

## **Kathy McGhee Schleier**

Kathy, class of 1975, heard her call to service when she found out that Dalton, Georgia (her hometown) was the divorce capital of the United States. Since 2004, when the Whitfield-Murray Marriage Initiative (WMMI) was organized, Kathy has spearheaded a drive to lower divorce rates in Dalton and the surrounding areas.

Due to the efforts of the WMMI, the Georgia legislature passed a law that couples planning marriage would receive a discount on their marriage license if they participated in a series of pre-marital counseling sessions. WMMI also convinced local magistrate judges in Whitfield County to sign an agreement to not marry anyone unless they obtained 8 hours of pre-marital education. For the past three years, Kathy has served on the Marriage Commission for the State of Georgia.

The WMMI name was changed to Family Frameworks ([marriageisforever.org](http://marriageisforever.org)) and has become a non-profit organization that serves as a resource center for tools, seminars, marriage classes in English and Spanish, and other programs to strengthen families....such as Dating My Spouse and Black Marriage Day.

In addition to her paid work as a pediatric nurse practitioner, Kathy serves as the organization's executive director. She writes grants to obtain funding for the many projects the organization promotes, produces the on-line newsletter, and teaches relationship and marriage strengthening classes. Among the grants that she has been awarded are the Safehouse Community Grant from the State of Georgia and the Co-Mission Grant, a national grant from Chik-Fillet.

Kathy, and her husband John, are both involved in their church and community. They have a blended family of five grown children, and she is "Mimi" to two grandchildren. Kathy says, "My life is about children, and everything that I do is about helping children to be the healthiest, happiest and most productive they can be."

In 2008, Kathy was presented with the Elvie Swinson Nursing Alumnus of the Year award from Southern Adventist University. We are delighted to present Kathy Schleier with GCA's Alumnus of the Year award, and are grateful for her contributions in strengthening the families in Northwest Georgia.