



Thomas Street's Monroe Named 2022 Parent of the Year

TUPELO, Miss. — Described as a giving spirit who wears many hats, Leigh Monroe gives of her time not only at her child's school, but throughout all of Tupelo.

At a time when volunteerism is critical to the success of any school district, Monroe has excelled, and on Tuesday the Thomas Street Elementary mom was named the 2022 Tupelo Public School District Parent of the Year.

It's the first honor for Monroe, whose son Connor is a 1st-grader.

"As a parent, it is extremely important for me to be involved in my children's education life because being involved allows me to be in the know of what is going on with my child at school," she said. "I enjoy being able to be present for my children, but also being able to help our school and our district."

A native of Meridian, Monroe currently serves as the TSE PTO president. She's spent the year organizing fundraisers, staff lunches, class parties and finding local sponsors for the K-2 school, while also volunteering on various committees.

"I can't begin to tell you what she means to our school," principal Candi Moore-Saul said. "She's here as much as we are and is willing to do whatever is needed. She is so loved by all and more than deserving of this award."

Outside of school, she serves on the Regional Rehabilitation Center and AEE boards and is currently a member of the Tupelo Junior Garden Club.

But if there is one thing she and her husband, Michael, truly advocate for, it's autism, a disorder Connor has. Whether mentoring other families also experiencing autism or speaking at events, they are open with their experiences.

"Having a special needs child motivates me even more to be involved," she said. "I want to encourage hope and promote inclusion and acceptance for all children with special needs. Connor is a very special little boy and nothing matters more to me than him being loved and accepted. We have been blessed with two phenomenal teachers at Thomas Street who have been instrumental in Connor's progress and success. Their love and hard work, as well as the other teachers and staff, make me want to do everything I can to show my gratitude and appreciation for them."

Robby Parman, executive director of the Regional Rehab Center, said Monroe's work is exceptional and that no task is too big or too small.

"She has done a tremendous job with the Kentucky Derby Party and Butler Golf tournament and has been a tremendous volunteer and resource for us," he said. "Whenever I have called on her, she has been unconditionally supportive. She is the most prodigious choice for parent of the year."

2021-22 Parents of the Year

Carver

Kimberly Jeffares

ECEC

Stewart McMillan

Joyner

Lesley Tackitt

Lawhon

Anna Beth Wyatt

Lawndale

Pamela Hooper

Milam

Kate Farabaugh

Parkway

Ashley Quimby

Pierce Street

Natalie Morton

Rankin

Nicole Graves

Thomas Street

Leigh Monroe

Tupelo High School

Eartha Bradley

Tupelo Middle School

Wendy Todd