the rest and that's been my motto all the way through," she said.



HPS Teacher of the Year 2016-2017, Erica Greer, calls her husband with the exciting news of her win and the gift of driving a new Toyota for the next year!



All nine Teacher of the Year winners for their schools—celebrate during the Teacher of the Year Luncheon.

Congrats to all!

(Sally Ross, Jordan Caldwell, Erica Greer, Nicole Beam, Alison Milstead, Lisa Doyle, Caroline Brown; back--Martha Martin & Amy Shurtliff.)



Week in Review is produced by the HPS Communications Office.
All photography is the property of the HPS Communications Office.
For photo use/media inquiries, contact Beverly Snowden, HPS director of communications:

Thursday Rotary Club Awards Wilmer Jenkins Teacher of the Year to Melissa Oates!

Congrats to Melissa Oates of Hickory High for winning the Rotary Teacher of the Year award. HPS Superintendent, Dr. Robbie Adell, joins her in the celebration along with all school winners!



(L-R) Caroline Brown, Yolander Kennedy-Watkins, Craig Weaver, Laura Carter, Melissa Oates, Caitlan Reese, Kelly Brittain, Brian Mulligan and Tina Regn.



Left: Child Nutrition celebrates School Nutrition Employee Week with Super Hero Day (Rhonda Davis, Tina Pottorff and Whitney Bandy.) Thank you to all!

Right: Robin McCluney, bus driver & HPS receptionist, shares the Mother's Day gifts from two students who ride her bus!

