

### Office of Special Education Services Receives National Awards



Columbia, S.C. – State Superintendent of Education Molly Spearman Announces that the Office of Special Education Services recently won two national awards from the American Council on Rural Special Education. One award was for the SC CREATE program, which helps school employees become special education teachers, and the other award was for a research article that was published in the winter of 2014.

“John Payne and his staff at the Department consistently find innovative and unique ways to improve the lives of our special education students,” said Spearman. “With nearly 800 individuals having completed the SC CREATE program and now working to serve South Carolina’s students, these awards are a testament to John’s hard work and success,” concluded Spearman.

The Department has led the SC CREATE program for the past 12 years. Working with 13 South Carolina universities that offer certification programs in special education, speech language pathology, and Board Certified Behavioral Analysis, tuition and textbook costs for full-time employees of school districts are covered in order for them to become special education professionals.

John Payne, Director of the Office of Special Education Services, also received a Research Award for his work on this initiative, along with four additional co-authors.

“Every day, we come to the office passionate about the work we do on behalf of students with disabilities,” said Payne. “It’s inspiring to think that nearly 800 special education teachers have successfully transitioned into rewarding careers helping South Carolina students learn and advance academically,” concluded Payne.

For more information, please visit: <http://sccreate.org/>

Photo Caption, L-R: Receiving the “Program Award” are Michael Thom, SCDE; Shirley C. Bausmith, Francis Marion University; Joe P. Sutton, SCDE; John R. Payne, SCDE; Dava M. O’Connor, Lander University; and Aimée Wieler, SCDE. Not pictured: Holly A. Pae, University of SC, Upstate.