



CONNECTION

A newsletter for the Thomas Academy family

Keeping connection through communication

January 2019 Edition

College & Career Promise collaboration with Southeastern Community College yielding results

As part of the commitment to individualized education, Thomas Academy has joined forces with Southeastern Community College to provide a variety of educational opportunities beyond the classroom.

“We have an articulation agreement with SCC to provide access to the Work Force Continuing Education Pathways through College and Career Promise,” said Dr. Geraldine Bradshaw, school director. “We are the first school in Columbus County to have this opportunity for our students. All these courses are free to students.

“This pathway provides our junior and senior students with the opportunity to take a one-semester course where they will be trained in Working Smart, manufacturing operations, forklift operations, CPR, and AED,” she

continued. “After completion of this pathway, they will have earned a certification in manufacturing operations and a job interview with a local manufacturing business. This is important for many reasons. Local manufacturing businesses are looking for employees and the number of interested employees is dwindling. For our young people, this will provide an opportunity to get full-time jobs starting at \$15 per hour.”

One of the first Thomas Academy students to complete the program is now working at Lowe’s in Whiteville part-time as a forklift operator earning \$10+ per hour.

“This is just the start for this young man’s success,” Dr. Bradshaw said. “He now has a certification that opens doors to high paying jobs across the country. He can choose to go wherever he wants with the confidence that he will be able to find a

job to support himself.”

A new manufacturing cycle will start in February as will college courses for a number of our juniors and seniors.

“We want our students to be able to explore their interests through the collaborations,” said Dr. Bradshaw. “This means taking the pathway appropriate for their goals, be it job force or college readiness.”

It is with this in mind that eligible juniors and seniors will attend a tour of Columbus Regional Hospital on Jan. 30.

“This tour will include visits to different areas in the hospital,” said Dr. Bradshaw. “After the visits, students will be sent to a conference room to see if anyone is interested in the medical field. If so, they will be offered a non-paying internship with the hospital. This program is in direct collaboration with Southeastern Community College.”

Dates to Remember

- Jan. 17 - Early Release Day (12 p.m. Dismissal)
Teacher Conferences (6 - 8 p.m.)
- Jan. 21 - Holiday (No school)
- Jan. 30 - Junior/Senior Tour of Columbus Regional Hospital

Basketball Schedule

- January 16 - Middle School Game
- January 22 - @ Columbus Christian Academy
- January 24 - Riverside Christian Academy
- January 28 - Brown Leadership Academy

**Schedule subject to change. Keep up with the teams on our Facebook page for updates.*

From the Director's Desk

Great things are happening at Thomas Academy!

Our fall EOC scores are in and our students again knocked it out! Our Biology scores increased by 19 points, something that is virtually unheard of in education circles. Our English I, English II and Math scores were among the highest we've had at the school.

The spring semester holds so much promise. Qualified students continue to take advantage of the opportunities presented at Southeastern Community College. As you can read in the following pages, our piano lab is back in session with the sixth grade students enjoying the opportunity to learn to play an instrument at no cost to your family.

Please make plans to join us for the teacher conferences on January 17 from 6 - 8 p.m. This is your opportunity to talk directly to the teacher about your child's grades and needs. This is an important part of the educational partnership so I sincerely ask that you attend this special evening.

While my focus is on the children during school hours, I practice an open door policy for students, staff, and parents. If at any time you have a question or concern, please call me. I can be reached on my cell phone at 910-874-1456 or by email at geraldine.bradshaw@thomasacademync.org.

Thank you to all involved for giving me the opportunity to grow our children.

Yours in service,

Geraldine Bradshaw



Helping students find Connection, Compassion & Character

The Thomas Academy educational experience is a partnership between the teachers, students, and parents/guardians.

Parental/guardian involvement means participation of parents in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication regarding student academic learning and school activities.

How can you get involved?

- Sign up for the Remind app
- Volunteer to help at the school
- Attend parent/guardian meetings
- Serve on the Parent Advisory Committee
- Talk with your child about his or her classroom experiences
- Log into Powerschool to check your child's grades
- Reach out to teachers directly with any questions or concerns
- Attend awards ceremonies or events

Connection is the newsletter for Thomas Academy designed to uphold the commitment to connection through communication. It is distributed once a month during the academic year to provide continuing updates on the happenings of the school. To remain connected between issues, visit the website at www.thomasacademync.org and become a fan on Facebook: www.facebook.com/ThomasAcademyNC/

Fall EOC Scores continue pattern of growth, success

The fall semester End-Of-Course scores have arrived and the results demonstrate continued success for our students.

“We saw a 19 point increase in our Biology scores,” said Dr. Tom Simmons, vice president for education. “Most schools will celebrate a 3 to 4 point jump and our students achieved a 19 point increase.”

In addition to the overall success by the class, one student scored a “5”.

“Only 3 percent of students in the state of NC scored a “5”,” said Dr. Geraldine Bradshaw.

“We are working hard every day to make sure that our students receive all the support they need. This is a large reason why we continue to see the growth and success on these tests.”

The individualized educational approach also allowed students to score well on both English and Math EOCs.

“We are so excited that the students are getting to see the results of their efforts,” Dr. Bradshaw said. “We look forward to seeing it continue in the spring semester!”

Staff of the Month

Jonathan Crawley Behavioral Support Specialist Boys Basketball Coach

Mr. Jonathan Crawley works hard to share his passion for basketball and life with the members of our Boys Basketball Team. He spends hours each day putting the

players through drills while also working to instill the value of team that goes beyond wins and losses. We truly appreciate Mr. Jonathan!



Leo Wilson

E.C. Teacher - High School Girls Basketball Coach



Leo Wilson works with our basketball teams to help the players understand that the skills learned go beyond the court. He spends hours each day ensuring that the players understand the importance

of working together toward success. His management of the challenges of a small team provides a practical demonstration of patience and commitment for all who pay attention. Thank you Mr. Wilson!

Do you know someone who would benefit from the



educational experience?

**OPEN ENROLLMENT
MARCH 1 - 31**

Interested?

Contact Dr. Geraldine Bradshaw or
Betty Hux at 910-646-2237
www.thomasacademync.org.

Students of the Month

The Students of the Month are selected by the faculty. In addition to their performance in the classroom, they are chosen through the demonstration of their commitment to the Thomas Academy motto of Connection, Compassion, & Character.

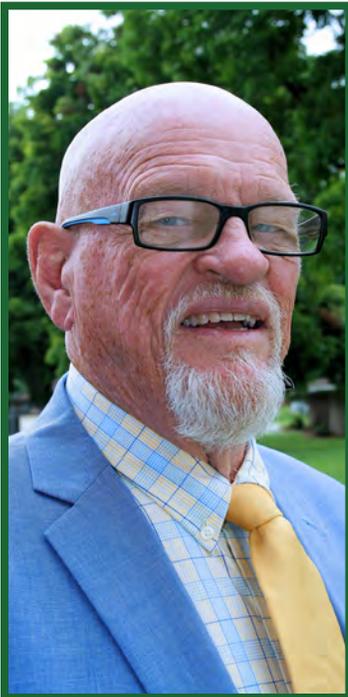
The January students of the month are:

Jada Mitchell
Middle School Student

Madison Tate
High School Student



Doc's Corner



Dr. Tom Simmons
Vice President for
Education

“We saw a 19 point jump in our Biology EOC scores. Most places will celebrate a 3 or 4 point jump. We had our highest English I, English II and Math scores that we’ve seen. Great things are happening at Thomas Academy!”



Music teacher Patty Lyerly provides piano instruction to Thomas Academy students in the lab created through the generosity of Dr. Judson Spalding after he learned of the desire to bring a new element to the school’s music education program.

Piano lab welcomes middle school students

This spring, the piano lab returns with classes being offered to the sixth graders three days a week.

“This is a great opportunity for our students to learn music in a different way,” said instructor Patty Lyerly. “I am so excited to be working with these middle school students this semester.”

A growing number of studies explore the relationship between music education and academic performance, including a Cambridge University study showing young people playing an instrument between ages 11 and 16 “showed greater progress and better academic outcomes than those not playing with the greatest impact for those playing the longest.”

The lab was provided through the generosity of Dr. Judson Spalding. Funding provided for the purchase of five Casio electric pianos to create the piano lab. Music books, headphones and benches completed the setup.

“Students get to hear themselves doing something and having success,” Lyerly said.