

Celebrating Our September Employees of the Month

There's a lot to celebrate at Ashe County Schools this month! We're excited to recognize **Tania Rollins**, Assistant Principal at Blue Ridge Elementary School, and **Jared Mahala**, Lead Custodian at Ashe County Middle School, as our **September Employees of the Month!**

While Jared and Tania have very different jobs, they have something important in common: **they show up, they care, and they make a difference every single day.** Their co-workers say it best — both are the kind of people who make their schools stronger simply by being part of the team.



Tania Rollins — Assistant Principal, Blue Ridge Elementary School

At Blue Ridge Elementary, **Tania Rollins is bringing energy, creativity, and a whole lot of heart to her new role as assistant principal.**

Assistant principals wear a lot of hats. They support students and staff, help solve problems, strengthen schoolwide systems, and work alongside their teams to keep the focus on what matters most: **helping children learn, grow, and thrive.**

Tania has jumped into her new role with enthusiasm — and her co-workers have definitely noticed.

When asked what she loves most about her job, Tania pointed to the people and the purpose behind the work:

“Every day at BRES brings new energy, friendly faces, and the joy of watching our students get truly excited about learning, thanks to our engaging staff. Being part of a team where you can visibly see our daily impact on children makes every challenge worth it.”

Her co-workers say Tania has quickly become a wonderful addition to the Blue Ridge family.

“Mrs. Rollins is doing a WONDERFUL job as our new assistant principal. She is going above and beyond in supporting staff and students. She has also added and updated things at Blue Ridge that were long overdue. A great addition to our school family this year!”

Tania has also earned praise for the way she has embraced the responsibilities that come with her new position — approaching each new challenge with positivity, confidence, and attention to detail.

“Tania has taken on her new role as AP like a pro. She has approached all her new tasks with positivity, punctuality, and precision. She is a great addition to BRES admin. Not only is she fun and creative, but she also knows how to be serious and get business taken care of. I am looking forward to seeing how much she accomplishes this year!”

And perhaps one of her greatest strengths is her ability to think big while still taking care of the details.

“Tania has a gift for seeing the big picture with long term goals and is also able to navigate the details with ease. She is creative, innovative and very hard-working.”

Jared Mahala — Lead Custodian, Ashe County Middle School

A great school takes more than great teachers and administrators. It also takes dedicated people behind the scenes who make sure students and staff have a clean, safe, welcoming place to learn and work. **Jared Mahala is one of those people.**

As Lead Custodian at Ashe County Middle School, Jared takes tremendous pride in his school and in keeping it running smoothly. His commitment was especially evident during a challenging stretch when he was the school's **only custodian for two months**. Even with an enormous workload, Jared kept things moving — and while the school was closed, he jumped in to help other schools across the district prepare to reopen.

When it was time to return to Ashe County Middle School, Jared was right back at work, making sure the building was ready for students and staff.

His co-workers say Jared is someone they can always count on.

“Jared is dependable, rarely calls in, and can always be counted on to show up and do whatever needs to be done. Even when the workload is overwhelming, he remains positive, upbeat, and willing to help. He never seems to look for a reason something can't be done. He simply figures out what needs to happen and gets to work.”

That can-do attitude is one of the qualities that makes Jared such an important part of the ACMS team. He is proactive, responsive, and willing to go the extra mile — even coming in outside his regular hours to address issues and keep the building in top shape.

During the school's roof construction, his leadership and organization were especially valuable as he managed building needs, responded to staff requests, and delegated responsibilities.

“Jared consistently works hard to keep our building in top shape. He takes ownership for the school, coming in regularly outside of his hours to address issues. Especially during our roof construction, Jared did a great job of managing the needs of the school, addressing requests from staff, and delegating responsibilities. He is proactive, looking for ways to prevent issues, and always responsive to concerns.”

But what really sets Jared apart isn't just the amount of work he gets done — it's the **heart and attitude** he brings to it.

“What stands out most about Jared is not just how hard he works, but the attitude he brings with him every day. He takes tremendous pride in our school and genuinely cares about the students and staff who spend their days here.”

And, according to another co-worker, that combination of dependability, positivity, and dedication makes Jared exactly the kind of employee every school hopes to have:

“Jared is the kind of employee every school hopes to have. He is dependable, hardworking, positive, and always willing to go above and beyond. I am incredibly grateful for everything he does for our school, and I can't think of anyone more deserving of this recognition.”

Tania and Jared remind us that **every role in a school matters — and the people who bring dedication, positivity, and genuine care to those roles make an even bigger difference.**

Whether it's making sure a school building is ready for a new day of learning or helping students and staff navigate that day once it begins, these amazing individuals are helping make Ashe County Schools a better place to learn and work. We are proud to celebrate them and grateful for everything they do for our students, our staff, and our schools!

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