



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**Halifax County, NC – June 7, 2022**  
*June Board Meeting Recognitions*



Halifax County Schools recognized Ms. Bonita Evans as the District Employee of the month for May. Ms. Evans serves as an Administrative Assistant and Bookkeeper at Hollister Elementary Leadership Academy. Ms. Evans’s job entails working in a receptionist capacity to greet the community, staff, and students, answer and direct phone calls, and organize documents and paperwork while maintaining a filing system.

Additionally, she assists the principal and staff with school projects and tasks. Staff states that Ms. Evans shows up to work every day, always doing her absolute best to keep students safe and all staff taken care of, and fulfills all her duties and beyond. She helps the school and community morale by staying positive through all situations. As a bus driver, data manager, receptionist, behavior assistant, and all other tasks, she always gets it done and done well! “Congratulations to Ms. Evans on a job well done. We are thankful to have her a part of Halifax County Schools”. Ms. Evans states, “It’s an honor to be chosen employee of the month! I am so thankful and blessed to have a family like mine!”



Halifax County Schools May student of the month is Abel Silver. Scholar Abel Silver attends Hollister Elementary Leadership Academy and is a 1st-grade student. Abel was chosen student of the month because he has shown improvement in all areas of learning. He strives to do his best work no matter what! Abel’s favorite subject is Reading. Abel states, “I love to learn to read and when others read aloud.” His favorite hobbies are watching movies, running, playing outside, and playing video games. Advice for other students: “Always do your best and never let anyone tell you

that you can’t succeed.” Abel’s thoughts about school and being selected student of the month is, “I am happy, and so is my family.” Superintendent Dr. Cunningham states, “Awesome job Abel. I am so proud of you. Continue to keep up the great work and strive for five!”



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The Halifax County Board of Education approved the Superintendent’s recommendation of Ms. Sharon Richardson for the Principal position at Aurelian Springs Institute of Global Learning. Shortly after graduating high school, Ms. Richardson began her career serving eight years in the United States Marines. In 2009, she obtained her teaching credential in Special Education in mild to moderate and moderate to severe disabilities from National University in California. Ms. Richardson has a bachelor’s degree in Psychology, Sociology, and Criminal Justice from Drury University in Missouri. Additionally, she has a master’s degree in Special Education with an add-on School Administration degree from Gardner Webb in North Carolina. In 2013, her military family moved to North Carolina from California. She started teaching middle school students soon after her arrival. During her four years as an EC teacher at the middle school, she was selected as “rookie teacher of the year” and was also chosen as “teacher of the year at the school level.” Ms. Richardson then became an EC Liaison for various elementary to high school schools. She has served several years as an Assistant Principal in Craven County Schools, where she has gained experience at both the high school and elementary school levels. In total, she has been in education for over 12 years. Creating learning environments where “all” students can be successful has been her personal goal throughout her educational career. Ms. Richardson states, “I look forward to contributing to the vision and mission of Halifax County Schools and being that “service leader” for the staff, students, and families of Aurelian Springs. Superintendent Dr. Cunningham states, “We are excited to have Ms. Richardson a part of Halifax County Schools. I cannot wait to see all of the great things she does and bring to Aurelian Springs Institute of Global Learning”.



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Halifax County Schools had the opportunity to award two scholarships during the board meeting through a partnership with Mr. Lester Lyons and Mr. Troy Veale from One Love Laboratory. Mr. Troy Veale, CEO of PHD/ One Love Laboratory, states, “It was a pleasure and honor to be a part of the Halifax family to assist with keeping the schools and community safe. At PHD/One Love Laboratory, we believe that "GIVING BACK IS NOT AN OPTION." The relationship that we have built with the Halifax community has been a great start in our safeguard attempts. Under the phenomenal tag team leadership of Dr. Cunningham and Dr. Battle, we had a well outlined opportunity to do such. In conjunction with Dr. Monroe and his interests in assuring the safety of the children, we feel that the Halifax School system has one of the best educational teams that we have serviced during the trying times of the COVID-19 pandemic. We commend this team for a job well done. We would like to thank the Halifax County Board of Education for allowing us to present and demonstrate our capabilities in assisting with the mission, values, and vision for school safety”.

“We also extend appreciation to Dr. Cunningham and Dr. Battle for allowing our laboratory to utilize selected students and staff for the testing procedures. This in-school career development opportunity assisted students in their training and skills in safe practices, data entry, reporting, and customer service. We take pride in helping our children; therefore, providing "on-the-job training and scholarships is a true focus for our laboratory. Our scholarships are designed to help recipients get a jumpstart towards financial funding for education. As we all know, college is costly, so every bit of help received is important. Doing our part for the community is in high demand. Due to the diligence of the Halifax County board and administration and the amount of trust they presented to us, it is a feeling of gratitude to have been able to give back to its students. Our vision is to LIFT OTHERS WHILE WE CLIMB. The watchword in our business is "SERVICE", and we stand "SQUARE" behind that. It brings a great job to award two exceptional students moving forward to attend college to pursue their future. We hope they will reach back and help others,” said Mr. Troy Veale. Superintendent Dr. Cunningham states, “We are thankful for our partnership with One Love Laboratory. It is great to know that we have their full support in empowering students to become successful global residents. I am so proud of Zaniya and Aniya for their hard work and dedication throughout their schooling. I cannot wait to see what the future holds for these two scholars. Continue to strive for five!”



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Zaniya Battle is the proud recipient of the Troy Veale Academic Achievement Scholarship. Zaniya is the Class President and Class Valedictorian of the 1<sup>st</sup> Inaugural Class of 2022 at the Halifax County Schools Early College. She excelled in athletics and academics, where she served as a high school cheerleader, a tutor, and a member of the Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society. She is a member of the first inaugural Lighthouse Solar Energy Camp, where she

served as a student ambassador. Zaniya was recognized for her many honors on the President's List, the Dean's List, and the Halifax County Schools Teen Court. She received the President's Award for Educational Excellence. Zaniya also served as one of the COVID testers for One Love Laboratories. Zaniya was one of the Halifax County Schools' Early College "Fabulous Five" who received an Associate of Arts Degree from Halifax Community College. She will be attending East Carolina University in the fall as a junior, majoring in Biology. She aspires to become your next surgeon as she continues to give back to her community.



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Aniya Heckstall is the proud recipient of the Troy Veale Athletic Scholarship. Aniya is a star athlete for Halifax County Schools, where she dominated the field in all sports: cross-country, basketball, volleyball, softball, and track and field. Aniya is well-rounded and has excelled in both academics and athletics. She is a member of the 1<sup>st</sup> Inaugural Class of 2022 at the Halifax County Schools Early College. Aniya is a member of the 1<sup>st</sup> Inaugural Lighthouse Solar Energy Camp and was awarded the President’s Award for Educational Excellence. Aniya will be attending Barton College on a scholarship in the fall, where she will transfer about 48 hours of college credits. Here are some of her athletic accolades:

- Cross-Country: Placed 2nd in running; Made All-Conference team; Helped girls to win 2021 Conference Championship. Most Valuable Runner.
- Basketball: Made all-girls Christmas Tournament Team; Best Defensive Player; Made All-Conference; Made All-Conference Tournament Team. Helped the team earn 2nd place Regular season and 2nd place in Conference Tournament. Most Valuable Player.
- Track and Field: Regular Season Aniya won 1st in the 100-meter dash, 1st in the 200 meters dash, and 1st in Long Jump. Aniya jumped 15’0 during the regular season. Made All-Conference; Best runner and jumper; Most Valuable Athlete.

Mr. Lester Lyons states, “We at One Love and PHD Laboratories measure our success based on our relationships with our partners and community. We appreciate the bond we have forged with Halifax County Schools and the opportunity Dr. Cunningham, Dr. Battle, and Dr. Monroe gave us to provide much-needed service in the school system. During the pandemic, things were very uncertain, and we appreciate that Halifax County chose us and stuck with us. The scholarships and achievement awards are just a token of our appreciation and our way of giving back to the community and partner that allowed us the opportunity to serve. We hope to push our youth to aspire to be more and wish to help them in any way we can and think these scholarships will be a starting point to getting them to one day give back or come back and serve the community. Thank you all for working with us, and just know we appreciate it greatly. Also, congratulations to the two award recipients, Zaniya Battle and Aniya Heckstall.”