

Good Things Do Come To Those Who Wait!

In late Fall of 2018, I made one of the most difficult decisions I had faced as an Interim Dean: to temporarily move, and then close, our Magnolia Drive Augusta University Literacy Center due to environmental concerns. Our services moved to the Telfair Public Library, which was an incredible blessing, but wasn't a long-term solution. Unfortunately, we haven't had a permanent home since that time. We've been patiently waiting and watching for an opportunity to arrive to fulfill our dreams of providing a space and place for community tutoring to occur.

That dream was fulfilled in a way none of us could have ever dreamed or imagined. In November 2020, we were informed that the [AU Literacy Center](#) would have a permanent home, in a beautiful space located in the community in our own backyard. A community we had long desired to serve – Harrisburg and Laney Walker. To top it off, we will be housed alongside some partners we respect, love and are excited to interact with: Community Foundation for the CSRA, Augusta Locally Grown, RISE Augusta and Harrisburg Health. Our beloved Center, that was created over three decades ago by our dear friend and colleague, Dr. Paulette Harris, has found a home at the [HUB](#)!

I share this with you, because this partnership has brought even more great news. The College of Education at Augusta University underwent its usual accreditation visit with the Georgia Professional Standards Commission (GaPSC). This accreditation takes place every seven years and is a requirement for our institution to offer certification for our teachers, school counselors and educational leaders.

We are pleased to unofficially report that we met ALL standards (I, II, III, IV, V, and VI) with no Areas for Improvement (AFI's) and no Stipulations. Our accreditors also found that all 19 of our programs in teacher education, educational leadership, and school counseling also met all standards with no AFI's and no Stipulations. That's a **perfect score** on accreditation – which rarely happens in any organization!

In years past, our accreditation was received. However, we felt our program was missing some key components. This year, our report tied everything to the [Georgia Department of Education's](#) focus to educate the whole child because of our new home and new partners.

The 'How' of the improvement contains the components of a problem-solving cycle:

- Identify Needs
- Select Interventions
- Plan Implementation
- Implement Plan
- Examine Progress

This is what our literacy team will be doing. We will be working with each student and adult that comes to the Literacy Center to identify where they are and to individualize an

intervention strategy uniquely designed to reflect their strengths and areas of need. We will be educating the whole child and the whole family unit! We believe this will be a model for our state and nation as a true evidence-based practice.

Because of this, the GaPSC cited us with a “Strength” in the Teaching Component 2.1 – Partnerships for Clinical Preparation. This standard demonstrates “Partners co-construct mutually beneficial P-12 school and community arrangements, including technology-based collaborations, for clinical preparation and share responsibility for continuous improvement of candidate preparation.”

The synergy that will be created by these four non-profits working together is yet to be imagined! We can’t wait to hear the stories of lives being changed because citizens are healthier, have access to and are eating healthy food, and have doors that are opened as they learn how to read. We know that illiteracy closes doors, but literacy opens them. Our mission at the AU Literacy Center is to help open those literacy doors to all who want to learn to read.

It has been a few years, with so many challenges, but what we have learned from our patience and continued hard work seeking out partners in our endeavors is that *good things DO come to those who wait!*



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