

*Class of 2015
Teachers of
Excellence
Awards*



New York State Senator
Kathleen A. Marchione



Senator Kathy Marchione



Dear Friends:

It is my great honor, and sincere pleasure, to recognize this year's New York State Teachers of Excellence.

Education Reformer Horace Mann once said, "Teachers teach because they care. Teaching young people is what they do best. It requires long hours, patience, and care." This was true when he said it in the 1800s and is even more true today. Our education system is powered by terrific teachers who have made considerable personal and financial sacrifices to enter, and remain in, the education profession. They pay out-of-pocket for classroom supplies. They routinely arrive early, stay late, and put their heart and soul into helping their students. They are active and involved, regularly volunteering in their communities and supporting countless local charitable efforts. This is what teachers do, and this is why they make such a positive difference.

Our teachers do much more than teach. They inspire us all with their dedication and commitment to our students and our communities. They change lives! New York State is home to some of the best schools, and the most dedicated, hard working and professional teachers in our nation and I am happy to have been able to recognize 28 of them this year.

I hope that you will take some time to read the bios of all these remarkable educators. They have made a difference in many lives – the lives of their students, parents and the community in general. I thank them from the bottom of my heart.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kathy".



2015
Teachers of Excellence



Michael Antonelli

Hudson High School

Michael Antonelli, a Chemistry teacher at Hudson High School, teaches students in grades 10 through 12. Mr. Antonelli has been nominated by the Student Council President and Vice-President, who believe that “a teacher of excellence is someone who not only does their job, but someone who also goes above and beyond.” Excellence isn’t just giving a student a textbook and giving orders, it is taking your time to help every individual to the best of their ability. Mr. Antonelli’s adherence to these principles is what makes him a teacher of excellence.

Mr. Antonelli is a very helpful person who cares about the education of his students. He has always displayed the best qualities of a professional educator. He sacrifices his free time during the day to help his students and welcomes everyone with open arms and helps them when they need extra help or encouragement.

Hudson High School is fortunate to have Mr. Antonelli as a member of their staff. His love of teaching is obvious to everyone and his humility, professionalism and dedication are an inspiration to all who know him.

Nominated by Atia Begh, Pres. Student Council and Rebecca Ward, Vice Pres. Student Council

Antonio Abitabile, Principal
Hudson High School

Maria Suttmeier, Superintendent
Hudson School District





Michele Baratto

Algonquin Middle School

Michele Baratto has been a music educator in the Averill Park Central School District for 15 years, developing music programs for students in elementary school, middle school and high school. Ms. Baratto is an outstanding teacher who works incredibly hard to develop positive, lasting relationships with her students and helps them cultivate a love for music.

Trying something new is at the heart of Ms. Baratto's professional practice. This past year she developed a brand new high school elective course for middle school students entitled "Explorations in Music." Her goal is to promote the student's interest in lifelong music appreciation. She has worked to make this class engaging for students. She has applied for and received a grant to purchase ukuleles and made them a unique and integral component to her class. To promote career and college readiness, she organized a number of career-focused field trips to venues including Proctors and Schenectady County Community College's music program.

Ms. Baratto continues her own life-long learning. This was evident when switching roles to direct orchestra, she took lessons herself to ensure that her string skills were honed to the highest standards. Ms. Baratto also participated in coursework at Villanova University last summer to better prepare herself for providing instruction in her new high school credit course. Michele Baratto is the consummate professional educator.

Nominated by Robert Messia, Principal
Algonquin Middle School

Dr. Jim Hoffman, Superintendent
Averill Park Central School District





Aimee Bishop

Tamarac Secondary School

Aimee Bishop is a gifted, well-rounded educator with a talent to be able to teach all levels of learners. She is currently a teacher of Global History I and Psychology. She is involved in numerous student activities, such as serving as a class advisor. Mrs. Bishop also takes an active role in course development, curriculum and assessment and other educational leadership positions.

Mrs. Bishop has a wonderful rapport with her students and works well with parents and her colleagues. Her active role in the development of the school's honors program, and as one of the schools honor programs long-time teachers, Mrs. Bishop's active role in this program has resulted in a unique educational program which has greatly benefited the most able and hard-working students.

Mrs. Bishop is an asset to the Tamarac Secondary School and the school is fortunate to have her as one of their educators. She is definitely deserving of the designation "Teacher of Excellence."

Nominated by Richard Pogue, Principal
Tamarac Secondary School

Dr. Angelina Bergin, Superintendent
Brittonkill Central School District





Susan M. Blander

Citizen Edmond Genet Elementary School

Susan M. Blander has lovingly served the children of the East Greenbush Central School District since 1990. For almost 25 years, Mrs. Blander has delivered the highest level of instruction to her children, both as a special education and general education teacher.

Ms. Blander's understanding of the whole child - developmentally, socially, and emotionally - sets her apart as a skilled and sensitive teacher. Her classroom is alive with activity while simultaneously maintaining organization and purpose. Mrs. Blander's love of literature and the written word is eagerly shared with her young learners who thrive in her classroom.

Ms. Blander has created classroom environments for her students, year after year, which are cemented in respect and caring. Recognizing the learning differences in her children and adapting instruction to support their individual success, she models for all children the dignity of the individual and the talents each has to offer. Whether excitedly reading to her students, cheering them on as they share their latest writing masterpieces, or trudging across a field of snow with children in tow to tap maple trees for syrup making, Ms. Susan Blander demonstrates the highest standards in education and quality teaching.

Nominated by Ana Yeomans, Principal
Citizen Edmond Genet Elementary School

Dr. Angela Nagle, Superintendent
East Greenbush Central School District





Nancy Boucher

Green Meadow Elementary School

Mrs. Nancy Boucher has been a dedicated teacher at the Green Meadow Elementary School for 34 years. Over the past three decades she has taught a variety of grade levels. In each setting, her love of children and dedication to the teaching profession is easily apparent.

As a veteran educator with a wealth of experience, Mrs. Boucher brings so much to the Green Meadow Elementary School. She is a dedicated and caring teacher who is committed to the success of her students, and understands their strengths, weaknesses and interests. Ms. Boucher tailors her instruction to meet the needs of each individual learner in the classroom. She has created a classroom environment in which students feel comfortable – an environment that fosters growth, yet is rigorous and challenging.

Mrs. Boucher's contributions extend far beyond her classroom walls. She is a dedicated active member of the Shared Decision Making Committee, the Instructional Support Team, Professional Learning community and assists with the school based television program. She is held in high regard by faculty, students and parents and is a true asset to the entire Green Meadow Elementary School community.

Nominated by Daniel Garab, Principal
Green Meadow Elementary School

Dr. Angela Nagle, Superintendent
East Greenbush Central School District





David Bromirski

St. Mary's Academy

David Bromirski has been an educator at Saint Mary's Academy in Hoosick Falls for over 17 years and in catholic education for over 20 years. Mr. Bromirski is a St. Mary's Academy graduate himself and truly cherishes and embodies all that St. Mary's Academy stands for. He has held the position of Middle School ELA, Religion and Social Studies teacher as well as Athletic Director. He has most certainly shaped, guided and molded generations of youth in the Hoosick Falls Community.

Mr. Bromirski has placed a tremendous importance on nurturing relationships with his students built on trust and respect. His instructional techniques challenge his students on a daily basis to think critically, dig deeper and persevere. He dedicates a great amount of time to the study of the most current events and connects them to key events in our nation's history and in the history of the Catholic Church. He applies a great deal of creativity to developing engaging discussions and activities to bring the subject to life for his students.

Mr. Bromirski also has volunteered countless hours, months and years to extracurricular activities. He has served as soccer and basketball coach for several years and remains dedicated to St. Mary's athletic program. Mr. Bromirski is an accomplished and dedicated educator.

Nominated by Maureen Daurio, Principal
St. Mary's Academy
Hoosick Falls





Debi Cionek

Maple Avenue Middle School

Debi Cionek is a Computer Literacy Teacher at Maple Avenue Middle School. She will be retiring at the end of the 2014-2015 school year after 37 years in education. She is an excellent teacher who has never stopped learning. She has taught at the community college, high school and middle school levels.

Mrs. Cionek has a passion for her subject matter and teaches students how to use the computers and always impresses upon them to do their best. She creates an environment that is conducive to learning with amazing lessons. She helps with the backup of the school's public folder and has recovered many lost folders and files when students have accidentally deleted them.

Mrs. Cionek spends a great deal of time on preparing her lessons and making them interesting, but also working out any kinks. She completes the assignments as if she is a student, anticipating problems that the students might have. She creates interesting Power Point slides to engage her students and goes above and beyond. Mrs. Cionek always has great ideas and a way of conveying them to the students. She sees things that others don't and is able to relay her knowledge to various levels. Mrs. Cionek has a great rapport with her students. Ms. Cionek's students often come back to see her and always remark about what a great teacher she is. All in all, Mrs. Debi Cionek is an amazing Computer Literacy Teacher and deserving of the title "Teacher of Excellence."

Nominated by Shelly Cromwell,
Computer – Cyber Concepts Teacher

Jeffrey Palmer, Principal
Maple Avenue Middle School

Michael Piccirillo, Superintendent
Saratoga Springs School District





Helene Clinton

Waterford Halfmoon Jr/Sr High School

Teaching is one of the most wonderful, exciting and rewarding jobs but it takes time, skill and dedication to do it right. A positive attitude towards school, learning and life are the most important qualities of an extraordinary teacher and Mrs. Helene Clinton is an extraordinary teacher. She not only possesses all the above qualities and more but she has a unique personality that makes students look forward to her class.

She maintains a healthy and supportive relationship with her students. She remembers that each student is an individual and there are many ways of learning and one way might not be the best way for every person. Mrs. Clinton creates lessons for all kinds of learners and makes sure that her students are on track for college and life. Her patience and understanding makes her a firm but approachable teacher. She encourages her students to explore new things and transforms students to give them the best possible education. She challenges her students and makes the classroom fun and stimulating.

Mrs. Clinton has been a teacher for over 20 years. She has made a positive impact on many students, providing them with the confidence and academic skills to move onto college and careers of their dreams. She is truly a “Teacher of Excellence.”

Nominated by Melissa Demarest, Student
Christopher Scanlon, Principal
Waterford Halfmoon Jr/Sr High School

Patrick H. Pomerville, Superintendent
Waterford Halfmoon Union Free School District





Sabrina Coll

Hoosick Falls Jr. Sr. High School

Sabrina Coll is an 11th Grade Teacher of U.S. History at Hoosick Falls Jr./Sr. High School. Ms. Coll has demonstrated a strong command of curriculum and assessment development. She often reflects on her instructional practices in order to motivate and engage her students. She puts in many hours preparing her lessons and advising after school activities, resulting in outstanding achievements for her students.

Her Regents Exam and AP U.S. History results are outstanding each year. For instance, 96% of her students last year passed the US History Regents with 68% achieving mastery and for AP U.S. History, her students averaged a 3.7.

Ms. Sabrina Coll demonstrates a compassionate blend of strength, intellect and commitment and serves as a role model to all her students. The Hoosick Falls school community is fortunate to have such a student-centered dynamic educator who has positively impacted student's lives and achievement.

Nominated by Stacy Vadney, Principal
Hoosick Falls High School

Kenneth Facin, Superintendent
Hoosick Falls Central School District





Shondra Conyers

Donald P. Sutherland School

Mrs. Shondra Conyers, a kindergarten teacher in the integrated co-teaching classroom at the Donald P. Sutherland School in the East Greenbush Central School District, is an exceptional educator. She provides students with high quality instruction that is differentiated based on the students' needs. Students always engage in meaningful learning through small group instruction and through the integration of technology.

Mrs. Conyers has established an impressive classroom environment. She is kind, thoughtful, and nurturing in her interactions with children. Students feel they are part of a learning community that is safe and engaging. The children in her class are highly respectful of one another and the adults with whom they work on a daily basis. They truly understand the expectations that have been set forth by Mrs. Conyers.

Mrs. Conyers is a team player and an active member of our school community. She is a member of the Instruction Support Team and Field Day Committee. She has made presentations at Board of Education meetings and participates in grade level curriculum initiatives and professional development opportunities that improve her instruction and student learning. She is respected by her colleagues and appreciated by the students and parents in the school community.

Nominated by Jack Alvey, Principal
Donald P. Sutherland School

Dr. Angela Nagle, Superintendent
East Greenbush Central School District





Pam Cooper

Greenfield Elementary School

Mrs. Pam Cooper is an amazing, teacher at Greenfield Elementary School who consistently creates a calm, peaceful classroom that provides an ideal learning environment. She is a caring and dedicated educator who finds the best in all her students and helps them develop to their full potential, academically and socially.

Mrs. Cooper understands that children do not all fit into the same mold. She respects their uniqueness and their individuality and brings out the best in all her students. Her excitement for the subjects she presents is contagious and the students look forward to learning what's next.

Mrs. Cooper has earned the respect and admiration of her colleagues and of the parents of her students. She is the kind of teacher that will be long-remembered after the student has left the classroom to go on to higher grades and even after graduating. Greenfield Elementary has greatly benefitted from Mrs. Cooper's dedication and commitment and she has definitely earned the title of "Teacher of Excellence."

Nominated by Tracy Hosier, Jennifer and Derik Zeh
Tina Davis, Principal
Greenfield Elementary School

Michael Piccirillo, Superintendent
Saratoga Springs, School District





Julie Coryell, Ph.D. **Hudson Junior High School**

Dr. Julie Coryell is a Grade 7-9 English as a Second Language teacher at the Hudson Junior High School. She is also the District Department Head for ESL, Teacher Leader Coach and member of the District RTI (Response to Intervention) team. In the Junior High, she serves on several committees which include the Safety Team, Data Team, School Climate Committee and the Instructional Support Team.

Dr. Coryell is a very dedicated teacher who has the admiration and respect of her students. Her lessons are engaging and she holds all her students accountable and encourages them to be the best they can be. Dr. Coryell has implemented a differentiating teaching practices model in her classroom and is currently in the process of training other interested teachers in the Junior High. This model has drastically changed many of the students' motivation and participation.

Dr. Coryell embraces her profession and exhibits all the characteristics of a true "Teacher of Excellence."

Nominated by Derek W. Reardon, Principal
Hudson Junior High School

Maria Suttmeier, Superintendent
Hudson City School District





Jennifer Eversole

Caroline Street Elementary School

Jennifer Eversole is a First Grade Teacher at the Caroline Street Elementary School in Saratoga Springs. She is highly organized and professional in all that she does. She is able to find student strengths and offers encouragement even when things are difficult. Above all, she is very child-centered and passionate about ensuring each child is successful.

The Caroline Street School's mission is to provide a safe, nurturing and academically challenging environment, fostering the self-esteem and zest for learning that will enable students to grow to their full potential as healthy, creative, responsible citizens. Mrs. Eversole fully embraces this mission and her students thrive as a result of it.

Mrs. Eversole has earned the respect and admiration of her colleagues, the parents and students. She embodies the qualities of a true "Teacher of Excellence."

Nominated by Daniel Packard, Principal
Caroline Street Elementary School

Michael Piccirillo, Superintendent
Saratoga Springs School District





Sarah Fleming and Sue Hale Co-Teachers Hoosick Falls Elementary School

Sarah Fleming and Sue Hale are the Kindergarten co-teaching team for the Hoosick Falls Elementary School. Special education teacher Susan Hale and the regular education teacher, Sarah Fleming, work together on a daily basis to effectively meet the varied needs of their students. Their amazing success can be largely attributed to their ability to work as a unit and their willingness to challenge themselves and each other as professionals on a regular basis.

In their classroom, failure is not an option. Ms. Fleming and Ms. Hale do not make excuses when a child fails to progress, they make an action plan. They never shy away from a challenge, they embrace it. They have welcomed students into their classroom despite recommendations by the preschool special education providers for a more restrictive environment and they have continuously ensured each child's academic and social success in the regular school environment. Ms. Fleming and Ms. Hale have opened their classroom and minds to their colleagues each year and have welcomed older students back into their classrooms as mentors, inspiring several to enter the teaching profession.

Ms. Fleming and Ms. Hale recognize the significance of the home-school connection in the recipe for educational success. They communicate regularly with parents on the progress of their children and will utilize any means necessary to reach out to parents, including home visits.

In addition to their work with children, they both participate in a number of professional activities that impact the success of the school community as a whole. Teaching is not just a job for these teachers, it is truly a passion. They are both deserving of the title "Teacher of Excellence."

Nominated by Amy Netti, Principal
Kristin Philpott, Assistant Principal, Director of Special Education
Hoosick Falls Elementary School

Hoosick Falls Central School District
Kenneth Facin, Superintendent





Melissa Gilligan

Bell Top Elementary School

Melissa Gilligan consistently exemplifies all of the ideal traits of great educators. Her enthusiasm and compassion are unmistakable, her commitment to children unwavering and her skills, insightfulness, and professionalism noteworthy. Mrs. Gilligan has successfully taught 3rd, 4th and 5th grade. She has amassed a personal folder, jam-packed with letters of appreciation from parents, student teachers, professional colleagues and administrators. Parents and administrators have used the words “thoughtful, professional, understanding, positive and excellent” when describing Mrs. Gilligan’s ability to teach and care for our young learners.

Mrs. Gilligan has significantly contributed to the East Greenbush Central School District by serving on numerous district-wide committees. For over 20 years, Gilligan has organized the annual school-wide Toy Collection for Rensselaer County’s Catholic Charities, Concerns-U Christmas store. She has helped students learn about and develop leadership skills through character development. With her guidance, students have planned, organized and participated in service learning projects designed to make a positive difference for others. She has supported students in organizing food drives for the YWCA and Craft Kits for children hospitalized in the pediatric unit at Albany Medical Center. This year she organized a school-community literacy initiative where students, staff, and parents read, discuss and participate in activities based on books.

Mrs. Gilligan is a dynamic educator that continually meets and exceeds the increasing challenges that today’s educators face. The Bell Top School community is a better place due to Mrs. Gilligan’s unwavering and empathetic support of students, parents, and colleagues.

Nominated by James McHugh, Principal
Bell Top Elementary School

Dr. Angela Nagle, Superintendent
East Greenbush Central School District





Glenn Giumarra

New Lebanon Junior/Senior High School

Glenn Giumarra is a teacher of Chemistry and Physics at New Lebanon Junior Senior High School. Whether he is providing quality instruction in the classroom, advocating for the advancement of the science program, serving as a leader of the New Lebanon Teacher's Association or preparing his students for local competitions in Physics challenges, he demonstrates a genuine commitment to the educational lives of his students. He works diligently to create an environment that is conducive to learning and responsive to their needs.

Mr. Giumarra is an integral component of a science department that is worthy of emulation. He is not only a leader, but an outstanding team player. He works closely with his department members to generate and fulfill professional goals designed to enhance instruction and student comprehension of the science curriculum. He is always open to suggestion and eager to implement new ideas and strategies in the classroom. Recently he recognized a need to enhance student's exposure to computer programming and is in the early stages of rolling out a new elective, Programming with Games and Gadgets, which will complement the Introduction to Computer Programming elective. This will enable students to write basic programs using Java and preparing them for post-secondary instruction in any programming language.

Mr. Giumarra has served as an advisor to the National Honor Society and has chaired the Scholarship Selection committee. He volunteers his time with Physics students to prepare them for competition in the annual General Dynamics team challenge. Mr. Giumarra has earned the respect of colleagues, parents and students and deserving of nomination as a "Teacher of Excellence."

Nominated by Antonio Abitabile, Principal
Hudson High School
Hudson City School District





Lori Givney

Hoosic Valley High School

Lori Givney is a Living Environment and Forensic Science teacher at the Hoosic Valley High School and deserving of the title “Teacher of Excellence.”

Mrs. Givney’s students have had great success on the New York State Living Environment Regents exam, not only in number of students passing the Regents examination, but also the number of students reaching the level of mastery. Mrs. Givney has taken on a new course offering of Forensic Science this school year. The course is offered through Syracuse University’s Project Advance Program where students receive college credit for the course. Mrs. Givney spent part of her summer vacation at Syracuse University to be trained in order to teach the course.

Mrs. Givney is a caring, compassionate and dedicated teacher. She works with students of all levels of ability. She works well with her colleagues, understands the wishes of the parents and assists the administration in many endeavors. Mrs. Givney is a consummate team player and accomplished professional. The Hoosic Valley Central School District’s motto is “Learning: a shared goal, a shared responsibility.” Mrs. Givney does everything to live up to this motto.

Nominated by G. Michael Apostol, Principal
Hoosic Valley High School

Amy Goodell, Superintendent
Hoosic Valley Central School District





Justine Greco

Ballard Elementary School

Justine Greco teaches second grade at Ballard Elementary School in the South Glens Falls Central School District. She is completing her eighth year as a classroom teacher.

Miss Greco has a strong sense of the child and an understanding of the individual strengths and needs of each learner within her classroom. She works closely with both the students and their families in order to create a true partnership between home and school. Miss Greco is a strong advocate for her students and works diligently to ensure they are provided the resources and opportunities that best connect to their needs and interests. Instructionally, Miss Greco works to develop lessons, activities and experiences that are engaging and motivating. She uses technology to enhance the instruction and strives to differentiate both process and products to match the interests, learning styles, and the abilities of her students.

Miss Greco goes above and beyond to enhance the school community. She leads the school's Drama Club for fifth graders and co-directs a production that each year could give Broadway a run for its money. Miss Greco is often found at extracurricular functions and gives of her personal time to show students and families how much they mean to her. Miss Greco sets the bar for exceptional teaching and lifts up the definition of educator.

Nominated by Michael Huchro, Principal
Ballard Elementary School

Michael Patton, Superintendent
South Glens Falls Central School District





Patricia W. Hannmann

Columbia High School

Patricia Hannmann has been an instructor of French at Columbia High School for 16 years. Mrs. Hannmann has taught for 35 years yet approaches each day as it is her first day. She is enthusiastic about her work, and her passion for her subject is evident and contagious to her students.

Mrs. Hannmann's lesson plans are always student-centered and focused on students' interest. There is a unique, indefinable quality in her teaching that draws students in. She exhibits a certain charisma that cannot be imitated. This intangible characteristic makes Mrs. Patti Hannmann what is commonly referred to as a "born teacher." Whatever the explanation for her success, one thing is certain - all the members of the East Greenbush Central School District community are richer for her presence.

Mrs. Hannmann is an asset to the community of Columbia High School and a true "Teacher of Excellence."

Nominated by John Sawchuk, Principal
Columbia High School

Dr. Angela Nagle, Superintendent
East Greenbush Central School District





Tammy Kirwin

Howard L. Goff Middle School

As young children we often dream about our careers as adults. For those who dreamed of teaching, we often imagined standing in front of a class and reciting poetry, tackling complex mathematical equations or debating the ethics of our society; not discussing how you have to look someone in the eye when they talk to you or why we cannot sit under a desk during a math lesson. It is rare to find an individual who is willing to spend countless hours developing the very basic skills of some of our neediest students. Tammy Kirwin, however, is that person.

Mrs. Kirwin's patience, tenacity, dedication and endless compassion for her students make her one of the most valued members of the Howard L. Goff Middle School. For 12 years, Mrs. Kirwin has worked with special education students in the East Greenbush Central School district and has brought out the best in each and every one of them. She has the ability to find humor in every situation, make a student feel special and important and brings together families to support their children throughout the year.

Mrs. Kirwin teaches her students the skills to be active members in the community - from developing, organizing and implementing the recycling program to hosting the annual Thanksgiving luncheon. She goes above and beyond to provide for them whether it be from clothing or snacks to other basic essentials. Mrs. Kirwin evokes pride and excellence in everything she does and does it all with grace and humility, making her a true "Teacher of Excellence."

Nominated by Matthew Sloane, Principal
Howard L. Goff Middle School

Dr. Angela Nagle, Superintendent
East Greenbush Central School District





Lisa Mahar

Red Mill Elementary School

Lisa Mahar is fourth and fifth grade teacher in the Red Mill Elementary School. She combines her strong special education background with her role as a regular education inclusion teacher. Ms. Mahar has done an excellent job in her first and fourth grade reading classes teaching children reading, writing and mathematics skills, along with all the other core subjects. At the fourth grade level, Ms. Mahar recently prepared students for the many challenges of the New York State Common Core based ELA, Math and Science tests. She also emphasized the social studies concepts that the students would need to understand for the Grade 5 Social Studies district level test.

Ms. Mahar meets the social, emotional, and academic needs of all her students. She is a highly effective communicator with students, staff and parents and her rapport with everyone is based on mutual respect. On a school wide basis, she is the driving force behind the successful Character Education Committee. Several years ago, Ms. Mahar received a Promethean Board to be used in her classroom and has incorporated its use into daily lessons at her grade level as well as staff training throughout the school and district.

Ms. Mahar serves on the school's Instructional Support Team, Red Mill Council, School Master Schedule Committee, Social Committee, Special Events Committee and the Garden Club, which she and three other teachers started as an agricultural experience for students. She is a multi-talented educator who continues to make a positive difference for students, staff and parents and is deserving of the title "Teacher of Excellence."

Nominated by John Caporta, Principal
Red Mill Elementary School

Dr. Angela Nagle, Superintendent
East Greenbush Central School District





Erin McCue

St. Jude the Apostle

Erin McCue is a 6th grade teacher at St. Jude the Apostle School. She demonstrates knowledge of content and continues to see ways to ensure successful learning for all students. She is very responsive to her students' interests and questions. Her plans include natural connections among content areas that have deepened student learning. The content that she teaches is aligned to the state standards and school curriculum.

Mrs. McCue maintains accurate data in an efficient and effective manner. She actively participates in professional development activities and contributes to the profession. She communicates frequently with families and engages them in the instructional program, strengthening the bonds between school and home.

St. Jude the Apostle's Statement of Belief states that "at St. Jude the Apostle School, teachers and staff are committed to help each student achieve his or her full potential." Mrs. McCue dedicates each day to doing this and is truly an asset to St. Jude Apostle School.

Nominated by Erin Baker, Principal
St. Jude the Apostle





Albert Pickens

Geyser Road Elementary School

Albert Pickens is a music teacher at Geyser Road Elementary School in Saratoga Springs. He is a teacher who goes above and beyond by bringing not just music, but also art and science to hundreds of children at the Geyser Road Elementary School. Aside from teaching the weekly music class to all six grades, he assembles entertaining concerts for each grade. He continues the Geyser Road Elementary School tradition of honoring our local veterans at a very special Flag Day concert.

Mr. Pickens also runs a special animation club for fourth graders, a science club for fifth graders and produces films with the entire 3rd through 5th grade classes. Under his direction the students write scripts, direct, edit the film, work the cameras, operate the microphones and of course act in the film. These activities offer a wonderful experience for the students. He has organized an apple orchard for the school with students participating in the planning process and this spring they will be planting the orchard.

Mr. Pickens' boundless energy, enthusiasm for special projects and overall professionalism, have made him an ideal nominee for the "Teacher of Excellence" recognition.

Nominated by Meredith Bain, Parent
Geyser Road Elementary School

Michael Piccirillo, Superintendent
Saratoga Springs, School District





Maureen Sheridan

M.C. Smith Intermediate School

Maureen Sheridan teaches the multi-age, multi-grade class as the M.C. Smith Intermediate School. She works cooperatively with students, parents, and staff to assure their programs are appropriate and their behavior needs are met. Ms. Sheridan continually goes above and beyond in meeting the needs of her students. This is true both inside and outside of the school day.

Inside of school she implements a behavioral modification program she calls “Prize Store.” Using her own funds, she stocks the store with items her students need and desire. Additionally she purchases gifts for students on their birthday and for the holidays. She has taken many of her students to events outside of school.

Whatever Ms. Sheridan does she brings out the best in her students. She is a true ally and mentor and deserving of the accolade “Teacher of Excellence.”

Nominated by Mark Brenneman, Principal
M.C. Smith Intermediate School

Maria Suttmeier, Superintendent
Hudson City School District





Laura Showers

Poestenkill Elementary School

Laura Showers is a Physical Education teacher at the Poestenkill Elementary School in the Averill Park Central School District where she has taught since 1993. Mrs. Showers has taught health and coached Junior Varsity volleyball. She is retiring at the end of this school year. Her passion and belief in physical education and lifelong health and wellness have been inspirational for many students.

Some of her accomplishments include: implementing “Project Adventure” curriculum and activities with students; co-advisor of Cross Country Ski Club; creation of the “Morning Stretch Program” and co-curriculum advisor for the Physical Education Department.

Perhaps the most notable accomplishment of her career is the facilitation of Jump Rope for Heart that she has spearheaded at Poestenkill for the last 22 years. This program supports the great work of the American Heart Association. Each year students in grades 3-5 have the opportunity to participate in a Jump Rope for Heart afterschool event. Through her efforts, over \$190,000 has been raised for the American Heart Association. She is truly a heart hero and will be missed by all at Poestenkill Elementary School!

Nominated by Barbara Goldstein, Principal
Poestenkill Elementary School

Dr. James D. Hoffman, Superintendent
Averill Park Central School District





Dale Strong

Germantown High School

Dale Strong is a Teacher of Excellence at Germantown High School. He teaches a diverse age- range of students. His classes include 8th grade Science, Physics, Practical Physics and a three- year University in the High School Science Research class.

Because he teaches many students from 8th grade through 12th, he has made a positive impact on students' lives. Through his counsel, he has given many students new, positive outlooks on school and life in general, encouraging many to stay on track and complete their education. The Germantown School District is dedicated to providing opportunity, resources, environment, and instruction so that all students may be productive, successful, independent and responsible and contributing members of society. Mr. Strong has been successful in achieving these goals and seeing his students reach their full potentials. His Science Research class is extremely demanding. Mr. Strong mentors his students and attends all the symposiums - SUNY, Burnt Hills/Ballston Spa High School and elsewhere – to show his support and encouragement.

Regarding his life outside of the school environment, Mr. Strong is a mentor and role model. Whether hiring students to work at his diner or nurturing Canadian geese back to health, Mr. Strong has made a positive impact on his school and community. He is a true “Teacher of Excellence.”

Nominated by Karol Harlow Principal
Germantown High School

Dr. Susan L.S. Brown, Superintendent
Germantown School District





Kelli Tackett

Saint Augustine School

Mrs. Tackett is a young rising star in education, which is evidenced by her tireless efforts both in and out of the classroom. As a 3rd grade teacher, Mrs. Tackett has the daunting task of educating our students, in many educators opinions, the most difficult of transition years. She does so with a friendly and energetic disposition and a genuine care for her students. She embodies what is defined as excellence in education and it is refreshing to see these qualities in such a young professional.

Inside the classroom, Mrs. Tackett always finds new, exciting and innovative ways to reach her students, year after year. It is not uncommon to walk into her room and see the students fully engaged with a STEM project, utilizing the Smartboard and iPads in her classroom, hearing a multiplication rap or “visiting” a far-off land (virtually) to learn of another culture’s customs and people. Embedded in all the fun, discussion and theatrics is a solid understanding of curriculum, instruction, student learning styles and the Common Core State standards. Mrs. Tackett has embraced the Common Core and is a teacher-leader for both the Diocese and the school.

Outside the classroom, Mrs. Tackett tutors local high school students from Catholic Central High School in Mathematics, tutors in the learning center at Hudson Valley Community College and directs a Summer Camp in East Greenbush. She embodies all of the qualities that parents and professionals look for in providing a quality education for our children.

Nominated by Joe Slichko, Principal
Saint Augustine School
Lansingburgh













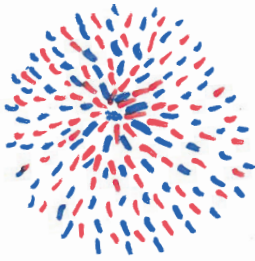


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You



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Senator Marchione



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Thank you!

Thank
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2014
Teachers of Excellence
Special Projects



Senator Kathleen A. Marchione

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