



SC School Improvement Council

"Civic Engagement in Public Education"

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Dr. Baron Holmes named SIC Advocate of the Year for 2013

COLUMBIA – Dr. Baron Holmes, longtime planning and research director with the SC Budget and Control Board now with USC's Children's Law Center, has been named by the SC School Improvement Council (SC-SIC) Board of Trustees as SIC Advocate of the Year for 2013.

The award was presented Saturday, March 23, during the SC-SIC Annual Meeting in Columbia. In recognition of the 35th anniversary of SICs in South Carolina, Governor Nikki Haley has proclaimed March 2013 as "School Improvement Council Month."

"It was Baron's initial vision for School Improvement Councils in our state all those years ago that laid the groundwork for having SICs serving in each of South Carolina's public schools," said SC-SIC Board of Trustees Chair Ellen M. Still. "He is not only an SIC advocate in 2013 but he continually has been a steadfast believer and vocal supporter of direct civic engagement in public education at the local level for the last three decades."

In the late 1970s, as Research Director for the House of Representatives Ways and Means Committee, Dr. Holmes spearheaded the research and analysis leading to the passage of the state's Education Finance Act (EFA) of 1977, which led to greater equalization of public school funding and created the local community-based organizations known since 1984 as School Improvement Councils.

He began his career in South Carolina in 1972 in the office of Gov. John C. West, first as Associate Director of the Implementation Office and then as Energy Policy Advisor. In 1974, Dr. Holmes joined the staff of the Ways and Means Committee as Research Director, and then served as Special Projects Director for the State Reorganization Commission from 1977 to 1980. For five years, he was President of the SC School for the Deaf and Blind, followed by service as Director of the State Budget Division in 1986 and 1987.

Since 1988, Dr. Holmes has been particularly dedicated to education and children's issues. As the State Budget and Control Board's Director of Planning and Evaluation/Office of Research and Statistics for over two decades, he served as Project Director for both the SC KIDS COUNT project and the SC Middle Grades project, and took an active part in the state's Reading Proficiency Initiative and the Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems project. Dr. Holmes was also involved in helping to write the enabling legislation for SC First Steps.

Dr. Holmes currently works with the USC Children's Law Center, which staffs the state's Joint Citizens and Legislative Committee on Children.

He holds the Bachelor of Arts degree in history and economics from the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, the Masters of Public Administration degree from the Woodrow Wilson School of Princeton University, and the Ph.D. in history from the University of Chicago.

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The SIC Advocate of the Year Award recognizes exemplary efforts on behalf of School Improvement Councils. The award is presented by the SC-SIC Board of Trustees to individuals who go above and beyond in supporting and promoting SICs in their particular spheres of influence. Previous recipients of the award have included state legislators, school and district level staff, and principal-SIC Chair teams.

Located in the University of South Carolina's College of Education, the SC School Improvement Council was established in state law 35 years ago to provide the member training, technical assistance, statutory accountability, and operational resources vital to the continued success of the community-based School Improvement Councils – and their nearly 15,000 members – in each of the state's 1,100-plus K-12 public schools.