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Community Relations Wins 13 State Public Relations Awards



HOUSTON COUNTY, GA - The Houston County Board of Education Community Relations Department won 13 state awards from the Georgia School Public Relations Association (GSPRA). Houston County was recognized during the GSPRA annual conference held in Athens Oct. 17-18, 2019. The team brought home two Best in Category, nine Gold and two Silver awards for 11 entries in five categories.

The following entries won both Best in Category and Gold awards:

- ★ Retirement Banquet, in the Special Events category; and
- ★ Social Media in the Social Media category.

The additional awards and categories follow.

- ★ Gold - Special Event, Teacher of the Year Recognition
- ★ Gold - Special Event, Groundbreaking Ceremonies
- ★ Gold - Special Purpose Publication, Practice Safe Skin (sunscreen)
- ★ Gold - Scoreboard Advertiser Recruitment
- ★ Gold - Student Art Calendar
- ★ Gold - Marketing Campaign, "Get on board!" Bus Driver

Recruitment

- ★ Gold - Marketing Campaign, "I Believe in You,"
- ★ Silver - Marketing Campaign, "Kindness...Pass it On"
- ★ Silver - Marketing Campaign, Houston County Career Academy Marketing

Judges score each entry on a 100-point scale, evaluating content, engagement, cohesiveness and overall effect. Up to 10 extra points are allowed for documenting how each project utilized the research, analysis, communication and evaluation process or showed formal planning and evaluation efforts. A total of 165 entries were submitted by 21 districts or organizations.

MORE

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The Retirement Banquet earned a score of 110 points. About the Retirement Banquet, the judge commented, "What an outstanding way to honor your retirees. Excellent planning, graphics, color scheme, program, etc. This is a 'wow' event! I wish my district could do this!"

Social Media also scored 110. The judge said, "Thank you for sharing the training presentation. Had a great time looking at ideas on your posts and how you use graphics."

The Groundbreaking Ceremonies and Teacher of the Year (TOTY) Recognition special event entries earned 109 and 107 points respectively. For the TOTY program, the judge said, "Another excellent event from Houston County! The comprehensive planning, sponsorship program, graphics, press coverage, etc. - Quality! Quality! Quality!"

Pictured with their awards are (from left): Beth McLaughlin, Community & School Affairs Director, and Kimberly Wetzal, Community Relations Secretary.

McLaughlin said, "We were excited to bring home a record number of awards! This recognition is the result of work accomplished in partnership with fellow employees from Human Resources, Facilities, Nursing, Transportation, Special Education and Teaching & Learning. We are thankful for the opportunity to serve our schools and district overall and appreciate the support and confidence of our Board and superintendent."

Houston's Community Relations team has won a total of 81 state awards since 2006, to include 48 Gold awards over 12 years of entries. Entries have been submitted annually since 2012, as well as 2010, 2008, 2007 and 2006.

Georgia's school public relations professionals are invited to submit publications, photography and electronic media annually within 14 categories. The entries were judged by North Carolina school public relations professionals. Possible awards include Best in Category, Gold, Silver and Bronze.

Chartered in 1973, GSPRA is a professional organization for school communicators and school-community relations specialists. An affiliate of the National School Public Relations Association, the organization has been designated a NSPRA Blue Ribbon Chapter for the past 28 years. For more information, please visit www.gspra.org.

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