

- [Gainesville.com](#)
- [GatorSports.com](#)
- [Gainesville Moms](#)
- [The Voice](#)
- [Guardian](#)
- [Gainesville Magazine](#)
- [Pets](#)

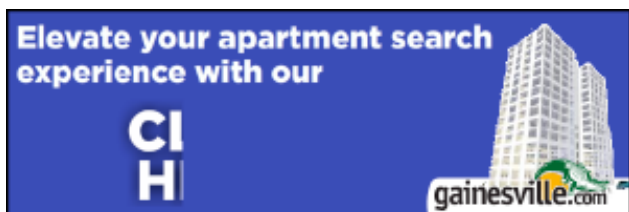
[Register](#) | [Forums](#) | [Login](#)



News Local Businesses Web Search

Web Search powered by YAHOO! Search

[52° CLEAR, Gainesville, FL](#) | [Home Delivery](#) | [Print Ads](#) | [Mobile](#) | [Place an Ad](#)



- [Home](#)
- [News](#)
- [Sports](#)
- [Entertainment](#)
- [Living](#)
- [Opinion](#)
- [Blogs](#)
- [Obituaries](#)
- [Real Estate](#)
- [Jobs](#)
- [Autos](#)
- [Classifieds](#)

- [Local](#)
- [Campus](#)
- [Politics](#)
- [State](#)
- [Nation/World](#)
- [Business](#)
- [Photos](#)
- [Video](#)

- [Weather](#)



RICH DAD'S EDUCATION Learn to Trade - Free Workshop
Ft. Myers / Naples Free Gift **CLICK HERE**
March 3-5

Article Repository

[Home](#) > [News](#)

- -
- -
- -
- [Enlarge Text](#)
- [Email](#)
- [Print](#)
- [Comments](#)
- [Share](#)

-
-
-
-

- [WITH PHOTO](#)
- [NO PHOTO](#)
- [FACEBOOK](#)
- [Yahoo! Buzz](#)
- [YAHOO](#)
- [NEWSVINE](#)
- [DELICIOUS](#)

Duval Elementary's Robert Hyatt is named Teacher of the Year

By [Christopher Curry](#)
Staff writer

Published: Friday, February 20, 2009 at 9:51 p.m.
Last Modified: Friday, February 20, 2009 at 9:51 p.m.

In a classroom at Duval Elementary School in northeast Gainesville, a group of fourth-graders sat in a drum circle and pounded out a rhythm.

When teacher Robert Hyatt signaled, one of the students would start playing a cowbell as Hyatt reminded

the rest of the class to stay off the beat of that instrument. A few minutes later, each child took a turn at a drumbeat as they moved around the circle.

"It's not enough to play the right rhythm," Hyatt called out. "You need to play the right tone. You need to play the right dynamics."

Hyatt apparently brings the right dynamic to the classroom. Thursday night, the veteran educator, who started teaching in 1972, was named the 2009 Alachua County Teacher of the Year.

The three finalists for the award — Hyatt, Howard Bishop Middle School math teacher Judy Masuda and Gainesville High physics teacher Keith Watts — have more than 80 years of combined classroom experience between them.

Given the experience and credentials of the other finalists, Hyatt said he was surprised and "overwhelmed" to win.

Duval principal Leanetta McNealy did not share his surprise. She said Hyatt has the perfect mix of discipline and humor needed to teach elementary school.

"He is most deserving of this," McNealy said. "Those of us who work with him from day to day know his commitment and the joy he takes in working with the children. He is truly the backbone of our fine arts program. He was integral in getting it started."

A Gainesville native, Hyatt, 57, was inspired to pursue music and teaching as a seventh-grader at the old Buchholz Junior High — where band director Richard Frye became his role model and mentor.

Now, Hyatt tries to pass that influence on to Duval fourth-graders like Tauvia Strappy and Anthony Walcott, both age 9, who introduced him during Thursday night's Robert W. Hughes Teacher Recognition Program.

"He's the best," Tauvia said Friday. "He's creative and funny ... we don't always get his jokes, but we always get his lessons."

Duval is the magnet school for the district's elementary fine arts curriculum, which includes music, drama and dance.

In recent years, budget cuts have not been kind to the public schools' fine arts programs. Duval has lost one art teacher and one music teacher, who were transferred to other schools and now split time teaching other subjects.

While Duval students take art and music all year, those programs were cut to half a year at other elementary schools. Because of that, Hyatt's wife, Lou Hyatt, a music teacher at Idylwild Elementary for more than 30 years, now teaches music at Williams Elementary for half the year.

But next school year, elementary art and music will be restored to full-year programs, with funding available because of the extra property tax for schools approved in last November's referendum.

"We have brilliant young art and music teachers who this year are teaching different subjects," Hyatt said. "They will return to teaching the arts next year — thanks to the voters."

He said his recognition was another victory for music and fine arts and the roles they play in a well-rounded education.

"It teaches what people do around the world," Hyatt said. "You learn so much about a country's culture by learning their music."

Contact Christopher Curry at 374-5088 or chris.curry@gvillesun.com.

All rights reserved. This copyrighted material may not be re-published without permission. Links are encouraged.

- -
- -
- -
- [Enlarge Text](#)
- [Email](#)
- [Print](#)
- [Comments](#)
- [Share](#)

-
-
-
-

- [WITH PHOTO](#)
- [NO PHOTO](#)
- [FACEBOOK](#)
- [Yahoo! Buzz](#)
- [YAHOO](#)
- [NEWSVINE](#)
- [DELICIOUS](#)

<p>Gainesville job listing Jobs Available in Your City Submit Your Resume & Profile-Free. www.Job.com</p>	<p>Automated Fx Trading The Real Money Forex Robot. See Live-Trading Proof. Fx-Trading-Review</p>	<p>Gainesville Job Listings Found: 237 jobs in your area. Make \$15 - \$100 / hour with bonuses Career-Finder.org</p>
--	--	--

Ads by Yahoo!

Add a Comment

Only moderator-approved comments are shown on this page. To see all comments, please visit the forum.

We at Gainesville.com created these forums as a place where our community can exchange ideas on news issues and express their thoughts. Please be courteous and respectful. Avoid expletives, false statements, veiled or overt threats and personal attacks. Stay on topic. ([View full Terms of Service.](#))

[Post a comment](#) | [View all comments](#) on this topic.

Next Article in Local

- [back](#)
- (16 of 20)
- [next](#)

- [**Airshow in Keystone runs through Monday**](#)

After a breakfast of SPAM, Army eggs and marmalade, Retired Col. Phil Newman and his fellow airmen piled onto trucks that took them to a single runway, where their B-17 bombers took off 30 seconds apart....

Local Business Directory

- [RESTAURANTS IN GAINESVILLE FL](#)
- [GAINESVILLE OUTLET STORES](#)
- [PLACES TO SHOP IN GAINESVILLE](#)
- [GAINESVILLE DOCTORS](#)
- [GAINESVILLE AUTO DEALERS](#)
- [BROWSE GAINESVILLE BUSINESS DIRECTORY LISTINGS](#)

HUGE ANTIQUE MALL
Over 200 Shops Antiques · Collectibles
smileysantiques.com
Smiley's OPEN DAILY
10-6
Collectable Nascar -Vintage Tools -Sports Memorabilia
Die Cast Toys - Vintage Florida Souvenirs Highwaymen
Paintings - Coins - Collectable Knives - Fossils
Vintage Hunting and Fishing items
click here to see all shops

Events Calendar [More Events](#) [Submit Event](#)

- [21](#)
[Sat](#)
- [22](#)
[Sun](#)
- [23](#)
[Mon](#)
- [24](#)
[Tue](#)
- [25](#)
[Wed](#)
- Sponsored by:

- [Most Read](#)
- [Most Emailed](#)
- [Most Recent](#)

- [Murphy, Ingram defend UF receivers](#)
- [Gameday - UF vs. Vandy](#)
- [Not bad, for openers](#)
- [Gators wary of Commodores](#)
- [City's spending spree](#)
- [EHS teacher pleads not guilty in gun case](#)
- [UF looks to transform itself](#)
- [Girlfriend's cousin visited Haleigh's home](#)
- [Haleigh's relatives keep story in forefront](#)
- [Gators dealing with economy better than most](#)

- [Haleigh's relatives keep story in forefront](#)
- [Students march against amendment](#)
- [Meet Alachua County's Teacher of the Year](#)
- [UF looks to transform itself](#)
- [EHS teacher pleads not guilty in gun case](#)
- [City's spending spree](#)

- [The next Bush in politics criticizes Gov. Crist](#)
- [Hot start carries Gators](#)
- [Cousin in Tennessee not a suspect in Haleigh's disappearance](#)
- [Obama tries to halt talk of bank nationalization](#)
- [Arrest close in Chandra Levy slaying](#)
- [Arrest in deaths of NBA star Curry's ex-girlfriend, her baby](#)
- [Senator faces perjury charges](#)
- [Men's tennis tops South Florida](#)
- [Letters to the Editor - Feb. 21](#)
- [EHS teacher pleads not guilty in gun case](#)



- [Contact Us](#)
- [About Us](#)
- [Advertising](#)
- [Subscribe](#)
- [Work for Us](#)
- [Help](#)
- [Privacy Policy](#)

- [Corrections](#)
- [RSS](#)
- [Terms of Service](#)
- [Photo Reprints](#)
- [Site Map](#)

Copyright © 2009 Gainesville.com — All rights reserved. Restricted use only.