



## **Youmone L. Berrien**

### **Teacher of the Year**

First Coast High  
10<sup>th</sup> Grade English II and Writing

Principal: Deborah Smith

### **Education**

B.A., Florida State University

### **Highlights**

- 6 years of teaching experience
- 2010 - The Buccaneer Award of First Coast High
- 2008 - Local teacher with the highest school wide FCAT reading student gain points



Youmone Berrien has been teaching for seven years. She currently wears many hats at First Coast High School; leader of the tenth grade English professional learning community, student activities director, senior class sponsor, and co-founder of the Ladies First Organization. Ms. Berrien's involvement stems from a philosophy that it is the job of the educator to "greet students at the entrance of academia, present them the tools needed to become productive, and guide them through our 'real world'."

Ms. Berrien's commitment to the success of every child has led her to teach in some of First Coast's most challenging classrooms. One of her seventh period English II classes last year had eighty-eight percent of students who scored at a level two or below on the Reading FCAT. Through structure, guidance and an opportunity to creatively express their knowledge, Ms. Berrien solicited her students' participation in changing their futures. As a result, twenty-one of her twenty-four students showed considerable gains. Ms. Berrien's success became contagious as she presented a school-wide FCAT motivational campaign that played a significant role in increasing First Coast's school grade.

The Ladies First Organization, dedicated to improving the lives of First Coast's female students, was born of a philosophy that teaching is a lifetime commitment to the service of improving the lives of others. Through mentoring, discussions, seminars and field trips, girl-on-girl violence has decreased and teachers have incorporated new techniques to successfully reach their female students in the classroom. Ms. Berrien believes that teachers "make an impact on student learning by meeting them where they are; guiding them to where they need to be; and cheering them along the way."

"Mrs. Berrien is an exceptional teacher who has demonstrated an ability to reach our lowest performing students as well as our honors students. Indeed her desire to promote student growth has been infectious. She is respected by every member of our staff."

*Deborah Smith  
Principal  
First Coast High School*