

**NEWS RELEASE**  
*September 30, 2009*

**Rome City Schools' Names 2011 Teacher of the Year!**  
**Rome City Schools' Employee Recognition Program**

The Rome Board of Education is pleased to announce that Ms. **Jennifer Williams**, Choral Music teacher at Rome High School, has been named the *2011 Teacher of the Year* for the Rome City School System. Ms. Williams was made aware of this honor September 30, in a surprise visit to her classroom by Rome City Schools' Superintendent, Dr. Gayland Cooper. Ms. Williams is a graduate of Shorter College and the University of Georgia. She holds a master's degree in music education. Ms. Williams says her success in teaching is rooted in treating her students with "respect, dignity, and kindness." Under her leadership, the choral music program has enjoyed significant growth in student participation. Ms. Williams also serves as chairperson of the Fine Arts Department.

Ms. **Danielle Tapp**, first grade teacher at Southeast Elementary School, also received a surprise visit from Dr. Cooper as she was named *Teacher of the Year* runner-up. Ms. Tapp has been teaching for five years. She is a graduate of Shorter College and the University of West Georgia. She holds a master's degree in early childhood education. Ms. Tapp has demonstrated significant success in integrating special needs students into the regular classroom setting. "Instilling confidence" in her students is the key to their success, according to Ms. Tapp.

Ms. **Gina Byars** was named as the *2011 Support Employee of the Year*. Ms. Byars has been employed 11 years at the Central Office. She currently serves as the administrative assistant to the Director of Personnel. She has also worked as a paraprofessional and school secretary. In addition to her job responsibilities, Ms. Byars regularly volunteers many hours of service to her church and the Rome community. She serves as pianist at her church and has coordinated many children-oriented activities, such as: Children's Ministries; Children's Church Choir; and "Homework Help" to name a few! This is Ms. Byars' second time to be named as the district-level *Support Employee of the Year*!

These outstanding employees were selected from representatives from each school by a committee of retired educators from outside the Rome area. The Rome Board of Education and the employees of the Rome City School System extend congratulations to these three outstanding employees, as well as, all of the employees selected as representatives in the district's Employee Recognition Program.

All employees selected for the recognition program will be honored at a banquet, in their honor, scheduled for Tuesday, **October 13, 2009** at Rome Middle School at 7:00 p.m.