

Teacher Position, No. 2 Biographies

Ms. Dee Downey Pruett, a resident of Attalla, is employed by the Etowah County Board of Education as a 7th – 12th grade math teacher and has 23 years of experience. She teaches the Supportive Educational Environment (SEE) Plus Program, serving expecting and parenting teens. She shares the Children's Trust Fund (CTF) of Alabama goal of preventing child abuse and neglect. Ms. Pruett has a M.S. from the University of Alabama and a B.S. from Jacksonville State University, both in secondary math education. Ms. Pruett is the Etowah County Alternative Education Center Teacher of the Year for 2009, and was the Etowah County Secondary Teacher of the Year for 2005. She was elected EEA Representative to the AEA State Delegate Assembly seven times and serves as treasurer for the Alpha Delta Kappa, (ADK), Eta Chapter. Ms. Pruett's activities also include Romar Beach Baptist Church, Baldwin County, Jesus Loves You, Bible on the Beach Retreats volunteer, June, 2009; Youth Bible Drill Leader for the Etowah Baptist Association; Executive Producer, Singer/Songwriter/Teacher of the *Singing Bible Drill* CD's; and Attalla D.A.R.E. Summer Camp volunteer/lifeguard. She enjoys singing/songwriting and playing the guitar. Her son, Josh, is a senior at Etowah High School, Attalla City.

Mr. Ricky Whaley, the incumbent, was born and raised in Lineville, and graduated from Lineville High School. He received his B.S. from Auburn University, and M.S. and A.A. degrees from Alabama A&M, all in agribusiness education. Mr. Whaley received an educational administration certification from Jacksonville State University. He has taught agribusiness education at Jacksonville High School for the past 24 ½ years, where he was selected as the Jacksonville City Schools Teacher of the Year in 1990 and 1995. Mr. Whaley is a member of the Jacksonville Education Association (JEA President in 1996, 1997, 2004, 2005, and 2008-current), Alabama Education Association and National Education Association. In 1996, he served as Alabama Agribusiness Teachers Association State President. Mr. Whaley is a member of the National Council on Teacher Retirement (NCTR) and the Southern Conference on Teacher Retirement (SCTR). He was selected as National Outstanding Young Agriculture Teacher, Region V in 1990, National Outstanding Agriculture Teacher, Region V in 1993, and National Outstanding Agriculture Program, Region V in 1994. He is married to Missia Boozer (a retired public school teacher), and they have 3 sons: Jack, 17, Nathan, 14, and John Ross, 4.

Postsecondary Position Biographies

Dr. Philip Westbrook is a lifelong Alabamian currently serving as an associate professor at the University of Alabama in the Department of Educational Leadership, Policy, and Technology Studies within the College of Education and as the director of Blackburn Institute, widely regarded as one of the preeminent leadership development organizations in the country. He holds a B.S. in elementary education from Birmingham-Southern College, a M.A.Ed. in elementary education and school administration from the University of Alabama at Birmingham, and an Ed.D. in educational leadership from Vanderbilt University. Dr. Westbrook has been a member of the UA College of Education faculty and taught school finance since 2007. Prior to that, he served as assistant superintendent of the Jasper City Board of Education, principal of Maddox Middle School in Jasper, and a classroom teacher in both Jasper and Homewood. He currently resides in Tuscaloosa where he is a member of Trinity United Methodist Church and active in community service.

Dr. Steve Swidler is the J. Stanley Mackin Professor of Finance at Auburn University, teaching courses in securities analysis, banking and financial derivatives. Prior to joining Auburn in 2001, he was a senior financial economist in the United States Treasury helping supervise nationally chartered banks. Dr. Swidler has taught finance and economics for more than 25 years and has served on the faculties of the University of Texas at Arlington, Southern Methodist University, the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and Rice University. His honors include the W. Paul Green Award for Excellence in Teaching, an Auburn University Faculty Mentoring grant and a Filene Research Institute award for credit union research. During his professional career, he has been invited to present his work on banking, capital markets and risk management at the Federal Reserve Bank, the Bank of England, the World Bank and numerous universities and conferences around the world. His publications in banking, finance and economics have appeared in more than 60 journals and professional proceedings. Dr. Swidler earned an M.A. and Ph.D. in economics from Brown University. He holds his B.A. degree in economics and mathematics from Oberlin College and obtained his license to teach mathematics in grades 7-12.

Dr. Susan Williams Brown, the incumbent, is a resident of Etowah County and has been employed in public education for 30 years. She has been employed with Gadsden State Community College as a mathematics instructor since 1990. Dr. Brown received her A.S. in general studies from Snead State Junior College, B.S. and M.S. in Mathematics Education from Jacksonville State University, and Ed.D. in Curriculum and Instruction from the University of Alabama. She was valedictorian of Sardis High School in Etowah County. Dr. Brown currently serves on the TRS Board of Control, NEA Board of Directors, and AEA Board of Directors. She serves as local GSCCEA Vice-President, and Vice-President of AEA UniServ District Nine. She has been a former member of the Postsecondary Advisory Committee on Policy Matters and is currently active in the United Way Loaned Executive Program, local Legislative Contact Team, and Eta Chapter of Alpha Delta Kappa. Dr. Brown has served two years as President and is currently Vice-President of the Postsecondary Division of AEA, 13 years as NEA Delegate, and six years as local GSCCEA President. She is an associate member of the Alabama Education Retirees Association (AERA). Susan is married to Gene Brown.

Dr. Charles D. Lake is a resident of Fairhope and has worked at Faulkner State since 1986. He began as an adjunct instructor and presently serves as Chair of Business and Computer Science. This past year, Dr. Lake served as Interim Dean of Instruction and returned to his love of teaching and mentoring students. He holds a B.S. in quantitative business methods, an MBA, additional graduate study in computer programming, and a PhD in instructional design from the University of South Alabama. Dr. Lake is Secretary-Treasurer for the Alabama Association for Higher Education in Business, South West Regional Director for the Alabama Council for Technology in Education, and a graduate of the Alabama Community College Leadership Academy from the University of Alabama. He is also a member of the Fairhope Single Tax Association, a co-sponsor of Phi Theta Kappa, and has been named Who's Who Among Teachers.

Mrs. Sharrie Cranford, LGSW, is a resident of Mobile and has been an RSA member for approximately 10 years. Having spent the past seven years with the University of South Alabama (USA), her career has included the Department of Human Resources as a Social Worker to recently becoming Director of Continuing Medical Education with USA. Mrs. Cranford is also an Instructor for the University of Alabama School of Social Work. She began her career after receiving a Master of Social Work degree from the University of Alabama, Magna Cum Laude, and a bachelor's degree from Spring Hill College. She has been on the Board of Management with the Mobile YMCA and has chaired their annual fundraiser for 6 years, increasing donations every year. She has won Volunteer of the Year award from the Mobile YMCA, Mobile Rape Crisis Center, and has received numerous other awards and recognition. Mrs. Cranford has been married to Doug Cranford for 10 years and has two children who attend Hutchens' Elementary and Faith Academy.

(Biographies continued on back.)

Retired Position No. 1 Biographies

Mr. Richard Nenstiel, a resident of Mobile, is retired from the University of South Alabama, having served in several clinical, management and academic positions from 1982-2007. He holds bachelors degrees from Pennsylvania State University (1978, biology) and UAB (1980, surgeon's assistant) and a graduate degree from USA (1987, MBA) and has worked in the medical and/or academic field since 1980. His clinical work has been in cardiovascular surgery, primary care, diabetes care, emergency medicine, and neurosurgery. Mr. Nenstiel has also worked in hospital administration and academia as a faculty member and department chairperson. Though retired from USA, he currently works full-time in a private neurosurgical practice in Mobile. He has served on a variety of state and national committees/boards including the Alabama Society of Physician Assistants and the American Academy of Physician Assistants. In 2004/2005, he served on the Healthcare Workforce Development Planning Committee in the Alabama Department of Community and Economic Affairs. In 2005, he was deployed with the Alabama-3 Disaster Medical Assistance Team to provide medical care in Cameron and New Orleans, LA, following Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Spring Hill Baptist Church is his church home, where Mr. Nenstiel currently serves as a deacon and Sunday school teacher.

Mrs. Sarah Swindle, the incumbent and Vice Chair, is a resident of Birmingham. She worked in public education for 33 years as a teacher in Mobile County, Jefferson County, Hoover City, and DOD in Ramstein, Germany, retiring in 1994. Mrs. Swindle earned a B.S. from East Carolina University and a M.A. from the University of Alabama. She is a member of the national RTA, AERA, Jefferson County ERA, Alpha Delta Kappa, and NEA. Mrs. Swindle has served on every State AEA Commission. She has chaired the AEA Policies and Procedures Commission and the Professional Rights and Responsibilities Commission. Her honors include serving as president of AEA, president of Jefferson County Education Association, as TRS representative on the AERA Board, and as an AEA/AERA Retiree Organizer. For the past ten years, the TRS and PEEHIP Boards have elected her to serve as Vice Chair. She has been a member of Dawson Memorial Baptist Church for 38 years. Her involvement has included being a Sunday School Teacher, member of the choir, member of various committees, and having served as the Lay Training Coordinator for the Stephen Ministry. She is a member of the Finley Character Education Committee for Hoover City Schools.