



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
OCTOBER 19, 2011

CONTACT: Emily Gest
DJJ Communications
(404) 508-7147
(404) 858-4226
emilygest@djj.state.ga.us

DJJ ANNOUNCES TEACHER OF THE YEAR
- Metro RYDC teacher Letuyna Walker of Macon honored at DJJ annual educators conference-

(Forsyth, GA.) – Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) Commissioner Amy Howell yesterday announced that veteran Metro Regional Youth Detention Center (RYDC) teacher Letuyna Walker was honored today as teacher-of-the-year at DJJ’s annual educators conference at the Department’s training facility in Forsyth. She will represent DJJ in the state competition for teacher-of-the-year.

Ms. Walker holds an Ed.D. in Instructional Leadership and has 21 years of experience in teaching and administration. She was recognized for her deep commitment to the teaching profession and DJJ youth; ongoing encouragement to both DJJ youth and professional colleagues; her teaching philosophy and high ethical standards. She was one of five finalists who completed a rigorous regional selection process by their peers. She teaches language arts and science at Metro RYDC, a short-term secure residential facility in the Atlanta area for boys and girls. She has been with DJJ since 2003 and has worked at Bill Ireland Youth Development Campus (YDC) as a teacher, education supervisor, as well as at Macon RYDC and DeKalb RYDC.

“Ms. Walker embodies the epitome of a DJJ teacher – encouraging, persistent, and dedicated. She rightly believes that every youth can learn and should be given an opportunity to learn,” said DJJ Commissioner Amy Howell, who, as Commissioner, is the superintendent of the DJJ school system, which is the state’s 181st school district and has dual accreditation from both the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) and the Correctional Education Association (CEA).

Added Commissioner Howell, “Too often, the youth who come to us have had negative experiences with education. Exceptional teachers like Ms. Walker help make manifest to youth that their world can be much larger and that education is a key to their recovery and rehabilitation.”

Ms. Walker said, “It’s a great honor I never expected. I do what I do because it’s a calling. The greatest reward is when a student has grasped a concept and the joy expressed from this discovery.”

The Commissioner congratulated all 20 nominees. The five finalists for the prestigious award were: Della Hughes, August YDC; Margaret Grimsley, Macon YDC; Eddie Etim, Aaron Cohn RYDC; and Charlotte Hall, Claxton RYDC.

DJJ’s mission is to protect and serve the citizens of Georgia by holding young offenders accountable for their actions through the delivery of services and sanctions in appropriate settings and by supporting youth in their communities to become productive and law-abiding citizens. Each day, at 26 facilities and 92 court services offices throughout the state, more than 4,000 DJJ employees work diligently to effect justice as well as redirect and shape the young lives in the agency’s care so they can take responsibility for their delinquent conduct as well as become contributing members of society. At the same time, DJJ seeks to protect the victims of crimes so that they can rebuild their lives.

###