

# GAINESVILLE CITY SCHOOL SYSTEM

Have You "Herd"?



## GHS Senior Wins Scholarship Award



Umer Khan (left) receives scholarship award

Congratulations to Gainesville High School senior Umer Khan as the winner of the Gus Whalen Community Scholarship in the amount of \$2500! This is the second consecutive year that a GHS student has won the scholarship.

High school seniors from Gainesville High School, East Hall High School, and Lakeview Academy who are currently participating in the Featherbone Community Academy were eligible to apply for the scholarship. The scholarship requirements included the students submitting an essay regarding their future plans, how the scholarship would support their goals, and how they emulate Featherbone Community's ideals along with two references from an educator and community member.

The scholarship is in memory of Mr. Gus Whalen, founder of Featherbone Community and Featherbone Leadership Academy.

## JROTC Gives Back To Our Community



**GAINESVILLE CITY SCHOOLS**

A Georgia Charter System

Wanda Creel, Ed.D.  
Superintendent

### Board Members

Brett Mercer, Chair  
John Filson, Vice Chair  
Delores Diaz  
Willie Mitchell  
Sammy Smith

## Important Dates

April 3 - 7

Spring Break Holidays

April 10

BOE Work Session

April 17

BOE Meeting



JROTC cadets engage in community service

Gainesville High School JROTC cadets recently volunteered their time and services to the community. As part of the group's community service project, the cadets cleaned Longwood Park, Wilshire Trails, and Holly Park, removing 2555 pounds of debris as well as 20 old tires from the premises.

For the JROTC program, community service is both an ongoing initiative and requirement. Historically, the majority of the community service has been in support of other school programs or needs such as relocating items on the school campus. Lt. Nathan Bourdeau, JROTC Lead Instructor, is currently working to extend the program's focus to include substantial and significant environmental projects and community outreach. "Community service is an outlet that teaches service to the local community and to our fellow man, and is used to emphasize the importance of adding value and giving back to one's community," says Lt. Bourdeau. "We hope to instill behaviors and actions that are consistent with contributing members of society."

Projects are selected based upon logistical considerations (such as how far away and how many cadets can the project allow) as well as which initiatives can add the most value to the community. Choosing to clean the city's local parks was a great service project, proving to be beneficial to the cadets as well as the community. "The logistics were relatively easy, and we could involve the majority of our cadets in the program," explains Lt. Bourdeau. "We all use Longwood Park and Wilshire Trails frequently, and [through this project] we were able to have a significant impact on our community."

---

## Students Are "Art Smart" at GEA

April 17-21

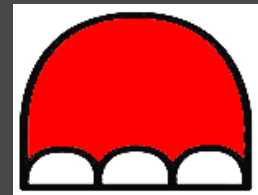
ES & MS Milestone Testing

April 18

Progress Reports

---


## Upcoming Events



[EVENT CALENDAR](#)

[ELEPHANT TRACKS NEWS](#)

Help us share our story

 [Forward to a Friend](#)

---

## Points of Pride



[District & School Achievements](#)

[GCSS Data Facts](#)

---

## Alumni News



[125th Anniversary Slideshow](#)



GEA students are #ArtSmart

During the month of March, thousands of schools around the nation participate in Youth Art Month which focuses on promoting art and art education with the involvement of local art museums and civic organizations. Gainesville Exploration Academy joined in celebrating art in education through Youth Art Month activities organized by GEA art teacher, Tandy Ray. Students enjoyed an exciting week of daily trivia questions, Color Choice Days, Dress like Art or Like an Artist Day, and Crazy Leprechaun Patterns Day!

Artwork from GEA and other local schools are on exhibit at the Quinlan Visual Arts Center now through April 8th. The purpose of the event is to bring awareness of the many benefits of having art programs in schools.



---

### Vision

Our students will think critically, act compassionately, work meaningfully, choose wisely, and live joyfully.

### Mission

As *ONE GAINESVILLE*, we will *INSPIRE, NURTURE, CHALLENGE & PREPARE* our students

---

### Our Schools

Gainesville High

Gainesville Middle

Centennial Arts Academy

Enota MI Academy

Fair Street International Academy

Gainesville Exploration Academy

New Holland Knowledge Academy

[www.gcssk12.net](http://www.gcssk12.net)

---

---

---

---

---





**Students volunteer to build Habitat house**

Habitat for Humanity of Hall County held a dedication and blessing ceremony on March 17th to celebrate the completion of a newly constructed home. Several people gathered to bestow well wishes to the new homeowners as they begin to settle in their new home. The special celebration included many volunteers (and supporters) who invested their time and services to assist in constructing the home for the family.

Gainesville High School construction students played a major role in the construction process, volunteering many hours to help build the home. Gainesville High School, a designated Habitat High School, has partnered with Habitat for Humanity for several years. Through this partnership, GHS students are able to utilize their construction skills learned in the classroom as well as actively engage in community service. Building Habitat homes is a heartwarming project that brings many people together for a special cause - to fulfill a family's dream of owning a new home!

---

## **Preparing Our Students For The Workforce**



**GHS Faculty on Fire - Mrs. Helen Perry**

Mrs. Helen Perry is no stranger to getting the community to unite to celebrate a common cause. Whether the event is a football game, school assembly, or special celebration, she is often the ringleader (and sideline cheerleader) in rallying the community together. When the idea developed regarding having a community-wide celebration to commemorate the the school system's 125th anniversary, Helen Perry did not hesitate to take the role as one of the co-chairs in organizing the event.

On March 20th, Mrs. Perry was honored as the recipient of the 2017 Faculty on Fire award for Gainesville High School at the district's board meeting. Described by her peers as "Ms. Gainesville", Mrs. Perry is a dedicated Red Elephant alum, with her father and three sons, Michael, Tyler, and Lewis also being GHS graduates. Her husband of 36 years, Mike, knows and understands the pride that Helen has regarding GHS and the Gainesville community. It's no surprise that one of Mrs. Perry's best memories is when the GHS football team won the state championship title in 2012. She recalls that it was an awesome opportunity to see the excitement in the community and it was fun to experience as the football cheerleading sponsor especially with her sons, Michael and Tyler, on the football coaching staff.

Because of her love for GHS, she has not minded one bit about wearing the many different hats for the various roles that she has had to fulfill. Currently serving as the Work-Based Learning Coordinator, she also leads the Youth Leadership Hall, Medical Scholars, and Communiversity programs. Having started as a substitute teacher then promoted to an ESOL paraprofessional in 1999, Mrs. Perry taught her first Business Education class in 2008. For many years, she also served as Student Council Sponsor and as Varsity Football Cheerleading Coach.

Evident from her extensive list of roles, Mrs. Perry is invested in Gainesville High School; but, most importantly, she is deeply invested in her students. "Kids have to know that you care for them," said Mrs. Perry. "You must establish relationships so you know your students,

and they understand that you want them to succeed. It is my job to help provide opportunities for students to be successful whether it is an internship in Work-Based Learning, or student participation in Medical Scholars, Communiversities, or Youth Leadership Hall."

Mrs. Perry's primary goal as an educator is to provide opportunities for her students that guide them in their career choices such as job shadowing experiences, field trips, guest speakers, and any resources that assist in connecting students with the business community. As the Work-Based Learning Coordinator, she strives to connect students to a work experience that aligns with their career goals to better prepare them for their future. Under her guidance, she wants students to understand the importance of good work ethics and how good ethics open the doors for more opportunities and advancement within their prospective job fields.

When asked how she would describe herself, Mrs. Perry's immediate response: "blessed". She explains, "I have a great family and a job that I love. I am very thankful for the opportunities that I have been given. I love my students!"

Mrs. Perry is "blessed" to have the opportunity to be an integral part of the many wonderful things occurring at her high school alma mater and to be involved in the school's rich tradition. On the other hand, Gainesville High School is truly fortunate to have Mrs. Perry as a role model, mentor, and cheerleader to the many students who she encounters. Mrs. Perry will always remain a part of Gainesville High School's rich tradition, and as stated in the school's mantra - "Tradition NEVER graduates" - it just keeps getting better over time!

---

## **Gainesville City Board of Education Meeting March 20, 2017**



The Gainesville City Board of Education meeting was held on March 20th at the Public Safety Complex. Special guests recognized by the Board included Gainesville Exploration Academy (Highest Student

Attendance), Fair Street International Academy (Highest School Employee Attendance), GCSS Transportation Department (Highest System Support Staff Attendance), Region Science Fair Winners (Gold Medals: Mary Peterson, Molly McLeod, Mark Toth; Silver Medals: Mary Nelson Bell, Anne Marie Dye, and Ianah Checo), Region Champion and Literary Winners (GHS Literary Team, First Place: Sophia Casey, Pratyusha Karnati, Ramiro Salinas, Izzy Pate, Jameson Murray, Ras Boone, Gus Kaufman, Herve Aklotsoe, Second Place: David Davenport, Boone Alexander, Stephanie Ortez, Cayla Adams, Nataly Gonzalez; Third Place: Stephanie Ortiz; Coordinators: Pam Ware and Julia Hamilton), Helen Perry (GHS Faculty on Fire Award), Mighty STOMP Award for Third Quarter (Renee Boatright), Star Student and Star Teacher (Anna Diaz and Mr. Chandra Karnati), Shannon Lewis Crook (2017 Philip Wright Award), Helen Ruffin Reading Bowl Regional Winner (GHS Reading Bowl Team, Coach Susan Wooten, and Team Members Ruth Moreno, Esme Paez, Sara Quinteros, Emma Fockle, Christy Nguyen, Michelle Razo, Hiram Martinez, Kathryn Smith, Jennifer Jimenez, Natasha Enrique and Pratyusha Karnati); 125th Anniversary Committee Members and GHS Staff (Helen Perry, Erin Still, Kim Davis, Jeff Pierce, Kris Nordholz, Jean Brannon, Neal Hughs, Chip Frierson, Violet Waldrip, Andrea Gilbert, Beverly Nordholz, Janice Young, Linda Hutchens, Linda Cornett, Tom Smith, Sammy Smith, Nathan Bourdeau, Scott Thomson, Susan Wooten, and Whittney McPherson), GCSS Social Workers (Jarod Anderson, Dr. Ursula Harris, Shannon Lewis Crook), GCSS School Counselors (Kayla Waters, Elizabeth Jones, Carol Ann Ligon, Dr. Kim Hall, Duduzile Siphambili, Tannia Wood, Matilde Garmley, Melody Granger, Dr. Monica Hayman, Rakia Marcus, JD Mutchler, Michael Jackson, and Wendy Savitz), and the Gainesville City Board of Education (School Board Appreciation Week).

Board Chair Brett Mercer recognized Leadership Hall guests in attendance. The Board reviewed and approved agenda reports as submitted by district personnel.

To view the board agenda and reports, click the links listed below:

- [Board Agenda](#)
- [Overnight Field Trips](#)
- [Facility Requests](#)
- [Capital Projects Update & Transportation Satellite Survey](#)
- [Personnel Report](#)
- [February Financials](#)
- [Furniture for Mundy Mill](#)
- [Rigging and Pulley System - PAC - Gainesville High School](#)
- [Write-off 2010 Uncollected Personal Property Tax](#)
- [Demolition of House on Wood's Mill](#)
- [GMP for Enota](#)
- [Superintendent's Strategic Plan Report](#)



## Job Fair for GHS Seniors



Gainesville High School will host a Job Fair for the GHS Senior Class on Friday, April 21st from 1:00 - 2:00 p.m. in the GHS Alumni Gym. This event is open to all Gainesville/Hall County businesses or organizations that are interested in hiring students for full-time or summer employment. Please contact Helen Perry at [helen.perry@gcssk12.net](mailto:helen.perry@gcssk12.net) or 770-503-5090 by Friday, March 31st for additional information and to register your business or organization for the event.

---

### Support Our REACH Scholarship Program



2016 REACH Georgia Scholars

Gainesville City School System encourages the community to support our REACH Georgia Scholars program by making a financial contribution to provide an opportunity for select GCSS students to pursue a college education. REACH Georgia is a needs-based scholarship program that pairs middle school students (Scholars) with mentors, coaches and additional resources to prepare them for college and careers. REACH Scholars who successfully complete the program and graduate from high school earn a \$10,000 scholarship paid over four years at a Georgia college or technical



college of their choice. 100% of all donations collected will contribute toward REACH scholarships. To download a pledge form, please click [here](#). For additional information regarding the REACH program, please click [here](#).

---

## GHS Honorary Diploma Nominations



2016 HD Graduates: Jackie Wallace, Dr. Bill Coates and Mary Ellen Murray

Gainesville High School is currently accepting nominations for 2017 Honorary Diploma nominations. This honor is bestowed to individuals who are part of the GHS community but who are not GHS graduates and whose achievements and strong support of GHS traditions are reflective of the true Red Elephant pride and spirit. Nominations are due by April 15th and should be submitted to GHS principal Tom Smith via email at [tom.smith@gcssk12.net](mailto:tom.smith@gcssk12.net) or via mail at 830 Century Place, Gainesville, Georgia, 30501. Please click [here](#) for additional information.

---

## Your Opinion Matters To Us



Parents and guardians of GCSS students are strongly encouraged to complete the online AdvancED parent survey to share opinions to help target areas of improvement for the school system. The survey can be accessed on the district website ([www.gcssk12.net](http://www.gcssk12.net)) or by clicking [here](#). Please be assured that responses will be anonymous, and parental input is greatly appreciated. For additional information or if there are any questions, please contact Priscilla Collins at [priscilla.collins@gcssk12.net](mailto:priscilla.collins@gcssk12.net) or 770-536-5275.

---

**#Cheersto125years**

---

**Advancing  
A Tradition of Excellence!  
#OneGainesville  
#RoadtoGraduation**

---



- **Gainesville City School System - @GCSSK12**
- **Centennial - @GCSS\_CAA**
- **Enota - @enotamiacademy**
- **Fair Street - @GCSS\_FS**
- **Gainesville Exploration - @GCSS\_GEA**
- **New Holland - @GCSS\_NH**
- **Gainesville Middle School - @GCSS\_GMS**

- Gainesville High School - @GCSS\_GHS



**GCSS Mobile App**  
GCSS is proud to announce its very own mobile app!

GCSS is now live!   

*Here are some amazing features to look forward to and things you can do with the GCSS app:*

**Notifications**  
Make sure you select "Yes" to receive Push Notifications so you can receive all breaking school news. These notifications will be used to provide information on early/late start and school closings.

**Calendar**  
The school wide calendar of events and athletic events at the tip of your finger! Add the events that you are interested in to your native phone calendar so you never miss them!

Download the GCSS Mobile App through **App Store**, **Google Play**, or **Window Store** to access the latest information while on the go! Features such as Calendar of Events, Directions, Faculty and Staff Directory, Emergency and District Alerts, Helpful Links, and Current News can be accessed through our mobile application. **"Go Mobile"** with GCSS!