

**BOARD OF EDUCATION OF HARFORD COUNTY
RECOGNITION**

HCPS EDUCATOR HALL OF FAME

**LYNNE E. OWEN
GEORGE D. CLARK
DAVID J. SIMMONS**

June 23, 2014

Background Information:

The Harford County Public Schools Educator Hall of Fame program, in partnership with the Harford County Retired School Personnel Association (HCRSPA), recognizes educators who have provided at least 20 years of extraordinary service to students and staff in the school system. Two Board of Education recognition ceremonies are scheduled per school year – one in the fall and one in the summer – where a class of up to three nominees are presented with plaques, Board certificates and proclamations from county and state government officials, and are officially inducted into the Hall of Fame. The inductees also are featured on the Harford County Public Schools website, www.hcps.org.

Discussion:

Summer 2014 Hall of Fame Inductees:

Lynne Evans Owen

Lynne Evans Owen was born in Philadelphia, PA and attended J. H. Brown School Elementary School. In 5th grade, she moved to New Jersey and attended Pennsauken Junior and Senior High School, graduating as Valedictorian in 1963. She attended Douglass College, Rutgers State University, graduating, Phi Beta Kappa in English Education in 1967. She moved to Harford County in 1968 when her husband was stationed at Edgewood Arsenal. She was a “stay-at-home” mom until 1976 when she was hired as an 8th grade English teacher at Joppatowne High School. A year later, she transferred to the newly-built Magnolia Middle School. She taught as a member of an 8th grade interdisciplinary team at Magnolia Middle for nine years and as English Department Chair for five years. Mrs. Owen really enjoyed working in a new school as a member of a team.

In 1985, she was appointed as an assistant principal at Southampton Middle School where she worked for four years until she was transferred back to Magnolia Middle. During that time, she organized and hosted the countywide Middle School Speech Festival. She was named principal of Magnolia Middle two years later. During the five years she served as principal, she used the School-Based Decision Making Model (SBIDM) of leadership. The leadership team, consisting of department chairs and team leaders, worked effectively to promote literacy and interdisciplinary connections across all disciplines. The school was recognized by

MSDE for significant improvement in its test scores as a result of those efforts. Recognition included a monetary award.

In 1996, she was transferred to Fallston Middle School where she served as principal for four years. In 1999 and 2000 the school was recognized by MSDE for significant improvement in test scores. One of the most memorable moments of Mrs. Owen's career was the visit of State Superintendent, Dr. Nancy Grasmick, to the school to recognize the accomplishment and present the financial award. Soon after, Mrs. Owen left Fallston Middle to become Supervisor of English/Reading, a position she held until her retirement in 2012.

As supervisor of English/Reading, she proceeded to standardize the materials and objectives for the elementary and secondary reading and writing programs. Common text books were chosen and purchased, quarterly assessments were created, and professional development was designed to support teachers in implementing the programs and evaluating students' progress.

Remedial programs were developed to help less able readers at all levels. At the ninth/tenth grade levels, Strategic Reading courses were established in a partnership with Johns Hopkins University. A new course, English for the 21st Century, developed by a team of Harford County teachers, provided an alternative to British Literature for seniors. Benchmark essays and assessments at grade levels set target standards.

Mrs. Owen retired in 2012 after 36 years.

George D. Clark

George D. Clark was born in central Kentucky and grew up in Garrard County, Kentucky. He attend college for two years at Berea College, KY, and then transferred to and graduated from Eastern Kentucky University in Richmond, KY. While teaching did not run in Mr. Clark's family, education was held in high esteem. He was influenced by several teachers in his early years, most specifically his 5th grade teacher.

Mr. Clark answered a job posting at his college placement office and came to Harford County with his wife for an interview for a position at Bel Air High School, which he accepted. While working for Harford County Public Schools, Mr. Clark obtained his Masters in Secondary Education from Towson University in 1968. During the 1970-71 school year, he took a sabbatical to Florida State University and earned his MBA.

Mr. Clark taught business for 17 years at Bel Air High School, followed by 17 years at C. Milton Wright High School. During his years in the classroom and while serving as Business Department Chair at both Bel Air and C. Milton Wright high schools, he was able to oversee and implement many positive changes in the area of business education at both the school level and countywide.

Mr. Clark served on the Countywide Business Education Curriculum Committee for 30 of his 34 years in the classroom. As such, he was involved in designing and implementing changes to the countywide Business curriculum, including the integration of the computer in many areas of the business curriculum and articulation programs with Harford Community College in Accounting and Computer Software. Mr. Clark was also a member of several professional organizations, including MBEA and EBFA, as well as educational organizations, NEA, MSTA and HCEA.

In addition to teaching, Mr. Clark served as the Track and Field coach at both Bel Air High and C. Milton Wright High schools. He was also an adjunct faculty member at Harford Community College for more than 20 years, teaching accounting.

The direct impact Mr. Clark had on more than 4,500 students in his classroom is what he considers to be his most significant career accomplishment. He truly enjoyed the relationships he developed with his students and witnessing them learn and grow. Mr. Clark is proud of the success of so many of his students following their high school graduation.

After 34 years teaching in the classroom, Mr. Clark served for eight years as grants accountant in the Harford County Public Schools Finance Office before retiring in 2005. Following his retirement, he continued to work with the school system's Title I Office until December 2007.

David J. Simmons

Mr. David James Simmons was born and raised in Havre de Grace. He attended Meadowbrook Elementary School and graduated from Havre de Grace High School in 1970. He went on to earn his Bachelor of Science in June of 1974 from Towson State College (now Towson University). He began teaching in Cecil County, but after two years he transferred to Harford County Public Schools. While teaching, Mr. Simmons continued his education and received his Master of Education in 1981, followed by his 30 credits beyond.

Mr. Simmons mother, who taught elementary school for 35 years, was his influence to become a teacher. One of four children, he and two of his siblings became teachers, and all four children married teachers!

Mr. Simmons began his career as a physical education teacher with Harford County Public Schools in 1976 at Havre de Grace Middle School, where he taught for two years before transferring to Harford Technical High School. He taught at Harford Technical High for eight years and then transferred to North Harford High School for two years before shifting to the elementary level for the remainder of his career. Between 1989 until his retirement in 2011, Mr. Simmons taught physical education at Hickory, Havre de Grace, Meadowvale, Emmorton and Forest Hill elementary schools. Mr. Simmons taught all grade levels from K through 12 during his 35-year tenure with Harford County Public Schools.

Interacting with his students and getting to know them was what Mr. Simmons enjoyed the most about his job. He loved working with the special needs students while providing them adaptive physical education classes and was skilled at modifying equipment and activities to make them feel like they were truly a part of the class. Mr. Simmons was passionate about children living up to their potential, both in the gym and in the classroom, and about learning to be healthy and fit for the rest of their lives. He served as a School Improvement Team member and was an advocate for special area teachers.

In addition to teaching and serving on several health and physical education committees, Mr. Simmons served as head coach for Varsity Baseball, Varsity Soccer and Junior Varsity Football. He was also instrumental in schoolwide Jump Rope for Heart fundraisers and other special events that brought the students, their families and the school staff together, such as American Heart Association walks, PTA Golf Tournaments, Olympic Day, and afterschool gymnastics/tumbling club, to name just a few.

Among many major accomplishments throughout his career, Mr. Simmons is credited with starting the football program at Harford Technical High School and was a part of the team

that opened two brand new schools and was integrally involved in ordering the equipment necessary to begin the physical education programs at those schools.

Mr. Simmons retired on July 1, 2011, following his diagnosis with ALS in December 2010. He passed away in October 2011. After his death, the annual Turkey Trot at Havre de Grace Middle School was renamed the Dave Simmons Turkey Trot in his honor.

Superintendent's Recommendation:

The Superintendent recommends the Board of Education of Harford County induct Lynne Evans Owen, George D. Clark and David James Simmons into the HCPS Educator Hall of Fame as its 179th, 180th and 181st members, respectively, in recognition of their years of extraordinary service to the students, staff and community of the Harford County Public Schools.