** 2016 Phil Pickens Award Finalist**

**Edith Abakare – Atlanta Public Schools Parent Mentor**

**“I get by with the help of a few of my friends. Young or old, every ethnicity, any neighbor, city or state mentoring is at the heart of who I am. I am one of the many who help persons with disabilities live meaningful lives in their home, school and community. I specialize in turning ‘no’ into ‘yes’.”**

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Amanda Locke

Parent Mentor

Evans County Schools

**Collaborations and Leadership Achievement Highlights:**

**Encourage school to include teachers and parents of student with disability with school “World Finest Chocolate” campaign. This was the first time special needs teachers, parents, and students were included at Douglass High School.**

**Each year we collaborate with P2P, Middle School MOID teacher, parents and students on transitioning from high school into community and post-secondary outcomes. We were able to assist 9 families in completing and submitting waiver applications for community based programs. We work with one of our CTI coordinators to assist with 8 students in planning for college and career opportunities.**

**Coordinate resources for our Parent Expo for parents of student with disabilities.**

**Serves as the District Level Special Education PTA Chair for the Atlanta Council of PTA’s, in collaboration with district and state PTA, we were able to start a movement of authentic inclusion for students with disabilitis.**

**Served as Region Representative and on the Leadership Council**

**Partners in Policy Making Graduate 1999**

**Georgia Future Facilitator Member 2014-2016**

Link to Edith Abakare’s APS school page

http://www.atlanta.k12.ga.us/Page/40844