

# NEWS RELEASE

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## Glen Oaks Fellow Award goes to Terry Conklin



**CENTREVILLE**---Receiving the Glen Oaks Fellow Award for 2008-2009 at the Glen Oaks Community College graduation on May 1<sup>st</sup> was a “pleasant surprise” for Burr Oak’s Terry Conklin.

“It is a real honor for me,” said the 1968 Glen Oaks graduate and Superintendent of Burr Oak Community Schools. “Over the years I have had some interesting conversations with people who don’t realize how important Glen Oaks is to this county,” he explained.

Conklin said he feels it is part of his job to encourage young people to go out and be productive members of society. “I encourage them to further their education even though I know college isn’t for everyone. I tell students that for every year of education you receive, you will increase your lifetime earnings by \$100,000. If you set your goals long term and short term, you can do or be anything that you want. Life is full of choices. You just have to be willing to work at it and anything can be accomplished. I know this to be true because I was married at age 16 and had two fine sons at the age of 19. I still graduated from high school at 17 and I began setting goals for myself and I continue to do so. The only thing that changes is priorities,” Conklin said.

Conklin recalls entering Glen Oaks Community College in 1966 when classes were being held in the old White Pigeon High School building (later razed when Glen Oaks moved to its present campus). “I don’t remember if there were many sports the first year. I know I had the opportunity to play baseball, golf and track at Glen Oaks. I was captain of the first baseball team, but I could make the team picture because I held down a third shift job while going to college. I remember having a couple of great role models while at Glen Oaks. Ken Schuler coached baseball, golf and basketball. Coach Colnick was the track coach,” he said.

Conklin went to Grand Valley State College (later renamed Grand Valley State University) where he lettered in baseball playing third base, golf as the number one or two man, and played football briefly when an injury ended his plans for the gridiron.

Becoming a teacher and coach was as natural as a duck taking to water for Conklin. From 1979 to 1989, Conklin taught secondary psychology and sociology, served as athletic director, led k-12 physical education, coached varsity football, baseball, track, softball and JV basketball, and still found time to be weight training coach at Glen Oaks Community College. He became Principal of Burr Oak Community Schools in 1989, went to White Cloud High School as Assistant Principal in 1990 and became White Cloud’s Principal in 1992. In 1993, Conklin returned as Superintendent of Schools at Burr Oak.

Terry and Lanette, a Burr Oak counselor, have seven children. Besides time with his family, school activities, and sports, Conklin is a member of numerous professional organizations for education and the local community. “Terry Conklin was truly an outstanding choice for the Glen Oaks Fellow Award,” said President Gary Wheeler.