

**Alice Coachman Elementary School  
Albany, Georgia**



**TRANSCRIPT: “COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT”**

COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER VOICES: I am very pleased to see, not only the companies that come in to volunteer but just single individuals that take it upon themselves their time and efforts to come in and say “what can I do to make my community better?” Because your schools are your community and your schools are only as good as your community is and vice versa.

I’ll talk about, from a company perspective; it really feels like a neighborhood school to us. So we call it not just Partners for Excellence, but our neighborhood school. And if you think of it from that perspective, it’s about getting to know everyone in the neighborhood. So we try to encourage our associates to get to know Alice Coachman. Personally it’s a great feeling when you know that you are making a difference in a child’s life. Or you can share with them what you do and the possibilities that exist for them.

This is my 26<sup>th</sup> year in the Dougherty County School system. I mostly stay in the library but I process books. I work on the accelerated reader programs and anything else that can help through the library. The library has always been very important to me and there are more books that are available for the kids.

We are one of Alice Coachman’s partners in Excellence Schools. We do the Reading Across America with the students. We also participate in the teacher and staff back to school breakfast. We also sponsor through donations through our plant, testing or any activities that help with the children & families. We are always glad to come out and support them in any way that we can.

Even though we’ve only been here 4 ½ years, we’re just volunteers and we don’t work with the children but I always feel my time is giving the teachers more time in the classroom.

This year I have been doing a lot more volunteering and I work with individual students. Some of them just need the extra help and I can go into the classroom and do that. I’ve been working with kindergarten babies and they still struggle but once you sit down with them one on one, they know they can do it, but they need a little one on one contact.

We’ve had a great chance to work with this school, particularly to read to the children. We have a lot of fun. It’s very enjoyable reading to the students. It’s a civic duty we feel like we need. When we come through the front door of the school, it’s amazing. Everyone is so polite and helpful from the principal, asst. principal, the teachers, the students. It’s like being home with your family.

And as all of the other volunteers have said, whatever Ms. Victor and staff here needs of us, we try to help them out in any way. One of the things that I like to try and focus on is the staff because they have a great responsibility in educating the young people. So one of the things that we have done that I hope supports them is Books are Fun and all the proceeds from that at our plant go toward their reading program here. We look at opportunities where we can help in any way we can toward making what they do a little bit easier through financial donations through our time, like reading and all the different activities that they have. Whatever they ask of us we try to do it because we know that these children, to coin a saying, they are truly our future and it's our responsibility as adults in the community to help with that any way that we can.