

DeLoach

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Vikings and Lady Vikings for decades.

"Our school system sometimes takes a beating in the news," he continued. "But there are more positives than negatives. We have good kids and teachers. I still see these kids I covered in sports. They still come up to me and say, 'Hey Mr. Barry'. They still recognize me. Through sports with the paper, I've gotten to know kids, their parents and coaches. It's very rewarding."

With DeLoach's counterpart, Dr. Versie Hamlett, Ms. Gibson County, he referred to her as "Top Notch" even though they haven't had a lot of interaction. She's always courteous and professional, he said.

"It's a tough job," DeLoach said of Dr. Hamlett's position as superintendent of schools. "A good leader is someone that has good people working for them. The person at the top is only as good as the people below. We have good principals, staff and good kids."

DeLoach is an avid sports fan. Perhaps that's why he was so good at covering

sports in the newspaper. As a kid, he played baseball, which is still his favorite sport. He loves his St. Louis Cardinals.

As a father, DeLoach coached youth baseball and basketball.

"When I coached Little League Baseball, I would teach three goals," DeLoach said of his coaching philosophy. "First is to have fun, make the playoffs and win the championship. If you're not having fun, it's not worth being there. The same goes for you job and your town. You have to like where you are. If not, it's not worth being there."

While coaching, he would ask the players, "What's the most important position on the team? They might answer the pitcher or catcher. No, it's the position you play. The same goes for life, for work, for church. The most important is the position you play. Everybody plays a part, has a role."

His take on sports as it translates to life is what make DeLoach who he is. He's passionate about sports, his town and his life. It's no wonder so many Chronicle readers voted him Mr. Gibson County.

Hamlett

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followed her to Andrew Jackson.

Before the school opened, Dr. Hamlett was offered a position in Jackson-Madison County's central office. She declined the offer since so many of her staff had followed her to Andrew Jackson. The following year, she did move to the central office as supervisor of elementary education. She later became chief academic officer of all 26 schools in the system. Dr. Hamlett briefly held this position for six months when she accepted the Humboldt superintendent's position.

While in Humboldt, Dr. Hamlett has led the school system to bigger and better things. One accomplishment she is most proud of is the renovations at the schools. Stigall Primary got a complete overhaul and looks better than it's looked in decades. Humboldt Jr./Sr. High School also had several renovation projects in the gym, football stadium and restrooms.

Under Dr. Hamlett's watch, two different Tennessee Commissioners of Education visited Humboldt to get a first-hand look

at how Humboldt students are making huge strides in education.

"I attribute this to the hard work of teachers, kids and parents, to embrace the new curriculum," Dr. Hamlett said of the commissioners' visits. "We've also had other school districts come in to see how we do things here as it relates to scores in education."

Being named Ms. Gibson County, along side Barry DeLoach as Mr. Gibson County, was a pleasant surprise, she said.

"Barry has been a Viking supporter from day one," she said of Mr. Gibson County DeLoach. "I'm honored to share this title with him. He's invested in this school district."

As busy of a schedule as Dr. Hamlett keeps, she spends her spare time reading. Most people may not know that Dr. Hamlett loves to run 5k races. In 2018, she competed in two, the last one at Union University last fall.

"It's such an honor," Dr. Hamlett said of being voted Ms. Gibson County. "I hope to live up to the standard. My passion is deeper to be the best I can be. I'm still learning and will continue to learn."

Many thanks!
- Randy Terry & Staff



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