

The Missing Piece...

Life becomes harder for us when we live for others, but it also becomes richer and happier.

Albert Schweitzer

Building houses was purposeful and financially rewarding, but somewhere in my innermost being something was missing. Continuing to reflect on the influence of high-performing teachers on my life, I was drawn back to education--my true calling! After many discussions with Sandra and much personal soul searching, I left a successful homebuilding career and entered the much less lucrative, but much more fulfilling world of teaching. I have never regretted the choice!

After earning a degree at the University of West Florida (UWF), my dream became a reality when I accepted a job as a special education teacher at Tate High School. I loved teaching and wanted to continue improving my skills. So, I earned a Masters degree at UWF. While at Tate, I became the **Escambia County Teacher of the Year** and was selected as a finalist for Florida Teacher of the Year!

Teaching special education students during the day, I also tutored students in mathematics after the school day was over. I have now completed twenty-eight years serving Escambia students as a teacher, specialist, coordinator and administrator. I have worked in many capacities at the district level, but I still find time to tutor students every week. Tutoring has kept me directly connected to teaching. When I left my classroom at Tate High School in 1987, I made a vow that I would *continue* to make a difference in students' lives through teaching. I have kept that vow. I still teach!