



From the President

Chris Cannon



“What you’re supposed to do when you don’t like a thing is change it. If you can’t change it, change the way you think about it. Don’t complain.”

Maya Angelou

Most of the people reading this article are educators or work closely with the field of education. Therefore, most of the people reading this are intimately familiar with the feeling of having the will of others imposed on them in regards to curriculum, methodology and pedagogy, discipline practices, scheduling, legislation (federal, state, and local), and even the time of day at which you may eat – and with whom you get to eat! Yes, at times as educators our autonomy is limited. What’s worse is that it is quite often limited by people we, as professionals, feel have less authority to be making these decisions than we do. When was the last time you told your mechanic how to fix your car? Unlikely, right? This is unlikely because you took the car to the mechanic because it had a problem you did not understand. He or she, as a professional, was able to diagnose the problem, choose the correct parts, and fix the problem with very little oversight (beyond basic safety regulations). Can you imagine that happening in the classroom?

Instead, we tend to teach in a system where many of the decisions needed to help students are already made for us. You may teach in a school where you are not allowed to give zeros for

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Gwen Hutcheson Outstanding Educators 2015: MIKE SAVAGE, ASHLEY GOODRICH, BRIAN SIRMANS, & MARGARET DUNCAN



Four talented Social Studies educators were recognized as Gwen Hutcheson Outstanding Educators at the 2015 GCSS Conference. L to R are Mike Savage, Ashley Goodrich, Brian Sirmans, and Margaret Duncan.

The Gwen Hutcheson Outstanding Social Studies Educator Award is an annual award of the Georgia Council for the Social Studies, recognizing educators who have made an outstanding contribution to the teaching of Social Studies. The award is named to honor Gwen Hutcheson, a stalwart GCSS member and advocate for Social Studies in Georgia. In 2015, four stellar Georgia educators received this prestigious award.

Mike Savage is indeed a worthy recipient of this award, avows Gwinnett County’s Social Studies Director, Debbie Daniell, who nominated him for this recognition. She cites the creative, innovative, and research based initiatives he has developed and supported in Gwinnett in his role as instructional coach as evidence of his excellence as a social studies educator. His collaborative approach and leadership skills are also lauded by his former principal, Maryanne Grimes. She especially applauded his “instructional eye” and highly



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(From the President, from pg. 1) missing work. You may teach in a system where special education students are given services, not according to their needs, but according to funding formulas to maximize the dollars for the school district. You may not be allowed to give homework during the week. You may be forced to teach certain topics on certain days because of the schedule. The list goes on and on.

At this point, this article is seemingly pretty negative, right? Lots of complaining with little substance? Not that all complaining is bad, mind you. After all, without any complaining people may not be able to know what problems need addressing in the first place. It is the complaining without action that is the issue. So, let us follow the lead of Maya Angelou and the quote and the beginning of this article and change our thinking. This year is going to be exciting for Social Studies. On a national level, it looks like Social Studies will finally be getting some federal resources through the renewal of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Through a series of grant programs, the federal government will finally be providing some opportunities for schools across the country to enrich history, geography, political science, and economics education. Maybe your school will see some of this money, maybe not. Either way, this is a positive thing for social studies education in the sense of it getting the same kind of recognition other disciplines have enjoyed for years. As Angelou says, "If you can't change it, change the way you think about it."

At the state level, you DO have an opportunity to have your voice heard. Beginning in January (most likely) the new versions of the Georgia Performance Standards (to be renamed the Georgia Standards of Excellence) will be available for public comment. Whether you are for or against the changes, you need to comment! Remember the first part of the Angelou quote? Once those standards get posted, you should see it as an obligation to make a comment – pro or con! This is how we get involved with one of the most important things we deal with. Our curriculum.

Giving up some autonomy is part of the deal when becoming a teacher. But that does not mean you have to give up your positive attitude. Think about the things you CAN control and take action – like with the curriculum for example. For the things you cannot control, try to think of them in a new, constructive way. These are bound to yield positive results in ways only complaining about the problems will not.

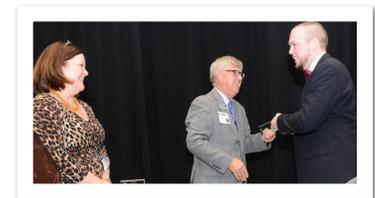


Kerry Moore, Teacher of Promise Award Winner



Kerry Moore, center, receives the Teacher of Promise Award from GCSS President Tammy Ponder and Executive Director Eddie Bennett.

his students passed the EOCT. He has continued to show such dramatic results of good teaching. Other accolades come from his principal at Whitewater High School, Roy A. Rabold, who described Moore as diligent, enthusiastic, goal oriented, organized, knowledgeable, caring, and a good communicator. His students could not agree more fully that he deserves this award. Among the qualities they appreciate are "vivid lecturing," "primary source investigations," his being "much more than a history nerd," and "the best history teacher our school has ever had."



The Social Studies Teacher of Promise Award recognizes beginning teachers who show exceptional promise in the field of teaching social studies. This year's winner, Kerry Moore, teaches in Fayette County and was nominated by that district's Social Studies Coordinator, Becky Ryckley. She notes that beyond just having promise, Mr. Moore, "stands out as a teacher who will fulfill his promise" with his "passion for social studies, compassion for students, and professionalism toward his colleagues." Even in his first year, thrown into a U.S. History course, his students had the highest "exceeds" rate for non-AP classes, and all of

(Continued from p. 1 - Gwen Hutcheson Winners)

skilled professional development techniques. Adds fellow teacher, Johnny Griffin, “Mike continues to make a difference in the lives of young people through his leadership and support of educators and schools throughout our county.” A former student, Nikki Monge, herself now a history teacher in Gwinnett, says of Savage, “Michael Savage is a true educator who taught me not only what I needed to learn for the test but what I would need to grow as a person and as a citizen.” Dr. Glen Blankenship, Senior Program Consultant at the GCEE, joins the long list of those commending this nomination, adding that “his contributions exceed the qualifications and selection criteria outlined in the nominations guidelines.”



Ashley Goodrich joins Mike Savage as a Gwen Hutcheson Award winner for 2015, and, like him, is no stranger to GCSS. Goodrich, who teaches Social Studies at North Oconee High School, was nominated by her friend and fellow GCSS board member, David Kendrick. “She leads by example,” Kendrick writes, and has worked tirelessly to coordinate special events for her students and involve them in community service projects such as PeaceJam. This program supported students in their study of Nobel Peace Laureates and addressed human rights issues, and led directly to her presentation at the GCSS conference on “Becoming Student Activists.” In addition to her fine teaching of every social studies discipline, she has also been recognized with Golden Apple Teacher Awards in /Clarke County in both 2007 and 2014, as well as winning the Shining Star Recognition and Teacher of Promise Award. She has published widely and presented many of her innovative ideas

to colleagues. One former principal, Dr. Robbie P. Hooker, stated that Goodrich is “one of the most creative and talented teachers I have ever worked with as a principal...dedicated, caring, and conscientious...very well organized ...and uses a variety of strategies to engage all of her students.” JoBeth Allen, UGA professor Emeritus, eloquently detailed many of Goodrich’s fine attributes but perhaps none more telling than this: “Ashley Goodrich is truly an outstanding social studies teacher. I refrain from giving my 16-year-old granddaughter advice, but I did tell her, ‘Whatever else you take, be sure to sign up for AP history with Ms. Goodrich.’ She did. It was her favorite class.”

Brian Sirmans “lives social studies on a minute by minute basis,” writes Sharon Coleman, who nominated him for a 2015 Gwen Hutcheson Award. “He has savored, learned, and shared what he has gained with his students and community by creating opportunities for them to do the same and by serving in Lanier County leadership roles to ‘practice what he preaches.’” He has taught many different social studies courses in both Coffee and Lanier Counties, and serves as a student travel program leader to provide more opportunities for his students. Georgia Representative Jason Shaw writes, “Brian is smart and gifted, and he’s not only respected by his peers but his students think the world of him as well. His level of commitment to his students is a quality that sets him apart as a great educator, and he provides an outstanding example of what makes a great teacher to the people of his district.” Writes Donna Cook, a colleague, “Mr. Sirmans has a profound gift for teaching, and we are lucky to have him working at Lanier County High School...No matter what he is doing, he always goes that extra mile to be sure the students get a quality education.” Sirmans helps to grow students as leaders, writes Wendy Moore, coordinator of Leadership Lanier, “as a history teacher, Brian applies this training by requiring his students to attend City Council, County Commission, and School Board meetings. They also visit the Court House, meet elected officials in government and law enforcement and even participate in mock elections.” One parent wrote in support of his nomination, stating that “He is extremely passionate about what he teaches, and that passion is infused beautifully and effectively into his students.” Her daughter added, “the way he teaches makes you want to learn...I just love his class.”



Another Gwen Hutcheson Award winner for 2015, and also a familiar name to those in the Georgia Social Studies world, is Henry County’s **Dr. Margaret Duncan**. Duncan was nominated for this award by Henry County Social Studies Coordinator Heather MacKenzie, who writes that Duncan works “tirelessly to deepen her curriculum knowledge and create historically accurate, standards-based classroom lessons that use primary sources and promote active student engagement. Margaret’s in-depth content knowledge, professionalism, and willingness to think out of the box are contagious.” A founding member of the Histocrats (www.histocrats.blogspot.com), Duncan participates in weekly chats and blogs, and works to bring history alive for teachers. Her fellow “histocrats” Lisa Henriquez and Nina Kendall, enthusiastically support her nomination for this award. She works actively with the Historical Jonesboro Society as well as the Georgia Humanities Council, and she has presented to peers nationwide on the value of gaming in the classroom and other topics.

Congratulations to all four deserving winners of the 2015 Gwen Hutcheson Outstanding Educator Award!

Special Recognitions: Glen Blankenship and Diane Sloan



Dr. Glen Blankenship has held many positions in GCSS, but none longer than that of the organization's historian, a role he filled from 1998 to 2014. Now, with other

demands on his time and talents, he is stepping down from that responsibility.

Blankenship was honored at the 2015 GCSS conference for his many years of service, as he turns the GCSS archives over to his successor, David Kendrick.

As historian, Blankenship kept back copies of the newsletter, the journal, minutes, financial records, conference programs, and annual awards programs...any and everything that documented the history of GCSS going back to 1964. Anytime the organization needed something from the past, he located and shared it.

His efforts did not go unnoticed. Becky Ryckley, Fayette County Social Studies Coordinator, said of Blankenship, "His knowledge and understanding of where the organization has been has really helped create a great institution that benefits all social studies educators throughout the state."

More generally, Gwinnett Social Studies Director Debbie Daniell added that Blankenship's contributions "to all aspects of education not only in Georgia but around the nation have enabled both teachers and students to become lifelong learners."



Glen and Diane share some history themselves.



It is with fond memories and heartfelt gratitude that GCSS also sees the departure of **Diane Sloan**, who has served as conference coordinator from 2004 to 2015. Sloan has served admirably to juggle the myriad demands of conference coordinator. She has worked tirelessly with exhibitors and site personnel, and managed session proposals, meeting rooms, and keynote luncheon events. Over time, this job grew from a temporary seasonal task to a set of responsibilities that stretched through most of the year.



Asked for her fondest memories as conference coordinator, Sloan wrote, "My fondest memory (or memories) of GCSS is the wonderful people I have met in the educational community. Several I consider lifelong friends and hope to continue seeing them in the upcoming years. Secondly, it is such a good feeling to know I had a small part in helping teachers with their very difficult but rewarding job of educating our students. I'm an optimist and think things will only get better for our country and for Georgia. As to challenges for the upcoming coordinator, well, you guys are lucky to have Pam Knauer. Together with Eddie and the rest of the board I think she'll do fine. Just maintain those wonderful relationships that we have - the Classic Center, the Athens' hotels, the printers and mailers and our exhibitors. She needs to put her own stamp on everything though."

Sloan is looking forward to more time for travel, playing with her two grandsons, and relaxing and reading more. She has worked most of her life, she says, and expects that to continue with volunteer work.

L to R, Tammy Ponder, Gwen Hutcheson, Diane Sloan, and Eddie Bennett



Friend of Social Studies Award: Randell Trammell and the Georgia Center for Civic Engagement and the State YMCA of Georgia

“Our partnerships are extremely important to the strength and vitality of the Georgia Council for Social Studies,” states GCSS Executive Director Eddie Bennett. “We consider Randell Trammell and the state YMCA of Georgia to be strong allies and friends.” The vital programs and strong support that this organization, under the leadership of Randell Trammell, has provided to GCSS led to its designation as the 2015 Friend of Social Studies.

Among the many stellar programs provided by the State YMCA of Georgia are:

- * the Junior Youth Assembly
- * the Youth Assembly
- * Georgia United Nations Assembly
- * Civic Youth Day

All of these provide opportunities for students to develop leadership skills and participate in the democratic, civic process. In addition, the Georgia Center for Civic Education provides professional development opportunities and civic education resources for teachers and recognizes outstanding civic educators through its award program. For more information, visit www.georgiacivics.org/



Randell Trammel and family celebrate his award.

Georgia Teacher of the Year, Ernie Lee

Georgia’s 2016 Teacher of the Year, Ernie Lee, impressed, charmed, and moved those in attendance at the 2015 GCSS conference. Lee, who teaches IB History, U.S. Government, and Civics at Windsor Forest High in Savannah-Chatham County, came to teaching after 20 years as a lawyer.



He became a teacher because he wanted to “make a lasting and positive impact on the community and the lives of others.” 2015 GCSS conference attendees agreed that he had a positive impact on the October event.

Social Studies Legislative Update

National News:

Stay informed with the e-mails sent out regularly by GCSS Executive Director Eddie Bennett. Especially relevant for social studies this year has been the re-authorization of the **Elementary and Secondary Education Act (renamed Every Student Succeeds)**. “No Child Left Behind” expired in 2007. On December 10, 2015, President Obama signed the “Every Student Succeeds Act”. According to Senator Johnny Isakson, who supported and worked on the new legislation, this Act “puts decisions affecting our children’s education back in the hands of those who know best – their parents, teachers, school boards and governors.” Stay tuned, because social studies was included in this legislation and we hope to see opportunities for social studies teachers. The legislation contained good news for the social studies with multiple sources of funding to support improved instruction in civics, economics, geography and history. After years of little to no funding for or emphasis on the social studies, there is hope that the new legislation will be a positive step forward.

Georgia News:

Key Developments to follow include:

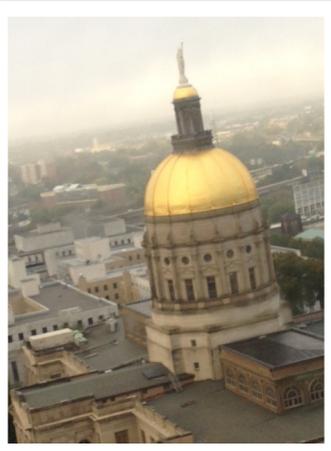
✓ *revised standards*

✓ *a proposal on merit pay for teachers*

✓ *legislative initiatives affecting APUSH*

✓ *and other education related issues sure to be considered by the Georgia General Assembly this year.*

Now is the time for all of us in the social studies community to be active, informed, and engaged citizens on behalf of our students and our own professional lives. We call on all GCSS members to act on the principles of good citizenship that we teach our students.



Social Studies Precision Review. A lot of work has been done to review the Georgia Performance Social Studies Standards. The process began with online feedback from approximately 9,000 educators. Working committees met to review the feedback at every grade level, K-12. Following that work, the Advisory Committee reviewed the work and made suggestions. After that, the Academic Committee made final recommendations, all based on the 9,000 teacher comments. The final recommendations will be made to the State Board of Education after the first of the year and the revisions will be posted online for sixty days. **The revised standards are expected to be posted on or near January 15 for public commentary. It is vital that you review those revised standards.** The State Board of Education will vote on the final approval in April 2016. The 2016-2017 school year will then be devoted to professional development for teachers and the development of assessment instruments aligned to the new standards. The new standards will be implemented during the 2017-2018 school year. Stay tuned to GCSS news for updates.

Communicate with your Georgia legislators. Some of those in the know recommend that you write and mail a letter rather than rely on phonecalls or e-mails to express your positions. Find out who your legislators are at:

<http://openstates.org/ga/legislators/> Look to the right and enter your address to find your GA senator and representative.

The GCSS Conference - A First-Timer's Experience

For Fayette County elementary teacher Kenny Blum, his first GCSS conference was an eye-opening, mind-expanding experience. Here's what this Oak Grove Elementary teacher wrote as he reflected on his two days in Athens:



Properly, we should read for power. Man reading should be man intensely alive.

The book should be a ball of light in one's hand. Ezra Pound (1885 - 1972)

Thank for allowing me to attend the 2015 GCSS Conference. Below is a synopsis of the sessions I attended. This was one of the BEST Conferences I've attended, and I would really like to attend in the future.

Break-out Sessions

- **Is Freedom Worth the Fight?**: A Project Based Learning Unit from the perspective of a Holocaust victim during WWII. Lots of resources and suggestions on other topics.
- **We DBQ. Do you?**: Using Document-Based Questions in the Elementary classroom. A review of our recent CTL DBQ Project, but I came away with several new resources!
- **Read-alouds that Amaze**: Lists of student-text and professional titles to jumpstart Social Studies and ELA
- **Keynote Address**: Egyptology as studied through satellite imagery. A fascinating study of using satellite imagery to examine our history. Use of multiple ranges of infrared to identify ancient civilizations and former geological features.
- **Reading Doesn't Have a Content Area!**: Using social studies content to teach reading instruction.
- **No Funds, No Problem**: Using Virtual field trips to enhance learning. THIS WAS PERFECT! We conducted a talk with Virginia History Center via Skype and discovered LOTS of interactive opportunities through Skype for Educators as well as valuable other resources.
- **Reading Doesn't Have a Content Area**: Using Social Studies content to teach reading instruction. Takeaway: I need to read more factual text in my lessons.
- **Thinking Like Historians**: How even elementary students can develop disciplinary ways of exploring the world. Breaking elements into Civic, Historical, Economic, and Geographic components as based on the C3 Framework.
- **S3TEAM**: Putting the Social Studies to work in STEAM. Through informal talks with Becky and from her presentation, we looked at how Maker Stations or various other studies can be incorporated into Social Studies. For instance - the makerspace of creating a tower of straws - connect to plate tectonics, San Francisco earthquakes. Chicago wind.

Other opportunities:

Lunch with experts: Joel Walker - National Archives; Laura McCarty - Georgia Humanities; Kevin Shirley - LaGrange College; Charles Elfer - Clayton State University. Discussion of History Day Competition. While this competition is not held at the elementary level, it certainly could be a project we develop to increase interest and experience for middle school. In addition, I met with some important people in the Georgia Social Studies Field.

Assembly Hall

- **EverFi**: free online courses for students. Understanding Money was a big one!
- **GPB**: learning opportunities through Georgia Public Broadcasting's online texts
- **The Southern Museum**: including historic locomotives and a recreation of the factory
- **Atlanta History Center**: great opportunities on Civil Rights - only a small fraction of AHC.
- **Monticello**: opportunities to study the home and life of Thomas Jefferson

Use of Technology

- **sched.org** - this might be the best conference application I've used. Ability to easily display session information and then select and create my own schedule.
- **Edmodo** - most participants posted their presentation notes to an Edmodo account. BRILLIANT!
- Several presenters used a variety of presentation applications. gSlides, gDocs, ThinkLink, DEN Boards and more

Teacher Opportunities & Resources

The Children's Museum is building a new world!!

Atlanta's only Children's Museum invites educators to its transformed, world-class space, which re-opened on December 12, 2015. Two new permanent exhibits and a new 3,000 square foot mezzanine level have been added. Project highlights also include the reinvention of the four existing galleries of the Museum, and the addition of a new permanent performance space for the Imaginators, the Museum's troupe of professional actors and educators. The Museum's new STEM focus area – in conjunction with literacy; culture and geography; health and wellness; and social and emotional lessons – enables the enhanced Museum to function as a catalyst for play-based exploration and experiential learning focused on the whole child. For more details, visit childrensmuseumatlanta.org



Population Connection Resources - Free to teachers!

A new version of *World Population* is now part of a new website, WorldPopulationHistory.org that has a number of interactive features and rich content to help students learn more about human geography – past, present and projected. The site has been designed with high school students and teachers in mind, especially for World Geography and World History.

The site features downloadable lesson plans at worldpopulationhistory.org/teachers-resources/

About Population Education

Population Education is a program of Population Connection, a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization that seeks to educate the public about global population issues. Since 1975, Population Education has been developing K-12 curricula for a range of disciplines -- science, social studies, math and environmental studies. A full description of all materials and workshops is available at www.populationeducation.org

Newseum Educational Resources

Visit <https://newseum.edu> find:

- Free access to curated, standards-aligned content, including Common Core
- 500+ historic newspapers, videos and other artifacts
- 80+ lesson plans, worksheets and galley guides
- In-depth **ED**Collections on the civil rights movement and woman suffrage
- Optimized for mobile devices and tablets



Teaching About the Holocaust - Free workshop for teachers!

Thursday, January 28, 5:00 - 8:00 PM

Friday, January 29, 8:00 AM - 4 PM

470-578-2085 rharker@kennesaw.edu

Kennesaw State University Center

3333 Busbee Drive, Kennesaw, GA 30144

The Museum of History and Holocaust Education at Kennesaw State University and the Georgia Commission on the Holocaust, in partnership with the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, present a FREE professional development event that will provide teachers with resources and pedagogical approaches to teach about the Holocaust. The workshop is free of charge and includes books and resources from the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. Dinner will be provided on Thursday, and a continental breakfast and lunch will be provided on Friday.

This workshop is made possible by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum and the Conference for Holocaust Education Centers and through the generous support of the David and Fela Shapell Family Foundation.

Teacher Opportunities & Resources - continued

For Psychology Teachers. The American Psychological Association (APA) supports the teaching of high school psychology. Here are three opportunities for teachers of psychology.

- **Excellence in Teaching Award.** This award provides an opportunity for psychology teachers to be recognized for outstanding teaching. Go to: <http://www.apa.org/about/awards/teaching-excellence.aspx>
- **2016 Essay Competition for High School Psychology Students.** For full essay question and competition rules and guidelines, visit <http://www.apa.org/ed/precollege/topss/student-competition.aspx>.
- **2016 Clark University Workshop for High School Teachers.** The 12th annual APA/Clark workshop will be held July 20-22, 2016 at Clark University in Worcester, MA. No registration fee and room and board are provided. All participants will receive travel stipends up to \$150 and limited scholarships based on need are available. The deadline for registration is April 15. To apply go to: <http://www.apa.org/ed/precollege/topss/clark-university-workshop.aspx>.

Snapshots from GCSS Conference 2015



Did you know:

*The **Mission** of the Georgia Council for the Social Studies is to advocate for, support, and celebrate the advancement of quality social studies teaching for Georgia students.*

*The **Vision** of the Georgia Council for the Social Studies is to prepare students to be knowledgeable, effective decision makers and engaged citizens in a globally interdependent world.*



Like GCSS on Facebook

Mark Your Calendar:

 **GCSS Conference, October 13-14, 2016**, at the Classic Center in Athens, GA. Look for more information soon about submitting a session proposal at www.gcss.net



 **NCSS Conference, December 2 - 4, 2016** in Washington, DC. Theme: *Civic Learning and Cultural Inquiry in a Changing World*. More details at www.socialstudies.org

 **Get connected:**

 *Georgia Social Studies Journal* - The current issue can be found at www.coe.uga.edu/gssj/current-issue/

 Think about becoming more active this year:

-  Participating in this year's Social Studies Fair
-  Attending the GCSS conference
-  Becoming a more active GCSS member and recruiting new members
-  Sharing your idea for *News & Notes*.

Need to contact GCSS? Please notify Eddie Bennett of changes in contact information at gcss1964@gmail.com or send notice to P.O. Box 675, Avondale Estates, GA 30002



News & Notes is published three times a year. Announcements and information should be sent to JoAnn Wood, Editor, at msjoannwood@gmail.com

