

# GLISI Announces 2024 Hidden Heroes

*GLISI honors education professionals who are making a difference in their communities across Georgia.*

DULUTH, GA, UNITED STATES, December 3, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Georgia Leadership Institute for School Improvement ([GLISI](https://www.glisi.org)), a statewide education leadership nonprofit, celebrates the nine top vote-getters of its fifth annual [Hidden Heroes](#) campaign which illuminates difference makers in education.

By the end of the campaign, the 130 education professionals nominated received a total of almost 42,000 votes illuminating how positive future-focused work that education professionals do each day for the next generation of leaders unifies our communities. Nominees ranged from paraprofessionals, school social workers, coaches, teachers, federal programs directors, nutrition directors, custodians, principals and superintendents. They were nominated by their communities and colleagues for their everyday acts of service, professional excellence, and deep care for students and education.

"Too often young people are not encouraged to pursue a career in education. Yet education is the profession that makes all other professions possible, and is a tremendously fulfilling way to make a difference in the lives of young people. With over 165,000 page views of nominees' stories, we are so proud of how this campaign engaged communities statewide to elevate and celebrate all the professionals who make school - and a bright future of economic, social and civic prosperity - possible," said Leslie Hazle Bussey, Ph.D., CEO and Executive Director of GLISI.



The top three Hidden Heroes in each region comprise the nine honorees:

#### North Region

- Norkesha Muhammad-Garrett, Director of Teaching and Learning, Henry County Schools
- Melissa Bowen, Teacher at Sharon Elementary School, Walton County Schools
- Dewayne Holmes, Detective Sergeant with Whitfield County Schools

#### South Region

- Marlon Lawrence, Custodian at Mary Lee Clark Elementary School, Camden County Schools
- Willie Fred Clayton, ESOL Social Studies and Science Teacher at C.A. Gray Junior High School, Colquitt County School District
- Mike Coe, Head Football Coach at Coffee High School, Coffee County Schools

#### Metro Region

- Dr. Ave' Maria Tatum, Human Resources Director for Clayton County Public Schools
- Marcia Payton, Principal at Michelle Obama STEM Elementary Academy, Clayton County Public Schools
- Dr. Angela Addison, Area Superintendent for Georgia Preparatory Academy, Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice

Each of the above Hidden Heroes and their nominators will receive cash prizes and will be celebrated at the Georgia Chamber of Commerce's Eggs and Issues breakfast on Jan. 14, 2025. The nominators, who made this campaign a success, shared inspiring stories of impact, joy and gratitude for our education professionals. Read all of the nominees' stories on our Hidden Heroes page.

New for this year, we are also acknowledging three additional winners, our Honorable Mentions, who were selected by past Hidden Hero recipients. They include:

North Region: Natalie Coker, Special Education Teacher at Pickens High School, Pickens County School District

South Region: Annette Baughman, Bus Driver for Columbia County School District

Metro Region: Cassie Bro, Health and Physical Education Teacher and Cross Country Coach at Buford Middle School and Girls Basketball Coach at Buford High School, Buford City School System

This year's Hidden Heroes was made possible because of the support of business partners and sponsors including Kennesaw State University's Bagwell College of Education, Georgia Power, and Parker Poe, with a special thanks to Georgia Chamber of Commerce.

To learn more about the 2024 Hidden Heroes winners, visit [hiddenheroes.glisi.org/2024](https://hiddenheroes.glisi.org/2024).

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## ABOUT THE GEORGIA LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE FOR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

Georgia Leadership Institute for School Improvement is an education leadership nonprofit with the mission to Uplift school leaders > Transform mindsets and actions > Create vibrant cultures of innovation > Build excellent and equitable schools. Founded in 2001 by a coalition of education, business, and government leaders who believed leadership was the most impactful lever for improving public education in Georgia, GLISI provides leadership development and consulting to help schools unleash the potential in every child, retain outstanding educators, and accelerate community prosperity. Learn more about GLISI by visiting [glisi.org](https://glisi.org)

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