“I want to be Sharon O’Neal when I grow up” is a common refrain coming from students and colleagues alike. Dr. O’Neal is much loved and respected as a student-centered educator who modeled true dedication and passion for literacy education. A scholar of children’s literature and writing workshop, Dr. O’Neal inspired students from early childhood through graduate school by sharing her passion for language and literacy in a caring, down-to-earth, hands-on, pedagogy of love. In her classrooms she nurtured authentic learning communities where students felt respected, knew they had important stories to share, and always centered issues of justice. She was equally caring as she was demanding, holding high standards for her students and for herself. Over her career at Texas State University, Dr. O’Neal has been an outstanding scholar who has won many awards and published book chapters, journal articles and even basal reading textbooks. Her record of service is extensive and includes a wide array of activities supporting the university, profession and community. Some of her service includes being a member of the Tomás Rivera Book Award Regional Committee, a board member for The Journal of Children’s Literature and The Reading Teacher, a Children’s Committee member for the Texas Book Festival, and much more. We are happy for Dr. O’Neal and wish her the best in her retirement and we are honored to call her a colleague. Sharon O’Neal is a professor who has transformed lives for the better—the ripple effect of her life’s work will continue to impact the teaching profession for years to come.