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**JOHNSON, COLWELL NAMED**  
**FCPS 2005 SUPPORT EMPLOYEES OF THE YEAR**

Clara Johnson, building supervisor at Hunters Woods Elementary School for the Arts and Sciences, and Michelle Colwell, student information analyst in the Department in Information Technology, have been named Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) 2005 Support Employees of the Year. The announcement was made by FCPS Superintendent Jack D. Dale.

Johnson, a 29-year veteran of FCPS, has been building supervisor at Hunters Woods since 1979. She joined the custodial staff at the school in 1977; prior to that, she worked at Great Falls Elementary, Kilmer Middle, and Wolf Trap Elementary Schools. In 1982, Johnson was named Building Supervisor of the Year by FCPS.

Colwell has been employed by FCPS since 1996; she began her career with the school system as a sixth grade teacher at Oak View Elementary School and accepted her current position in 1997.

Johnson is widely praised for her dedication to the school and students and for her positive, can-do attitude. From handling facility needs to keeping the building secure to making certain that things functioned seamlessly during the school's recent renovation, Johnson's leadership was cited by nominators as one of her main strengths. "Clara's diligence and leadership as a building supervisor is every principal's dream," said Hunters Woods principal Stephen Hockett. "Our renovation was smooth because of Clara and her ability to focus and prioritize during the countless number of surprises that occur during the renovation of a building that has over 950 students."

The Hunters Woods PTA spearheaded the effort to nominate Johnson for FCPS Support Employee of the Year and received e-mails and letters of support from many members of the school staff and community. Teachers praise her for her thoroughness, cheerfulness, and ability to adapt to the task at hand. Teacher Lou Stefano says, “That Clara takes her job as building supervisor seriously goes without saying. However, she goes well beyond that role and is a member of our team to shape, mold, teach, mentor, minister, and support our kids. Frankly, I don’t look at Clara as the ‘building supervisor.’ I look at her as a peer.”

Johnson is also praised for her ability to keep a calm atmosphere in the cafeteria during lunchtime and for serving as a positive role model for students. “In our hectic lives, many incidents of kindness and going that extra step go unnoticed because there is no need to note it,” says PTA member Katy Vickland. “In the case of Mrs. Johnson, there are far too many such acts for all of them to go unnoticed.”

Colwell is praised by Maribeth Luftglass, assistant superintendent for information technology and chief information officer, for going “above and beyond in all phases of her job with exceptional skill, thoroughness, and dedication. She gives superior client service and is a highly valued resource in our data-driven system.”

In a position that requires detailed analyses of individual data in student records to certify that the electronic record accurately reflects what the student did in school, Colwell’s attention to detail is greatly appreciated by student information assistants (SIAs) in the schools. “The SIAs rely on Michelle to support their work and welcome her audits and reports as tools to aid them,” says her supervisor, Laura Robinson, coordinator of decision support. “They do not see her as an auditor finding mistakes.”

Colwell has developed audit reports, queries for the schools, and files to be imported into schools administrative student information (SASI) to enhance the accuracy of the reports. Once the data are certified to be error-free, they are made available for numerous reporting scenarios. “Michelle

Colwell's personal work ethic demands 100 percent accuracy," adds Robinson. "Her subject areas are critical to the mission of FCPS: verified credits, Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) test scores, graduate diploma types, and postsecondary plans."

Robinson credits Colwell with providing new verified credit reporting, now part of the new Standards of Learning (SOL) and No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) requirements for high school graduation. She developed a system that combined the two sets of information and provided reports to guidance counselors and central administrative staff members so they could identify students who were missing courses or tests needed to graduate. Colwell is also part of a group working to combine the senior survey and the college application process into one database.

Bernadette Glaze, advanced academic programs specialist, credits Colwell for providing her with accurate data about student achievement in AP and IB programs. "I can rely on Michelle to get me the information for the newspaper articles that are always due in an hour," states Glaze, referencing the many requests she gets for information from reporters. "I get quoted in the paper, but Michelle does the work: professionally, punctually, and willingly."

"I feel like Michelle is a part of our counseling team," says Ginny Broadbent, director of student services at Lake Braddock Secondary School. "She is an active listener who puts 110 percent into finding a solution to a problem." Richard Crowley, coordinator of guidance and career services adds, "She has single-handedly changed so many things for us to improve the ability of counselors to serve students. It is rare that just one person can make a difference for thousands and thousands of kids, but Michelle's work has not only affected counselors but it has helped to ensure that kids get the very best support."

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Note: For more information, contact the Office of Community Relations at 703-246-2991.