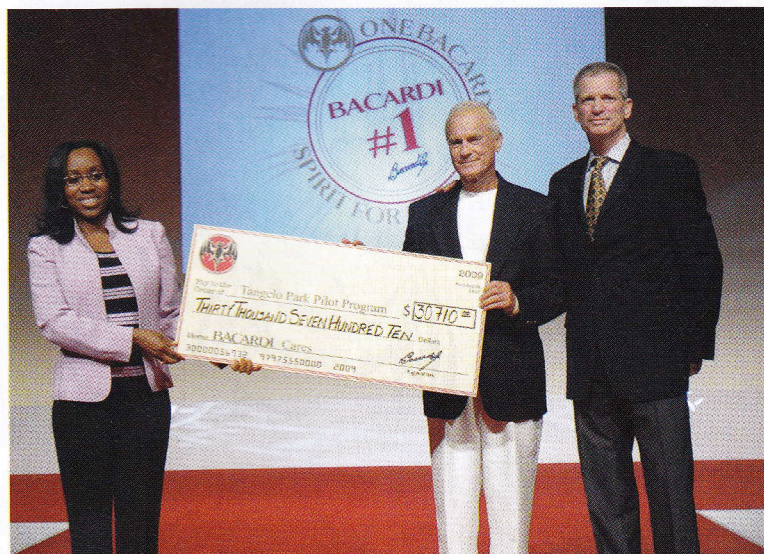


Educating with Excellence

Tashanda Brown-Cannon receives the first of two checks for Tangelo Park Elementary from Harris Rosen of Rosen Hotels & Resorts and Michael Misiorski of Bacardi U.S.A., Inc.



COURTESY OF BACARDI U.S.A., INC.

By Anna Reinert

Principal of
Tangelo Park
Elementary,
Tashanda
Brown-Cannon
is committed to
bringing quality
education to her
community.

Tashanda Brown-Cannon has always been an educator. When she was in elementary school, Brown-Cannon saw her younger brother struggling in his kindergarten class. She felt it was her responsibility as his older sister to educate him and help him to succeed in his schoolwork. So she worked with him on flashcards and circled his mistakes with a red pen. “He was really my first student,” she says.

Brown-Cannon received her degree in elementary education from Florida A&M University and started her career teaching second grade in Jacksonville. After moving to Orlando she continued teaching second and later fourth grade before becoming a curriculum resource teacher, supporting and training fellow educators. She entered into administration by becoming the assistant principal at Windy Ridge K-8 and finally the principal of Tangelo Park Elementary School in **Southwest Orlando**, where she has been since 2006.

In the time she has spent at Tangelo Park Elementary, Brown-Cannon has continuously encouraged her students and staff to go above and beyond in order to advance their education. The school achieved Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) through the No Child Left Behind program and was rated an “A” school for the last two years in a row and Brown-Cannon has no plan to change that.

In 2009, Brown-Cannon was named the State Elementary Literacy Leader of the Year by the Florida Department of Education, a title she puts into effect every single day at her school. In participation with Just Read, Florida! Brown-Cannon ensures that students are reading by age 9. “It’s about working with the teachers and emphasizing literature in everything they do,” she says.

Her award led to additional support from the community later in the year when Brown-Cannon was

asked to speak at a Bacardi U.S.A., Inc. convention being held at the Rosen Shingle Creek Resort. “They were moved by the opportunity to help the school and the community,” says Brown-Cannon. Through their Bacardi Cares campaign, the company ended up donating more than \$50,000 to the school as well as art supplies for every student.

Brown-Cannon also works with The Tangelo Park Program, Inc., a program funded by Harris Rosen and Rosen Hotels and Resorts that provides full college or vocational school scholarships—including tuition, room and board, books and travel expenses—for every graduating high school senior from the Tangelo Park area.

With help from the community, Brown-Cannon has big plans to improve her school and the quality of education that each and every student receives. She plans to use the Bacardi donation to update and upgrade technology and furniture in the classrooms and hopes to maintain their AYP status and finish off this school year with another “A” rating.

In her free time, the busy principal enjoys spending time with her husband and two children and volunteers as a curriculum consultant for Renewed Life Restoration non-profit organization.

Her favorite part of her job: “Seeing struggling students achieve and having an opportunity to be a participant in their success.” And with Brown-Cannon on their side, the students at Tangelo Park Elementary find it easy to live up to the school’s motto of “Excellence is the Only Option.” **L**

To learn more about the Tangelo Park Program and how you can help, visit CentralFlorida-Lifestyle.com.