



NEWS RELEASE

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GCPS salutes its top transportation professionals

Gwinnett County Public Schools' (GCPS) transportation team is one of the best around. In addition to safely transporting approximately 130,000 GCPS students to and from school each school day, they have stepped in during digital learning to support the district's efforts to feed children. Each year GCPS hosts an awards banquet to honor a select group of transportation professionals who, through their hard work, dedication, and job performance, have proven themselves to be the best of the best. Although GCPS was unable to host the event this year because of COVID-19, the school district is pleased to recognize this year's honorees for their service to Gwinnett students and their families. **Laura Bonanno** and **Marta Angelyne West** have been named the **2019-20 School Bus Managers of the Year** and **Darlena M. Bumphus** is this year's **Monitor of the Year**. In addition, **Joey Guthrie** is the **Fleet Technician of the Year**.

Laura Bonanno

2019-2020 Regular Education Bus Manager of the Year

Laura is a Gwinnett County native who has been with the school district for five years. She drives routes for McKendree Elementary School, Creekland Middle School, and Collins Hills High School, and serves as a back-up driver for Taylor and Walnut Grove elementary schools. Laura says her most memorable moment as a driver occurred when one of her kindergarten riders opened up to her. She says, "The little girl refused to talk on the bus for three months and one day she whispered in my ear, 'I love you.' It was my first year driving a bus and my first 'I love you' from a student. I cried."



Laura Bonanno

Marta Angelyne West

2019-2020 Special Education Bus Manager of the Year

Marta is a veteran driver who has been with the district for 24 years. She drives routes for Brookwood, Craig, Grayson, Pharr, Starling, and Trip elementary schools, Bay Creek, Couch and Crews middle schools, as well as Brookwood and Grayson high schools. Marta has four daughters and three grandchildren who are the light and focus of her life. She adds, "I started because I wanted to



Marta Angelyne West

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The Mission of Gwinnett County Public Schools
is to pursue excellence in academic knowledge, skills, and behavior for each student, resulting in measured improvement against local, national, and world-class standards.

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2010 and 2014 Winner of



raise my own children. Now I still drive so I can have time to spoil my grandchildren.”

Darlena M. Bumphus

2019-2020 Special Education Bus Monitor of the Year

Darlena adores children and loves the opportunity she has and the pleasure she gains from working with them. She has worked with GCPS for 8 years and is a back-up driver and monitor for the Norcross area. Darlena likes to engage students. She explains, “I want to help make sure they have a good day and that they are safe as they go to and from school. I want to get to know them no matter what disabilities they have, and to give them a smile— and when I receive one back, it makes my day. I feel like I’ve done my job and I’ve made a difference in their life.”



Darlena M. Bumphus

The selection of the 2019-2020 winners is the result of an extensive process. First, drivers are nominated by their colleagues in their transportation zone. There are 23 regular education zones and 21 special education zones. Nominees then take a written and driving skills test. Eleven finalists are selected – five regular education bus managers, three special education bus managers, and three special education bus monitors. A judging committee selected this year’s winners from the finalists.



Joey Guthrie
Fleet Technician of the Year

Don Moore, executive director of Transportation, is proud of the honorees, but disappointed they could not be recognized in the traditional way. He adds, “It is with great pride and a heavy heart that we announce this year’s Bus Managers and Monitor of the Year,” Moore said. “We are proud to recognize these incredible individuals, and sad that we could not honor them during our annual awards banquet. Our 22nd annual awards banquet was scheduled for March 17, 2020, the same week that schools were closed due to COVID-19. When we announced the cancellation, our winners, finalists, and zone representatives did what you would expect from exceptional individuals. They immediately started delivering food with the rest of the drivers and monitors to ensure the children of Gwinnett continued to be fed. We are blessed to have such incredible people as part of our Transportation family.”