

2017

EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION AWARDS

Wednesday, April 26, 2017

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Special Thanks to:

*National Teachers Associates Life Insurance for providing a
big screen television to one of our nominees this evening; and
Jostens for providing rings for the winners*

Please Note

The *Excellence in Education* Awards Ceremony is a time to celebrate outstanding teachers and education/business partnerships and to socialize with friends and colleagues. To provide each teacher and business honoree with the dignity and recognition they deserve, we ask that you refrain from talking at your table during the awards ceremony.

Thank you for your cooperation.

2017
EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION AWARDS

Awards for

*Anne Arundel County Public Schools
Teacher of the Year*

*Anne Arundel County Independent Schools
Teacher of the Year*

*Anne Arundel County
Business Partnerships of the Year*



Excellence in Education
PROGRAM SCHEDULE

Reception/Registration— 6:00

A time for fellowship with colleagues and friends

Seating for Dinner— 6:15

Welcome & Greetings

Brad Bell, *Maryland Reporter, ABC7/WJLA-TV*
Master of Ceremonies

Bob Burdon, *President-CEO*
Anne Arundel County Chamber of Commerce

Julie Hummer, *Vice President, Board of Education*

George Arlotto, Ed.D., *Superintendent of Schools*

Dinner— 6:30

Awards Ceremony— 7:15

Recognizing Excellence

Brad Bell, *Maryland Reporter, ABC7/WJLA-TV*

Katrina Griffin, *2016 Anne Arundel County Teacher of the Year*

2017 Teacher Honorees & Semi-Finalists

2017 Independent Schools Finalists

Deborah Flynn, *St. Mary's High School*

Kelly Rampmeyer, *The Summit School*

Excellence in Education
PROGRAM SCHEDULE

2017 Public Schools Finalists

Josh Carroll, *South River High School*
Sally PazyMiño Wilson, *Tyler Heights Elementary School*
Stacey Scofield, *Walter S. Mills-Parole Elementary School*
Timothy Smith, *Folger McKinsey Elementary School*
Denise Stephanos, *Arundel High School*

Promoting Partnerships

*Presentation of Business Partnership
Nominees and Awards*

Presentation of the Teacher of the Year Awards

*2017 Anne Arundel County
Independent Schools Teacher of the Year*

*2017 Anne Arundel County
Public Schools Teacher of the Year*

Closing



Anne Arundel County Public Schools Finalists



Josh Carroll
South River High School

Josh Carroll has worn many hats throughout his impressive 17-year career as an educator. Though he started his career as an English teacher, his passion could not be contained to the classroom. With a desire to richly touch as many students as possible, Carroll became involved in countywide curriculum writing as well as athletic coaching.

“Years ago, I focused solely on classroom performance; but, with experience as a coach, I have learned that setting high expectations for students in and out of the classroom leads to students setting high expectations in life,” Carroll said.

Such expectations led him to pursue even more responsibility. “When the Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) program was introduced to South River, Josh was the first person I asked to take on the challenge to build and grow the program,” South River Principal Will Myers said. “The program took off and grew because of his personality, drive, and organization. It thrives today because of the foundation he established.”

After leading South River’s AVID program for six years, Carroll was tapped to join the school’s highly sought-after and accomplished STEM magnet program. In a role where he is compelled to stimulate and foster some of the county’s brightest minds, “he challenges his students to think critically, to be creative, and to go beyond the obvious, while presenting material in the most interesting and engaging manner,” Myers said.

His talent and dedication recently led to his appointment as the interim department chairperson for the school’s STEM program. However, the demanding role has not kept him from still being active as a coach, mentor, and chairperson of several school committees. “Mr. Carroll makes great things happen,” Myers said.

“Great teaching begins with forming positive, meaningful relationships with students. Purposefully, I create time to get to know my students and to let them know me. I want my students to see me as trustworthy, caring, and dedicated to their success. More importantly, I want them to be dedicated to their own success.”

Anne Arundel County Public Schools Finalists



Sally PazyMiño Wilson
Tyler Heights Elementary School

Some may say that six years in an occupation is a short amount of time to make a mark on an industry. In the case of Sally PazyMiño Wilson, her colleagues would likely say that her career, her school, and her students are six years stronger because of her influence.

She surely has the accolades to prove it. Wilson has been recognized by the U.S. Department of Education as part of the White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanics for outstanding instruction and community collaboration. She has also shared her award-winning approach on a global scale as a presenter at an international conference for ESOL educators.

Such acclaim has allowed her to assume leadership roles such as Equity Liaison and a member of the school's Vision Taskforce. Her skills also make her a sought-after professional confidante.

"Colleagues regularly seek out Ms. Wilson as a model for teaching techniques and equitable strategies," Tyler Heights Elementary School Principal Julia Walsh said.

With a four-point strategy for success, "Wilson's smile radiates 'Tyler Pride,' and she shares her passion each day to continue to push our school forward," Walsh said. Through high expectations, engaging instruction, parent involvement, and building student confidence, she prepares, molds, supports, and uplifts her students.

Her approach has proven to be a winning combination for not only her students, but the entire Tyler Heights school community. She attends and provides a strong presence at Annapolis Education Commission and PTA meetings, Title I extracurricular events, and parent workshops.

"I hold four elements sacred in my classroom: high expectations help students to achieve; engagement and differentiation result in increased mastery; parent involvement is paramount to student success; and a culture of student dignity and value helps students to flourish."

Anne Arundel County Public Schools Finalists



Stacey Scofield
Walter S. Mills-Parole Elementary School

Schools are often the epicenters of our communities, and Walter S. Mills-Parole Elementary School is a shining example of this belief. At the very heart of this really important place you'll find Stacey Scofield, whose compassion for her students and school community dictates her every move.

"It is my love for these students and community that makes teaching more than a job. It is my passion, my joy," she said. Throughout her 20-year career, she has made it a point to serve in areas where she felt she was needed the most. Those needs led her to volunteer and teach GED classes at the local detention center, as well as provide home instruction for an ill student.

A heart so big cannot be contained, and Scofield is quick to help wherever she can. From participating in the Girls on the Run program to mentoring at the Boys & Girls Club and serving on several school committees, the giving never stops. Then there's her day job, where the students are always excited and in a hurry to get to their media sessions.

"When you walk into our media center, you will see students engaged in working on computers using an online database to research a topic, preparing a speech and using media texts to support their ideas, creating 3-D objects with a special printer, or lounging in the corner immersed in a great book," Mills-Parole Principal Ginger Henley said. "Students continually ask to visit the media center so that they can spend time with Mrs. Scofield. She has instilled a love of learning in our students."

Scofield has also earned her stripes among her colleagues. She often delivers professional development and gives of her personal time to keep the school's staff abreast of the latest technological supports and tools.

"Everything I do, every interaction that I have with my students, must serve the students to educate and make them feel empowered. The relationships that I form are of utmost importance to me."

Anne Arundel County Public Schools Finalists



Timothy Smith
Folger McKinsey Elementary School

Physical education has evolved into so much more than a recreational break from the rigors of core classes. Astutely, today's physical education teacher balances and builds connections between traditional classroom lessons and the many wellness attributes that will enrich students' lives. With that in mind, Timothy Smith is not only a role model of healthy choices, but an exemplary modern physical education teacher.

"On many occasions, I've teamed with talented colleagues to scaffold critical concepts across a variety of subject areas," Smith said. "Having students complete exercises according to a specified number of repetitions listed on graphing cards has allowed our students to interpret mathematical data. Identifying biomechanical terms such as 'force' or 'acceleration' and discussing how the application of those concepts results in the improved performance of certain kinetic skills, builds vocabulary and draws comparison to science."

Such practices got the attention of the CBS This Morning show, which visited with Smith last spring to chronicle the innovative, dynamic instruction and active learning that his students and parents alike have come to love.

"The gym is right across from the school office and every time a parent is in the main office, they get a glimpse of Mr. Smith in action," Folger McKinsey Principal Lenora Fox said. "Nine times out of ten, parents are transfixed — they can't help but listen or take a look because, just like their children, they too are engaged."

Smith's work has also been recognized by the Maryland Association of Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance. He was a 2015 recipient of the Simon McNeely Award, which honors state educators for instructional excellence and extensive community contributions. Those community contributions include organizing a cup stacking tournament that annually attracts more than 200 young people from across the country.

"Establishing personal relationships with all of my students is something that I take great pride in; and creating a lasting impression on their learning, regardless of any cognitive inhibitions, emotional insecurities, or physical limitations, has always been my most valued tool as an educator."

Anne Arundel County Public Schools Finalists



Denise Stephanos
Arundel High School

To the benefit of her family and students alike, Denise Stephanos brings a whole new meaning to the term ‘home school connection.’ As the mother of a daughter with Down Syndrome, Stephanos has used her skills and passion as an educator to help her daughter develop. Symbiotically, her efforts as an advocate for her daughter have made her a well-rounded teacher.

“I fought for her when others would not. I believed in her when others could not. I have seen firsthand what is possible when everyone perseveres including the teachers,” Stephanos said. “I do the same for my students. I fight for what is best for them. I figure out a way to reach them, and I never ever give up on them. If I expect to teach my students the art of perseverance, then I must model it in my own work.”

With such a penchant for advocacy, she is also a leader among her peers. As the Math Department chairperson at Arundel High School, her colleagues have also benefitted from her deep knowledge, vast experience, and creative approach. “Her support in coming up with cool and meaningful lesson plans in Geometry is invaluable,” Arundel teacher Blake Wilburn said. “I especially appreciate her flexibility and her common sense approach to situations that can seem overwhelming.”

Her students would agree. One of them, Sam, wrote that he likes Geometry because “Ms. Stephanos throws special stuff into the math like using maps to learn the coordinate plane.” Tamaué, another student, added that “Ms. Stephanos is respectful and she motivates us to figure things out on our own.”

Through her own ingenuity, Stephanos launched a math tutoring program during lunch which has helped more than 300 students this year. She also runs a regular seminar for AP Statistics and holds after-school sessions for students who need additional help.

“In order to help students reach their potential, I expose them to a large variety of educational experiences, acknowledge differences in learning styles and interest, meet them where they are, and honor each step they make in the right direction.”

Anne Arundel County Independent Schools Finalists



Deborah Flynn
St. Mary's High School

Deborah Flynn has been a teacher for more than 30 years and dedicates herself as much as ever to the passion and enjoyment she gains from challenging her students to excel in French. Whether through songs, food, role play, field trips, videos, or guest speakers, 'Madame Flynn' immerses her students in all aspects of another culture.

Flynn is currently the Foreign Language Department Chair and single-handedly teaches all French levels, I–V. She has taught at St. Mary's for 27 years and has been the department chair for the last 11 years. But it's in French classes where her passion is the most evident. She has also lived in France and led numerous student trips to Europe.

She earned her BS degree in French and Spanish Education from Longwood University, where she later completed her ME. As an undergraduate she studied for a year at the Sorbonne in Paris, and she has completed graduate work at numerous universities including the Institute of Spanish Studies in Valencia, Spain; Goucher College; The Catholic University of America; University of Maryland; and the College of Notre Dame of Maryland. She is certified to teach French and Spanish in grades 7–12.

"In no way can I convey Madame Flynn's gifts and talents in this letter," St. Mary's Principal Mindi Imes wrote in support of her nomination. "We believe she is the teacher of the year not only because of her expertise, dedication, and commitment to her students, but also because she loves the French language and her passion is contagious. We know that St. Mary's High School is a better place because she is teaching here."

"My desire for excellence in teaching rises from yearning to share my passion for languages, cultures, and learning. My philosophy is to inspire my students to build skills to understand the world we share and pass on the joy of becoming lifelong learners."

Anne Arundel County Independent Schools Finalists



Kelly Rampmeyer
The Summit School

If you looked at Kelly Rampmeyer's credentials, you'd assume she must have been teaching for at least 30 years. Then, when you realize she has been teaching less than one-quarter of that, you understand how much education, teaching, and volunteering she has concentrated into a short period of time.

During her seven years at The Summit School, Rampmeyer has taught English, reading, and math to lower-school students. She also coaches archery, cross country, and tennis to middle school athletes. A couple of years ago she was promoted to Assistant Program Coordinator and also serves on the school's leadership team.

Rampmeyer has a Bachelor of Arts degree from McDaniel College and certifications in Elementary and Special Education. In addition, she has led or been a part of relief and education efforts in Uganda, New Orleans, Haiti, and Nepal.

"While Kelly uses her skill and creativity to meet her students' diverse instructional needs, she has a knack for making school fun and for promoting school community spirit," said Summit School Executive Director Dr. Joan Mele-McCarthy. "For example, Kelly, an avid athlete, formed the school's first cross-country team, and first tennis team, and she brought archery to our athletics and summer camp programs. There is truly no better teacher I can think of who is more deserving of this honor."

Rampmeyer has also put her athleticism to good use in another way. Last summer, she spent over nine weeks riding her bike 4,333 miles from Seattle to Boston to raise money for Summit. She raised more than \$11,000 in support of the school's scholarship program.

"Teaching is my first passion, but not my only one. Outside of school, I have volunteered in 30 countries. I aim to bring this global perspective into the classroom, and I hope to give insight to students about life outside of Summit."

Anne Arundel County Public Schools Semi-Finalists



Alma Durm

Ruth Parker Eason School | National Board Certified Teacher

“A teacher must have passion. It is passion that brings me to compulsively dissect old lessons. It is passion that drives me to bridge the gap between school and home. I am passionate about making my students’ lives better, their futures brighter, and their voices heard.”

With more than 35 years of teaching experience, Alma Durm has some proven strategies for being successful in the classroom. Such strategies, however, cannot compare to her passion and innovation. She tops those attributes with a resolve and enthusiasm to provide the very best opportunities for her students.

“She works inexhaustibly and with great joy and determination on behalf of each and every student in her classroom specifically, and in the school community,” assert her colleagues, Ellen Hays, Tammy Wolanin, and Krystina Bennett. “She lives every day believing she is the voice for her students.”

Committed to project-based learning, Durm has created several opportunities for her students’ talents to shine not only in the classroom, but also in their school community. She began a greeting card program that combined her students’ interest in crafts with their compassion for others. What started as an expression for the students to share with each other, evolved into a full-fledged operation that sells the popular cards at the school’s craft fair and at the Chesapeake Arts Center. Durm has also expanded the effort to include ornaments, decorations, and sea glass jewelry among the inventory. To bring the project full circle, she created an entrepreneurship class, helping her students to develop business plans to produce and sell their items.



Nancy Hack-Behringer

Mayo Elementary School | National Board Certified Teacher

“Building relationships with students and staff is the glue that holds all of the essential components of teaching and learning together. My strengths as a teacher are the relationships I build every day with students and teachers in order for teaching and learning to occur at the highest level.”

Nancy Hack-Behringer equally values the connections she makes with students and her colleagues. As the Literacy Coach at Mayo Elementary School, she has the great responsibility of teaching the teachers and students. For her, it’s a natural approach. “By supporting teachers in their learning, I am increasing student learning,” she said.

No matter her title over her nearly 39 years in education, Hack-Behringer has always been an instructional leader. She provides several professional development activities throughout the year in addition to taking the lead on many school initiatives such as school improvement, testing, and student learning objective facilitation all while providing top-notch reading interventions and enrichments to students.

“She makes an impact on every child she teaches. She is the reason that many of her former students become teachers,” said colleague Suzanne Jones, kindergarten teacher primary team leader at Mayo Elementary School. “There are no limits to what our students can achieve due to the support she provides and goals she sets for each student, as well as the teachers.”

Anne Arundel County Public Schools Semi-Finalists



Janet Liimatta

Ferndale Early Education Center | National Board Certified Teacher

"I see my students through the lens of a parent. I am more of a facilitator than an instructor. I believe all of my children are capable of great things. I just need to give them the opportunity to discover their own path."

In a magical and empowering way, 23-year veteran educator Janet Liimatta has blurred the lines between parent and educator. "I want the same things for my students that I want for my own daughter," she said. With that approach, she has been able to create a learning space built on exploration and experimentation, where failure is just as essential to learning as success.

Through the design and implementation of a Nature Play Space at Ferndale Early Education Center, Liimatta personified the perseverance, persistence, and patience that she often asks of her students. Knowing that her students receive little exposure to the outdoors, she tirelessly sought funds and resources to create an amazing outdoor learning space that features a vegetable garden, native wild flower garden, teepees, a music wall, and large sand area. Her students even helped install pavers to build a hopscotch area.

"I had absolutely no prior experience in attempting anything of this magnitude," she admits. "However, the parent in me is willing to do anything for my children. Hearing the learning and laughter coming from the new space makes everything worth it."



Elizabeth Starnes

Southern High School | National Board Certified Teacher

"A strong library media specialist not only increases student achievement, but transforms the learning community into information-powered citizens committed to literacy and prepared for the challenging demands of the 21st Century."

Elizabeth Starnes' typical day starts in the Media Center at Southern High School, but it always ends in the community. Although the Media Center, with its bright colors and inviting atmosphere, is a true reflection of the vibrancy she exudes as a teacher, it is her deep dedication to the Southern community that brings her praise from students, colleagues, and the school's partners.

"She goes above and beyond in everything that she does," said Lee Derrick, former Southern High School Business Advisory Board president. She puts her heart and soul into her work, as well as into supporting the school in ways that are not a part of her job description."

In addition to providing excellent resources and instruction that directly cater to the needs of her students, Starnes holds a lunchtime book club that is popular among students and staff. As the school's eCoach, she delivers technology-related professional development to staff, and is highly regarded among her peers as a team player. "Her ability to reach all learners and work with teachers' curricular needs is inspiring," said Meghan Hryniewicz, the school's signature program facilitator.

Anne Arundel County Public Schools Semi-Finalists



Robert Stojakovich

Magothy River Middle School

“When we give children the opportunity to be learner, problem solver, and thinker, we create opportunities where they are the stakeholders. Students need the support of a well-structured and balanced approach which compels them to pursue competence, relatedness, and autonomy.”

Music teacher Robert Stojakovich uses many strategies to ensure that his students are successful. Interestingly, failure is at the very core of his approach. “On the first day of class, he asks students if they ‘like to fail,’ ” said Magothy River Middle School Principal Christopher Mireni. “He then surprises them by teaching that failures are not only expected, but necessary. His philosophy is that it is through failures that we learn the most.”

Just like a true conductor, he values every student as an integral part of the orchestra – just as every instrument and every note is important. He imparts this attitude on his students by often grouping instruments in unconventional ways so that the students can hear and feel their significance. “He doesn’t just teach his students to play music, he teaches his students to be musicians,” exclaims Mireni.

As a result of his all-encompassing approach, Stojakovich’s students routinely earn superior ratings at the county and state levels. He also offers a summer music camp to deepen students’ skills in preparation for the new school year. And the teaching doesn’t stop as he also holds parent education sessions to teach parents how to support their young musicians at home.

Anne Arundel County Independent Schools Semi-Finalists



Tom Mach

Archbishop Spalding High School

"The measurement of a successful adult in today's world is reflected in one's ability to utilize information, not the ability to simply know things. This is why my classroom is focused more on skills and collaboration than it is on cataloging information."

Tom Mach hasn't been a teacher as long as many other nominees, but he's certainly one of the leading innovators. He uses technology to complement traditional teaching methods to foster an environment of learning. As a history teacher, Mach's AP students have passed the national AP exam at an 80 percent rate, among the best in the school.

Mach has taught social studies, religious studies, and been an adviser for the yearbook for the past eight years at Spalding. In addition, he serves as the lead on the Technology Committee, provides professional development for other teachers, and moderates the Model United Nations Club.

"Mr. Mach is a continual learner who constantly seeks the best ways to educate our young people," Archbishop Spalding High School principal Lewis Van Wambeke said. "He is a resource for our educators and has emerged as a leader through his efforts to understand how technology is best used for learning. We are fortunate to have such a dedicated teacher."



Kathy Poerstel

Alpert Family Aleph Bet Jewish Day High School

"I am privileged to have a multi-age classroom that allows me to bond with students for two years rather than one. I find that this extra year gives me even more time to know my students as individuals and to modify my teaching to meet their needs. My classroom is set up to accommodate all learners."

Kathy Poerstel has taught in varying roles at Alpert Family Aleph Bet Jewish Day School for the past 15 years. She started as a second-grade teacher, became a physical education teacher when the school had that need, and later became the technology coordinator. She has been a true team player and continuously looks for new ways to make her school better for students, staff, and parents.

"When passing through Mrs. Poerstel's classroom, you are never quite sure what you will find," said Sarah White, Head of School. "Students could be pirates one day, reading stories and integrating the pirate life into their studies, or they could be engineers using a limited amount of materials to build bridges or buildings. Mrs. Poerstel has an easy way about her that students can relate to without feeling pressure or anxiety. She goes out of her way to get to know her students and her families."

Excellence in Education Nominees



Karin Abbott

Windsor Farm Elementary School

Grade: 3

Subject: Elementary

Teaching Experience: 12

"Bringing theater, music, visual art, and dance to my classroom has brought the standards 'alive' for my students. They are active participants in their learning as opposed to observers of their learning."



Lori Berry

Woodside Elementary School

Grades: K-5

Subject: Mathematics

Teaching Experience: 15

"I must provide a stimulating classroom that supports risk-taking, invites a sharing of ideas, allows for a child's natural curiosity to direct learning, and requires students to cooperatively persevere — preparing them to tackle tough issues while working together."



Debra Biggs

Pasadena Elementary School

Grade: 5

Subject: Elementary

Teaching Experience: 13

"I view each child as an individual with diverse needs that align to their unique emotional, cognitive, and developmental levels. Emotional growth is as important to the learning process as cognitive and developmental progress. When student diversity is accounted for, all students will succeed."



Kristen Brice

Richard Henry Lee Elementary School

Grade: 1

Subject: Elementary

Teaching Experience: 5

"It is my obligation to create a safe, positive environment that gives us the freedom to learn, build relationships, and take risks. I want to promote an exciting learning environment that makes it difficult not to learn."



Josalyn Brown

Crofton Woods Elementary School

Grade: 3

Subject: Elementary

Teaching Experience: 9

"My one goal has been to make my students feel accepted and willing to take risks. They should know that I believe in them, and that I am their biggest cheerleader. If they know that I'm invested in their lives, they are willing to work hard not only for me, but also for themselves."

Excellence in Education Nominees



Amy Chitwood

Rolling Knolls Elementary School

Grades: K-5

Subject: Special Education

Teaching Experience: 9

"I call my students 'my family' because in our year together they become a piece of my heart. I work each day to build a classroom community that shows respect, communication, and love that resembles family. When those relationships are built, it allows me to push my students out of their comfort zones and watch them soar!"



Alane Connolly

Shady Side Elementary School

Grade: 1

Subject: Elementary

Teaching Experience: 7

"Relationship building is key to having a successful school year. Students learn and achieve best when they feel safe to take risks and make mistakes. I build on this relationship by celebrating student successes and showing students that I value their thoughts and opinions. It is as much their classroom as it is mine."



Tammy Dronberger

Broadneck High School | National Board Certified Teacher

Grades: 9-12

Subject: Social Studies

Teaching Experience: 27

"Teaching does not begin and end at the bells. I try to make myself available to students whenever they may need me through email. Taking the time to answer students' immediate questions paves the way for a relationship whereby they trust that I'll be there when they need me. Truly effective teaching must go beyond the classroom."



Amanda Embury

Frank Hebron-Harman Elementary School

Grades: K-5

Subject: Music

Teaching Experience: 16

"All students are unique. I do my best to guide students and allow them to discover things on their own through hands-on activities and group projects. Teaching is like caring for a garden. If you continually care for your student by giving them what they need to grow, you will witness how they change and flourish into amazing learners."



Tricia Fisher

Broadneck Elementary School

Grade: 4

Subject: Elementary

Teaching Experience: 21

"When parents tell me that their child is eager to attend school, shares classroom stories, and is happy, my goal has been accomplished. To achieve this excitement for school, students need a safe, trusting environment where there are opportunities to grow as independent learners."

Excellence in Education Nominees



La Wanda Hoes

Corkran Middle School

Grade: 7

Subject: Science

Teaching Experience: 10

"Forming strong relationships is the key to being an outstanding teacher. I use every opportunity I can to talk to students one-on-one or in small groups. I talk to students at lunch and afterschool activities, in the hallways, or at community events. By forming relationships, I am creating an opportunity for all students to be successful."



Angela Holmes

Oak Hill Elementary School

Grade: Kindergarten

Subject: Early Childhood

Teaching Experience: 17

"It is just as important to have children thrive emotionally as it is for them to achieve academically. I take five minutes out of each morning to let the children express something that they want our class to know. This allows relationships to form within the classroom."



Allison Johnson

Mary Moss @ J. Albert Adams Academy | National Board Certified Teacher

Grades: 6-8

Subject: Mathematics & Science

Teaching Experience: 13

"An empathetic teacher listens to and witnesses students' struggles that impede their learning while implementing the strategies to help students overcome such struggles. However, empathy does not reduce rigor or the expectation that the student will be successful."



Elizabeth Joy

South Shore Elementary School

Grades: 2-4

Subject: Elementary

Teaching Experience: 20

"I am one of the lucky ones who can say I'm living my dream! The most important aspect of teaching is to open your heart and remain dedicated to your students. Nothing humbles me more than a visit from a former student, and to hear that I have made a positive impact in his or her life."



Margaret Kling

St. Mary's Elementary School

Grade: 6

Subject: Mathematics & Religion

Teaching Experience: 23

"I strive to create a safe, positive, faith-filled classroom where my students can thrive and grow socially, emotionally, and cognitively. Virtues that are emphasized in my classroom are respect, responsibility, compassion, empathy, and self-discipline. I make it a priority to be fair, consistent, and encouraging."

Excellence in Education Nominees



Denise Lane

George T. Cromwell Elementary School

Grade: 1

Subject: Elementary

Teaching Experience: 27

"It is easy to teach the lessons and have students listen. However, it takes a lot of work to make sure that students have a desire to learn. It is my duty to create activities that allow them to wonder, be curious, seek more answers, and think outside of the box. When students want to learn, they are very powerful."



Kelly Lewis

Arundel Middle School

Grades: 6-8

Subject: Special Education

Teaching Experience: 8

"Purposely guiding students to be all that they can be is my driving force toward excellence in teaching. I am an advocate for my students. That means that dedication and hard work, personal professional development, and collaboration with teachers, staff, and community are all directed and focused on my students!"



Tori Peddicord

Southern Middle School

Grade: 7

Subject: Special Education

Teaching Experience: 6

"Every child is unique. When students can recognize that everyone has value, and that value may appear different for individual people, they can begin to strive for excellence in everything that they do. It is my goal to be the beacon that guides students to find such worth."



Shelby Queen

Shipley's Choice Elementary School

Grade: 1

Subject: Elementary

Teaching Experience: 34

"Each day and each year bring new challenges and rewards. I embrace changes and put my all into them, like a new curriculum or using technology. Every morning when I wake up and come to school, I give it my all for 180 days! The children deserve nothing less."



Sarah Rogers

Meade High School

Grade: 9

Subject: English/Speech/Debate

Teaching Experience: 5

"If education is the tide that rises all ships, we are the safe harbor. While encouraging students to be captains of their own fate, or members of a cooperative crew - we must challenge them to brave new waters. We patiently wait for them to reappear on the horizon so we can share in their discoveries and inspire them to chart new adventures."

Excellence in Education Nominees



Margaret Sagi

St. Paul's Lutheran School | National Board Certified Teacher

Grade: 4

Subject: Elementary

Teaching Experience: 28

"The student needs to know that you have their best interest at the heart of your teaching. It is important to establish a strong relationship, learn a student's interests so that it can be tied into instruction. This often helps motivate even a reluctant learner."



Deborah Sparby

Severna Park Middle School

Grade: 6

Subject: Science

Teaching Experience: 18

"The decision to return to teach science was my destiny. Had I not left teaching, I would not have the real-world scientific knowledge or sense of belonging in the classroom. This passion led me to pursue every program possible to acquire more effective teaching practices and first-hand collaborations with scientists to bring back these wonderful opportunities to enhance student experiences."



Virginia Lutherin

Old Mill High School

Grades: 9-12

Subject: Social Studies

Teaching Experience: 17

"I care deeply for my students; my love for them makes me want to provide them with options for their future and for our country's future. Demonstrating deep concern and love for my students is most important. Without it nothing else could happen."



Lydia Teal

Central Elementary School | National Board Certified Teacher

Grade: 4

Subject: Elementary

Teaching Experience: 16

"Every day I intentionally lead students, families, colleagues, and myself to a better tomorrow through the words of John Quincy Adams: 'If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more, and become more, you are a leader.'"



Sharon Toms

St. Margaret's Day School

Grade: Kindergarten

Subject: Early Childhood

Teaching Experience: 17

"I give each student a social skills toolbox that they can use and apply to their daily routine on their journey to becoming good citizens. Learning through play is still at the core of teaching in kindergarten, which means that everything I teach has intentionality."

Excellence in Education Nominees



Gail Turk

Lindale Middle School

Grade: 6

Subject: Mathematics

Teaching Experience: 17

"As a mother and a teacher, I do my best to make connections with my students in my classroom and in the school. It is not uncommon for students to seek me out so that they can talk to me one-on-one or in small groups about home or school issues. I always do my best to make time for any student who wants to talk or use my classroom as a place to regroup."



Suzy Wyatt

Davidsonville Elementary School

Grades: K-5

Subject: Music

Teaching Experience: 41

"I want to create an atmosphere that encourages participation, involvement, and risk-taking while in a safe and comfortable environment. Even after decades in the classroom, I am always thinking of how to better engage and inspire my students. Through self and peer reflection, I am also a learner along with my students."

Business Partnership Awards

AltaVista Strategic Partners

Brian Nichols

Nominated by: Corkran Middle School

For the past two years, Corkran Middle School and AltaVista have worked together to support at-risk young men through their work with the Boys' Leadership Group. AltaVista's employees have donated time and money to help increase student engagement and mentoring during many team-building activities. During the 2015–16 school year, this partnership helped improve student attendance, grades, and behavior while decreasing referral rates by 40 percent.

Anne Arundel Community College

Homeland Security and Criminal Justice Institute

Dr. Tyrone Powers

Nominated by: Meade High School

As director of Anne Arundel Community College's Homeland Security and Criminal Justice Institute, Dr. Tyrone Powers and his staff have specifically partnered with Meade High School and its Homeland Security Signature Program to bring the college's resources to the high school and its feeder system. This experience includes a "college immersion" day where all attendees sit in on college classes, hear lectures from industry professionals, and enjoy a lunch made by the college's own café staff.

Anne Arundel County Mental Health Agency

Crisis Response

Jennifer Corbin

Nominated by: AACPS Health, Physical Education, and Dance Office

Jennifer Corbin has enthusiastically and passionately provided professional development and training to AACPS health teachers on critical and timely issues such as mental health first aid, suicide prevention, and crisis management. She has been a frequent guest speaker to middle school and high school health education classes on the subject of drug prevention and a valuable resource for schools during crises.

Anne Arundel County Volunteer Center (AACVC)

Bruce Morganstern

Nominated by: Glen Burnie High School

Bruce Morganstern was the first community partner to come to Glen Burnie High School to offer an opportunity to support the theme of the Public Service Signature Program, and planned his strategy to ensure a successful partnership between his organization and the school. He brought the Community Emergency Response Team Training (CERT) and provided instructors with the training necessary to teach the course to others. Because of his efforts, six Glen Burnie High School students and two teachers received national certification for completing the basic training program. Over the next few weeks, Mr. Morganstern has also supported nearly 500 juniors as they prepare for the school's mock interviews.

Business Partnership Awards

Anne Arundel County Workforce Development Corporation

Scott Wallace

Nominated by: Northeast High School

Scott Wallace provides meaningful job and internship opportunities for Northeast High School students, connecting them specifically to their area of interest so they feel motivated to become successful in a career. Included in those opportunities are chances for personal growth. Mr. Wallace has consistently led a team in the planning and implementation of various workforce events for students. He clearly understands that philosophy and seeks out the right business owners to get involved in a number of highly engaging events.

Bakery Express

Valerie Shade

Nominated by: Severn River Middle School

During the 2016–17 school year, Bakery Express has supported the “Muffins for Moms” and “Donuts for Dads” community events at Severn River Middle School. In the partnership, Bakery Express donated 20 dozen donuts and 12 dozen other pastries for the events that are intended to encourage parental participation and involvement. More than 600 families have been impacted by this partnership.

BWI-Thurgood Marshall Airport

Kim Davidson

Nominated by: North County High School

Kim Davidson sits on the Integrated Community Stakeholder teams for the Signature Programs at Glen Burnie and North County high schools. She attends the North County Business Advisory Board meetings that serve the high, middle, and elementary schools of the North County cluster, and also participates in the North Arundel Chamber of Commerce Educational Outreach Committee. Included among its many ventures, BWI-Thurgood Marshall Airport hosts a “Behind the Scenes Tour” that creates career awareness for students. Ms. Davidson heads this effort by coordinating between the Maryland Transit Authority (MTA) Police, the TSA, and Customs and Border Patrol to allow students’ access to these professionals during working hours.

Chick-fil-A

Mike Edmonds

Nominated by: AACPS Central Office and Office of School & Family Partnerships

Chick-fil-A has been a wonderful business partner to AACPS’ Central Office, as well as all of the schools in the Annapolis and Edgewater communities. Mike Edmonds, who owns and operates the three franchises in the Annapolis/Edgewater area, has conducted a book drive to benefit the Walter S. Mills-Parole Elementary School. Parent-Teacher Associations and local schools have also raised money from events held at Chick-fil-A, and those funds have allowed them to purchase much-needed technology, reimburse teachers for out-of-pocket classroom expenses, buy additional school supplies for students, and hold social clubs and enrichment programs that might otherwise not be available.

Business Partnership Awards

Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage

Kathleen Brooks

Nominated by: AACPS Music Office

During the last school year, the Annapolis Symphony reached out to the AACPS Music Office in an effort to establish a positive give-back program to our schools. Since that time, more than 125 musical instruments, estimated in value to be between \$15,000 and \$20,000, have been delivered to the school system's music program. The campaign relied on the involvement of a community partner who could facilitate the donation of instruments throughout the county. Coldwell Banker — with offices at Church Circle, Annapolis Plaza, Crofton, and Severna Park — enthusiastically offered to serve as that business partner. The firms helped in all aspects of the project, including promotion, drop-off, and eventual delivery to the school system for subsequent delivery.

Community United Methodist Church of Crofton

Hilary Golden and Dave Lanzer

Nominated by: Arundel High School

Volunteers from The Community United Methodist Church of Crofton Youth Program have been great partners to Arundel High School for several years. Leaders at the church regularly meet with students as part of the school's Community Development and Global Citizenship signature program. They meet with students to help improve their networking skills, communication, and roots of empathy as a member of the Integrated Community Stakeholders Team. With the assistance of Hilary Golden and Dave Lanzer, students participated in the Manna House Breakfast Club, where they cooked and served food to approximately 200 people.

Davidsonville Ruritan Foundation

Bob Bold

Nominated by: Davidsonville Elementary School

For over 60 years, Davidsonville Elementary School has maintained firm ties with the Davidsonville Ruritan Club and its charitable arm, the Davidsonville Ruritan Foundation. Throughout the years, the Ruritan Foundation has been involved with the students of the school and has sponsored the Mildred Watkins reflection essay since 1980, in honor of the former principal who held that position for more than four decades. The Ruritan Foundation provides the contest winner with a plaque and a monetary award. In addition, the group has given a \$50,000 donation to Davidsonville Elementary School to fund technology, including classroom projectors for teachers.

Educational Systems Federal Credit Union

Tiffany Scales

Nominated by: Old Mill High School

Tiffany Scales has taken an already-strong relationship between the Educational Systems Federal Credit Union and AACPS and made it even stronger. She has worked with AACPS signature programs since 2015. In that time, she has taught mini-lessons to students, served as a member of the Southern High School Business Community Advisory Board, and been contributor to the school's Design: Preservation & Innovation signature program. In addition, Ms. Scales has worked with students at Old Mill High School to help them prepare for the interview process with mock interviews, resumé writing, and general advice. She cares about the students and is genuinely interested in promoting financial literacy education, providing practical context, and relevance for children.

Business Partnership Awards

Goshen Farm Preservation Society

Louis Biondi

Nominated by: Broadneck High School

The Goshen Farm Preservation Society has been working with the signature program at Broadneck High School for the past three years, and its members work diligently to ensure that students benefit from the historic property in Cape St. Claire. The location allows for students to visit the farm in a single class period. Members continually work to expand the availability of the farm to benefit all students at Broadneck High School, including the AVID classes, art, botany, and its Environmental Literacy Explorations courses.

HOPE for All

Leo Zerhusen

Nominated by: Judy Centers of Anne Arundel County

HOPE for All has helped the Judy Centers of Anne Arundel County tremendously by working with the North County community. Many families have benefitted from its generosity with everything from household furnishing to referrals for other assistance. At its most recent clothing giveaway, HOPE for All was able to give out 363 hats, scarves and gloves, 250 pairs of shoes, 75 belts, 3,587 pieces of clothing, 60 Halloween costumes, 150 stuffed animals, and at least 200 books. More than 125 families attended this event.

Outfluence, LLC

Kay L. Betz

Nominated by: South River High School

Kay Betz of Outfluence has been an essential member of the South River community, and her team members have volunteered at South River High School signature program events, including the Diamond Challenge, health fair, mock interviews, Career Day, and many other events. These events have been beneficial by engaging students in team projects and in-class discussions to enhance their communications skills and marketability.

Patient First

David Clark

Nominated by: Pasadena Elementary School

Patient First has made contributions to Pasadena Elementary School for the past four years, and those funds have been applied to the purchase of iPads and ChromeBooks for the school's primary grade learners. Providing these learners with the latest technology has supported the school system's initiative for the guided reading technology component to strengthen literacy so that students can all read at or above their grade level by the second grade. Additionally, Patient First has supported the school's efforts to remain a Wellness School of Distinction by providing first-aid safety kits, as well as bandages and protective gloves.

Business Partnership Awards

Robert L. Jones

Nominated by: Meade High School

Bob Jones' involvement with Meade High School's Homeland Security Signature Program began four years ago and since that day his dedication to the program, the high school, and the students it serves has been unparalleled. Mr. Jones' recent role comes on top of his 40 years in the Fort Meade community and volunteering in various capacities until his retirement. Since retiring, his new "job" has included being a part of AACPS' curriculum development, student-focus groups, mock interviews, Career Day speaker, instructional resources for staff, and school-wide instruction. In addition, he was a driving force behind the Homeland Security and Criminal Justice certification from AACC at Meade High School, and was a co-creator of the Counterterrorism and Intelligence course at Meade.

South Anne Arundel County Rotary Club

Dean Titcomb

Nominated by: Southern High School

The South Anne Arundel County Rotary Club (SAARC) is a network of problem-solvers, who make positive, lasting change in communities and abroad. SAARC's hallmark programs, in partnership with Southern High School's Signature Program and Business Community Advisory Board (BCAB), provide opportunities for students by connecting them to practical skills necessary for successful transition to career and college. Titcomb started the Southern High School Signature Career Experience Field Trips in 2014 and his efforts have helped hundreds of students. On those free field trips, students enjoy innovative hands-on-design challenge activities and gain knowledge about career opportunities. He also works to integrate the school's Signature theme: Design: Preservation & Innovation into career experiences.

Starbucks – Waugh Chapel Town Center

Rachael Roehl

Nominated by: Carver Staff Development Center

When AACPS launched its first professional development opportunity where teachers facilitated their own growth journey last year, Starbucks of Waugh Chapel Town Center was the first company to agree to support and donate to EdCamp AACPS. This Starbucks location has supported the Carver Staff Development Center by providing professional training up to four times a year, donating gift cards, coffee mugs, containers, and other prizes for raffles to encourage teachers to participate in the EdCamps. The continuous support of EdCamp AACPS displays their love for education and bringing teachers the most comforting learning experience with coffee and a smile.

Business Partnership Awards

University of Maryland College of Computer, Mathematical, and Natural Sciences/ UVA College of Arts & Sciences

Stacey Locke

Nominated by: Severna Park High School

Stacey Locke, formerly of the University of Maryland's Computer Science Department and current vice president of the University of Virginia's College Foundation, has been an integral member of Severna Park High School's Business, Innovation, and Leadership community stakeholders' team. Under her leadership, the signature program has grown into a school-wide successful program that has enhanced student achievement, provided real-world opportunities, and helped prepare students for the 21st Century workforce. Using her networking capabilities, Ms. Locke was instrumental in organizing a cross-country trip to San Francisco and Silicon Valley, where students experienced innovative corporate work environments, such as Google, Facebook, Twitter, and Autodesk. Under the program, two students recently won \$10,000 in the International Diamond Challenge business competition.

Westfield Annapolis

Matthew Barry

Nominated by: AACPS Visual Arts Office

Westfield Annapolis has offered a high-profile venue to annually present the artistic achievements of emerging student visual artists from AACPS since the 1980s. Westfield Annapolis not only showcases the traditional art programs, but has worked to take our partnership to new heights by exhibiting work on the monitors throughout the mall. Exhibiting artwork is an essential part of the art program experience, and the generous donation of space to accommodate the number of works is to be noted.

Excellence in Education
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

*Judges for the
2017 Teachers of the Year*

Kristie Battista, *Principal, Marley Elementary*
Pam Bukowski, *Vice President, TAAAC*
Andre Dillard, *Principal, Georgetown East Elementary*
Amanda Edmonds, *Principal, Freetown Elementary*
Jodie Hogan, *Teacher of the Year 2013*
Allison Pickard, *Anne Arundel County Council of PTAs*
Vanessa Rivera, *Anne Arundel County Council of PTAs*
John Yore, *Principal, Meade High*
Nuria Williams, *Principal, Crofton Middle*

*Judges for the
2017 Business Partnership Awards*

Jasmine Coleman, *Manager, Service Learning and Mentorships*
Lise Foran, *DoDEA Grant Project Manager, AACPS*
Brittany Jones, *External Affairs Manager, BGE*
Emily McAuley, *Director of Sales & Marketing, SpringHill Suites*
David Reilly, *President, Reilly Benefits, Inc.*
Chuck Yocum, *Senior Manager, Business & Community Partnerships*

** Please note: Any judge who has worked with a nominee in the last three years was recused from judging that nominee.*

The Excellence in Education Committee would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to the following people for their time, talents, energy, and support of this event and tonight's program:

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE STAFF

EDUCATION COMMITTEE MEMBERS

2017 JUDGING PANEL

AACPS DESIGN AND PRINT SERVICES

AACPS PARTNERSHIPS,
DEVELOPMENT, AND MARKETING DEPARTMENT

AACPS COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE

*We are very grateful for their dedication to the educators of
Anne Arundel County.*



Former AACPS Teachers of the Year

2015–16	Katrina GriffinGerman North County HS (also Maryland Finalist)
2014–15	Jennie J.L. MerrillFifth Grade Severna Park ES (also Maryland Finalist)
2013–14	Christina HoustianSocial Studies Broadneck HS
2012–13	Jodie HoganSpanish South River HS (also Maryland Finalist)
2011–12	Martha GardnerElementary Teacher Belvedere ES
2010–11	Laura GrooLanguage Arts Southern MS (also Maryland Finalist)
2009–10	Erin SullivanESOL Glen Burnie HS
2008–09	Donna McCallister.....Language Arts George Fox MS
2007–08	Clayton CulpMathematics Broadneck HS
2006–07	Alicia Appel.....English Southern HS (also Maryland Finalist)
2005–06	Susan CaslerLanguage Arts Crofton MS (also Maryland Finalist)
2004–05	Walter “Skip” Lee.....Physical Education Chesapeake HS
2003–04	Michael BellArt Southern HS
2002–03	André Jones.....Social Studies Severna Park MS
2001–02	Mattie ProcacciniEnglish Old Mill HS
2000–01	Anthony BerardSocial Studies Glen Burnie HS
1999–00	Denise LevitineArt Piney Orchard ES
1998–99	Diane GerriorInstrumental Music Severn River MS (also Maryland Finalist)
1997–98	Bruce Villwock.....Physical Education Broadneck HS
1996–97	Priscilla WardPre-K Germantown ES (also Maryland Finalist)
1995–96	Kandace Chase.....Special Education Ruth Eason School
1994–95	Thomas Cordts.....Physical Education Windsor Farm ES
1993–94	Linda Adamson.....Elementary Mayo ES and Jessup ES (also Maryland Teacher of the Year – 1995)
1992–93	Jane DaughertyMusic Broadneck HS (also Maryland Finalist)
1991–92	Virginia Crespo.....Social Studies Broadneck HS (also Maryland Finalist)
1990–91	Olin YoderArt Meade HS (also Maryland Finalist)
1989–90	Art SmelkinsonDrama Old Mill HS
1988–89	Patricia Neidhardt.....Science Broadneck HS (also Maryland Teacher of the Year – 1990)
1987–88	Penny Vahsen.....Science Magothy River MS
1986–87	Richard Wiles.....Physical Education Millersville ES (also Maryland Finalist)