



FOUNDATION *for* EXCELLENCE
IN PUBLIC EDUCATION
CLARKE COUNTY, GEORGIA

Janis J. Stephens Paraprofessional of the Year Award



Janis (Jan) Stephens holds a BS degree in Early Childhood Education (University of Central Florida), a master's degree in Special Education (Brenau University), and a Special Education Administrative Leadership Credential (University of Georgia). Jan designed and implemented a slate of cutting edge early childhood programs for more than 30 years as an educator and administrator. In the earlier years of her career, she was a special education teacher and coordinator, then led the CCSD pre-K program, Early Head Start, Head Start, and other programs for young children.

Both Jan and the programs under her direction repeatedly received local, state and national recognitions for innovation and quality. Jan spearheaded the Pilot Pre-K Program for the Clarke County School District, a program acclaimed by then-Governor Zell Miller as a “model” program for the state, and helped launch the state’s Pre-School inclusion model for young children with disabilities. The CCSD Office of Early Learning received the “Program of the Year” award from the Georgia Association on Young Children (2003), and has received many grants for family literacy, early reading, and other awards, including the largest Early Reading First grant in the nation (2007). The University of Georgia selected her as recipient of the 2010 “Crystal Apple Alumni Achievement Award”, an honor given to alumni in K-12 education who have made a significant impact on student, school or school district performance. Jan is a 2006 recipient of the *Katherine H. Hug Instructional Leadership Award* from the Foundation for Excellence.

The *Janis J. Stephens Paraprofessional of the Year Award* was established in 2010 with a gift from Bertis and Katherine Downs.