

November 4, 1999

Dr. Michael M. Krop, Vice Chair

SUBJECT: NATIONAL AWARD TO EXCEPTIONAL STUDENT EDUCATION TEACHER

If you looked inside the September issues of National Geographic, Reader's Digest, Family Circle or Forbes magazines, you might have seen a familiar face smiling up from a circle of happy children, all of them wearing construction paper feathered headdresses. That was our own Barbara Gonci, showing off her exceptional students at Hialeah Gardens Elementary School.

As the State Farm Insurance Companies' national winner of the Good Neighbor Award for September, Ms. Gonci brings honor to this entire school system, as well as to herself, her class and her school.

For 28 years, Barbara Gonci has dedicated herself to the needs of special children in Miami-Dade County Public Schools. She caught the attention of State Farm with her unique way of bringing Native American culture to life for her learning disabled students on a level they could relate to. Her students were involved in growing corn, constructing shelters, cooking fry bread and creating pottery. As the State Farm display stated, ". . . she brings an exciting world to students whose horizons might otherwise seem limited . . . her sense of fun, adventure and infectious enthusiasm . . . inspires her students to academic achievements they might never have thought possible."

**ACTION PROPOSED BY
DR. MICHAEL KROP:**

That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, recognize the achievements of Ms. Barbara Gonci, teacher of the learning disabled at Hialeah Gardens Elementary School, and thank her for her years of dedication, creativity and commitment to the children of our community.