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State Charter Schools Foundation Names Shining Star Teachers

Twenty-eight state charter school teachers recognized for extraordinary service.

ATLANTA, GA (statewide) – May 27, 2022 – The State Charter Schools Foundation of Georgia (SCSF), a nonprofit foundation dedicated to supporting high-quality state charter schools in Georgia, announced 28 state charter school teachers selected as 2022 Shining Star Teachers. Awardees come from around the state and represent 13 different schools authorized by the State Charter Schools Commission of Georgia. The SCSF created the program to honor teachers who have gone over and above to serve their students and school communities. Shining Star teachers will receive a \$50 gift card to Amazon and recognition on the SCSF website (scsfga.org/stars) and social media channels (@SCSFofGA). Awards have been presented through surprise visits by Michele Neely, President of the SCSF, and SCSF board members, Dr. Adria Welcher and Ms. Fadzai Konteh, or during special recognition events organized by school leaders, students, and coworkers. The teachers were selected from nearly 150 nominations submitted by parents, students, school leaders, fellow teachers, and family members. Nominations included stories of creativity, tenacity, and an overwhelming commitment to improving the wellbeing of students

during an extremely challenging school year. The initiative is proudly sponsored by FEV Tutor, the Association of American Educators (AAE), and Infinite Giving.

“What a joy to see our Shining Star teacher, Brandi Dixon, engaging her class on Field Day at the International Academy of Smyrna! It confirmed the importance of the work we do at SCSF. Our hardworking teachers across the state do whatever it takes to connect with our students,” reflected Dr. Adria Welcher, SCSF board member, after presenting the honor in person to Ms. Dixon. “Indeed, it takes a village to raise our children and it is our honor to be a part of that village. We can rest assured that our future is in good hands and at SCSF we are enthusiastic to partner with our educators to make sure of it!”

Photos and quotes from the nominations for each teacher can be found online at scsfga.org/stars. Each teacher will be featured individually on the SCSF’s Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram accounts.

Shining Star Teachers by School

- **Baconton Community Charter School, Baconton**
 - Amanda Barber, Kindergarten
- **Cherokee Charter Academy, Canton**
 - Lon Honore, 2nd grade
- **Coweta Charter Academy, Senoia**
 - Andrea Gipson, 1st grade
 - Hannah Shelton, 2nd grade
 - Kyle Sims, band
- **Ethos Classical, Atlanta**
 - Jade Shroud, kindergarten

- **Furlow Charter Academy, Americus**
 - Joanna Arnold
- **Georgia Connections Academy, virtual school**
 - Kimberly Keene, middle school math and special education
 - Jody Smith, 8th grade math
- **Georgia School for Innovation and the Classics (GSIC), Hephzibah**
 - Tanisha Thompson, 8th grade math
- **International Academy of Smyrna, Smyrna**
 - Brandi Dixon, 4th grade
- **Liberty Tech Charter School, Brooks**
 - Anna Guerrero, kindergarten assistant teacher
 - Julie Hally, special education
 - Jennifer Loveless, middle school science
 - Anna Mayhew, kindergarten
 - Sheri Thorne, kindergarten assistant teacher
 - Kristi Van Gunst, kindergarten
- **Pataula Charter Academy, Edison**
 - Wendy Everson, special education
 - Summer Hill, kindergarten
 - Elizabeth Knox, 4th grade
 - Lana McFather, 10th grade
- **Resurgence Hall Charter School, Atlanta**
 - Gabriela Bravo, 3rd grade

- **School for Arts Infused Learning (SAIL), Evans**
 - Holly Baxter, 2nd grade
 - Kayla Biles, 5th grade
 - Heidi Schultz, gifted education

- **Spring Creek Charter School, Bainbridge**
 - Rachael Bray, 1st grade
 - Rachael Herendeen, 8th grade

About the State Charter Schools Foundation

The State Charter Schools Foundation of Georgia (SCSF) is a nonprofit foundation dedicated to supporting high-quality state charter schools serving children throughout Georgia by leveraging resources to help schools launch, build capacity, and grow. For more information about the State Charter Schools Foundation, visit scsfga.org or follow us on social media @SCSFofGA. *The SCSF is the charitable foundation for the State Charter Schools Commission.*