

Dr. Ray Shawa

Seventeen years ago, Dr. Raymond Shawa came to Hamilton Christian Academy with the idea in mind that he would only stay until he acquired a full time pastorate somewhere. God had other plans for him. He and his wife, Gaynel, and children, Missy, Kristi, and Jason had traveled many places following the Lord's leadership. Dr. Shawa served as a youth/education minister at University Hills Baptist Church in Denver, Colorado; Snellville Baptist Church in Snellville, Georgia; First Baptist Church in Groves, Texas; and Edgewood Baptist Church in Columbus, Georgia. He then served as pastor at University Baptist church in Beavercreek, Ohio; Minister of Evangelism at Edgewood Baptist Church in Columbus, Georgia; Pastor at Oak Grove Baptist Church in Creole, Louisiana; and Principal at Christian Heritage Academy in Columbus, Georgia.

He then came to reside in Lake Charles so that both he and Mrs. Shawa could be closer to their parents. Dr. David Moore hired Gaynel to teach, then later asked Dr. Shawa to teach. After his second year at Hamilton, he began serving as full time Assistant Principal. He also pastored at Woodlawn Baptist Church and then Maranatha Fellowship Church during this stint. Seventeen years into his so called "brief stay" at Hamilton, he leaves us to take on the task of full time pastor at Oak Grove Baptist Church in Creole, Louisiana, once again.

He leaves us with lots of memories and cherished heartfelt sentiments. He has developed relationships that have changed the lives and hearts of many students, parents, teachers and staff. Through his counseling, disciplining, and just good listening ability, God has touched many hearts, lives, and marriages through him. He has and will remain a pillar in the Hamilton Christian Academy family. We pray for blessings beyond measure for him and his family. We also pray and will continue to pray for the speedy restoration of his church in Creole that was almost completely destroyed in Hurricane Rita and damaged severely by Hurricane Ike. This transition meets the Shawas with new physical, financial, and spiritual battles. Dr. Shawa will shepherd a somewhat displaced flock and Mrs. Shawa will begin to commute from Creole, after they have completed the move there.

We thank Dr. Shawa for the integrity and humble spirit he offered to the Hamilton environment, the many days he was the first to arrive at school and greet all the many student and parent faces with a smile, and the many nights that he and Mrs. Shawa were the last to leave after locking up and turning out the lights at the school. As one chapter ends for him, a new one begins. In his words, "There are no problems, just opportunities." Dr. Shawa, we pray huge blessings on your new opportunities. In the Name of the One Who Gave life, Amen.