

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Frank O’Gara or Elaine Kanellis

Voice: (703) 588-3260 or (703) 588-3265

Email: frank.ogara@hq.dodea.edu

elaine.kanellis@hq.dodea.edu



Croughton Elementary School Principal is Awarded Outstanding DoD Employee with a Disability Award

ARLINGTON, VA – Ms. Georgia Ann Williams-Fitzpatrick, principal of the Department of Defense Education Activity’s (DoDEA) Croughton Elementary School in England, was recently awarded the Outstanding Department of Defense (DoD) Employee with a Disability Award for 2008.

Williams-Fitzpatrick has worked with the federal government for over 32 years; 28 years of her career have been with DoD. She began her career in the Peace Corps as a volunteer in Liberia; following her return she served as a Peace Corps recruiter. Williams-Fitzpatrick has served as an administrator at the elementary, middle, and high schools level. Currently as the principal of Croughton Elementary School in England, Williams-Fitzpatrick is very visible in her school and knows every one of the students by name.

Mr. Charlie Toth, Assistant Associate Director of Education, recognized Williams-Fitzpatrick for her dedication and contributions to DoDEA.

“It is an honor to have Ms. Williams-Fitzpatrick serving as one of our educators in the field. Her dedication to the mission, her abilities as a leader and the valuable contributions that she makes as a principal and mentor to our students is inspiring,” he said. “Her hard work truly impacts the lives of students, staff and faculty at Croughton Elementary School.”

This is the 28th year that the DoD has held the Disability Awards Ceremony and the 21st year the DoD has held the Disability Forum. Williams-Fitzpatrick was one of only 12 DoD employees who received the award from Dr. David S.C. Chu, the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness.

The program originally began in 1981 when the Secretary of Defense introduced an award program to honor employees with disabilities who make an outstanding commitment to excellence and make contributions to keep our nation secure and at peace. Employees that receive these honors are chosen by their organizations from thousands of DoD employees around the world.

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DoD Disability Awards/2-2-2

This annual ceremony increases awareness of the contributions that are made every day by individuals with mental and physical disabilities. The forum also highlights career opportunities available for employees with disabilities and emphasizes the importance of disabled individuals in the workforce, not only in the federal government, but in the private sector as well.

Williams-Fitzpatrick graduated from Tuskegee Institute University in Tuskegee, Alabama with a bachelor's degree in Biology. She received her master's degree in Science Education from Georgia State University and earned a Master's plus 30 credits in School Administration from the University of San Diego and San Diego University.

Because of bone disease, Williams-Fitzpatrick underwent a 50 percent partial amputation of her left foot. Severe rheumatoid arthritis in both knees also affects her mobility. Despite this, Williams-Fitzpatrick has made it a routine practice to visit every one of her classrooms everyday and has contributed to substantive changes in her school. During the 2007-2008 school year Williams-Fitzpatrick taught science to 6th grade classes when low school enrollment was unable to support separate 5th and 6th grade classrooms.

Her willingness to help others shows not only through her work with DoDEA, but through her work in her surrounding community as well. Williams-Fitzpatrick has been an ordained minister for 12 years and a church musician for over 20 years. She is a former president of the Phi Delta Kappa Education Fraternity and Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority. Williams-Fitzpatrick also received a Special Act Award after she saved a life using CPR. In 2008 she honorably received the 1st Battalion, 94th Field Artillery Certificate of Appreciation and coin and in 2005 she was awarded the U.S. Army Europe Scroll of Appreciation. Williams-Fitzpatrick has also received Exceptional Performance Awards 23 of her 28 years in DoDDS.

Williams-Fitzpatrick and her husband, Rev. Dr. Alec Fitzpatrick, a native of England, currently reside in England. Williams-Fitzpatrick has one daughter, who she adopted in Liberia while still in the Peace Corps, three grandchildren, and two godchildren. Her favorite pastimes are babysitting, solving 1,000 to 3,000 piece puzzles, playing Scrabble and events relating to Gospel music.

Congratulations to Ms. Williams-Fitzpatrick! Thank you for your hard work and dedication to the mission of providing quality education for all students.

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DoDEA plans, directs, coordinates, and manages the education programs for Department of Defense dependents who would otherwise not have access to a high-quality public education. DoDEA consists of the Department of Defense Dependents Schools located overseas, and the Department of Defense Domestic Dependent Elementary and Secondary Schools located in the United States and its territories and possessions. DoDEA provides education to eligible DoD military and civilian dependents from pre-kindergarten through 12th grade. DoDEA also provides support and resources to Local Education Activities throughout the U.S. that serve children of military families.