



# LEE COUNTY

## SCHOOL SYSTEM

### Press Release

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **SHANICIE WILLIAMS HONORED AS A HIDDEN HERO**

**Leesburg, GA** -- Lee County High School's Shanicie Williams was selected as the 2023 Hidden Hero of the South: Illuminating Difference Makers in Education. Mrs. Williams received an astounding 4,192 votes, outpacing her counterparts in all regions and the nine finalists. Hidden Heroes was hosted by the Georgia Leadership Institute (GLISI), a local nonprofit organization with the mission to uplift school leaders, transform mindsets and actions, create vibrant cultures of innovation, and build excellent and equitable schools.

The Georgia Leadership Institute was founded in 2001 by a coalition of education, business, and government leaders who believed leadership was the most impactful lever for improving public education in Georgia, and provides leadership development and consulting to help schools unleash the potential in every child, retain outstanding educators, and accelerate community prosperity.

Born during the COVID-19 pandemic as a way to recognize and illuminate the stories of educators heroically keeping students and families connected, the Hidden Heroes campaign has grown exponentially. This year, the 4<sup>th</sup> annual competition began in October when more than 160 educators from schools and districts across the state were nominated through an open call, by their communities, for their everyday acts of service, professional excellence, and deep care for children and families. By the end of the campaign on November 27, more than 61,000 votes had been cast for these inspiring educators. Ms. Danielle Whitaker and Mr. Kevin Taylor were among the list of inspiring educators nominated.

Mrs. Williams was met with a bouquet of flowers as the news of her *heroism* came through her principal, administrative team, and office staff of Lee County High School. “I am overwhelmed with gratitude and joy as I express my sincere thanks to each and everyone who took the time to cast a vote and played a part in being named GLISI's 2023 Hidden Hero of the South,” Mrs. Williams said. “This recognition means more to me than words can convey. Teaching has always been more than a profession for me; it's a passion, a calling, and a privilege. It is a challenging profession and sometimes I may question whether my efforts are truly making a difference. Receiving this award is not just an acknowledgement of my efforts but a testament to the leaders who have mentored me and the colleagues who have worked tirelessly alongside me. To the students who inspire me daily, the colleagues who support me, and the parents who trust me with their child's education, thank you for being my motivation and my partners in this rewarding journey.”

Hidden Heroes was open to public voting November 1-27 and the top three winners in each region (Metro, North, South) comprise the nine honorees. The nine winners include teachers, custodians, and district staff. Each will receive a \$500 cash prize along with public recognition in an event to be held in January.

“Congratulations Mrs. Williams on being 1 of 9 educators selected from across the state to be named as a 2023 GLISI Hidden Hero! I cannot think of a more deserving

educator for this honor. You are a true difference-maker in your school and in the lives of your students! We are truly grateful to have you on our team in Lee County,” offered Kelli Duke, Mrs. Williams’ nominator.

“Congratulations on this well-deserved honor!” says Dr. Karen Hancock, Lee County High School’s principal. “Mrs. Williams’ dedication to education and the impact she has made on students’ lives has not gone unnoticed. This award is a testament to her exceptional teaching and unwavering commitment. I am truly proud of her accomplishment and grateful for the inspiration she has provided to both students and colleagues. She is a hidden hero at Lee County High School.”

Congratulations Shanicie Williams!

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***About Lee County Schools:***

*The Lee County School System is a GA public Pre-K - 12 school district that fosters relationships through diverse, challenging & quality educational experiences that cultivate successful citizens. For more information about LCSS, go to [www.lee.k12.ga.us](http://www.lee.k12.ga.us) or follow us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/leecountyschoolsystem](https://www.facebook.com/leecountyschoolsystem) or on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/leecountyschool](https://www.twitter.com/leecountyschool) or on Instagram at [www.instagram.com/leecountyschools](https://www.instagram.com/leecountyschools).*