

Fauquier County Public Schools

News Release

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2019 TEACHER OF THE YEAR NOMINEES CELEBRATED

At its Feb. 25 meeting, the Fauquier County School Board honored 18 teachers, all of whom have been nominated to be Fauquier County's representative in the Washington Post Teacher of the Year competition. A selection panel will choose one of the 18 teachers to be the Fauquier County Teacher of the Year, and that teacher will be entered into the Post's Teacher of the Year competition. The Fauquier County Teacher of the Year will be announced later in March.

The evening began with a reception to honor the nominees, featuring appetizers presented by culinary arts students at Fauquier High School. At the meeting, each school's Teacher of the Year nominee received a glass apple award when introduced to the room filled with family, friends and colleagues. Following are nomination excerpts read at the board meeting in recognition of the 18 Fauquier County Teacher of the Year nominees. A recording of the celebration is available on the Fauquier Excellence in Education Foundation's Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/FauquierExcellenceinEducation/>.

KATHARINE BENNETT is a versatile teacher, who has taught 1st, 3rd and 4th grades at Pierce and is now teaching 2nd grade. She recently obtained her English as a Second Language endorsement so that she would be able to serve the ESL students in her classroom better. Her colleague writes, "Kate understands the importance of meeting a student on his or her level both academically and emotionally. She facilitates a love of learning and a feeling of community for all." Another colleague writes, "Kate is an open and approachable teacher. Her warmth and love for her students is evident, sincere and honest. Children from previous years stop by every morning to greet her, not quite ready to give up the love and acceptance she provides." Ms. Bennett is a grant-winning educator who is appreciated by colleagues across the Commonwealth, sharing presentations in the county, as well as in Richmond. Her students give her high praise, saying, "She dances like she is wearing tap shoes," and "She gives us very good stuff in math."



KATIE COMPTON began her career at Smith elementary as a general education teacher and currently teaches 2nd grade. She actively inspires a growth mindset so that her students take risks, learn from their mistakes, and understand that effective effort leads to achievement. A colleague writes of Mrs. Compton, "She is a very caring, patient, and loving teacher and brings excitement to her lessons which leaves a lasting impression with her students for a lifetime." A parent adds that Mrs. Compton is a tremendous educator whose enthusiasm for helping children created in their daughter a desire to read and explore many different subjects in-depth. Her principal writes that Mrs. Compton builds positive relationships with her colleagues and the school community. She is the teacher representative for the PTO and the co-chair of the PBIS committee. Katie's students want to learn what she knows because they know they have a teacher that cares for them!



RAYMOND CROWELL dedicates endless hours to teaching Health and Physical Education and to his duties as an activities director and FRESH coordinator. He even steps into administrative duties when called upon at Marshall Middle School. He co-directs and produces the school musical, organizes and runs the talent shows, and supervises Warrenton Youth Soccer Club rec ball. His colleague writes that everyone loves Raymond! His hard-hitting, open and honest approach to the sometimes-awkward subject material of middle school health and human sexuality helps his students understand the necessity of taking health and fitness seriously. Colleagues and students agree that his loud, boisterous laugh puts a smile on everyone's face as it echoes throughout the hallways at Marshall. His colleague adds that everybody needs a teacher and colleague like Raymond, but Marshall is blessed to have THIS Raymond!



One of **MELINDA GRAHAM'S** second-grade students writes, "I am excited to go to Mrs. Graham's class because we learn about the presidents and Christopher Columbus. She always gives us hugs that make me feel better." Mrs. Graham's enthusiasm for learning transfers to her students, thus creating in them a desire to learn and achieve. She has a calm, yet nurturing demeanor that instills the confidence in her second graders to try again if they fail. A colleague writes that he came to Coleman 12 years ago eager to start his career, and Melinda (or Mendy, as she is known to colleagues and friends) greeted him with a smile, hug and assurance that this was going to be the best career choice he could have made! He adds she is a mentor and a friend, leading a morning prayer group for teachers and encouraging them during their times of need. Another colleague writes that Mrs. Graham has overcome personal struggles and challenges and she brings her fighting spirit into the classroom and school and makes anyone who knows her rise to a higher level. She is my hero!!



BRIDGET HILLIN is that teacher that one always remembers, and is glad they had as a start to their school years. She not only ensures lessons are fun and engaging in her Pearson kindergarten class, but also that her students fully understand what they are being taught. She guides her students to become independent problem solvers and lays the foundation for students to apply these skills in the future. Her colleague writes that she strives to connect and build strong relationships with her students from day one. Another colleague writes that Mrs. Hillin is a "go-getter" and her positive can-do attitude inspires other staff members on a daily basis. Every child adores and admires her. Mrs. Hillin sponsors the running club and volunteers at every annual PTO Bingo night, Halloween trunk and treat and cancer walks, as well as organizing Pearson's first Dr. Seuss night many years ago. Her ambitions and energetic personality is contagious and brings joy to students and coworkers!



ANNIE HOPPE, a speech therapist at Greenville Elementary, is known for her patience and kindness to students and colleagues alike. She is committed to her students' developing in them the skills they need. Ms. Hoppe is extremely knowledgeable in her field. A colleague writes that she was able to diagnose the cause of one her student's speech problems, and after a medical procedure, he is now on the road to speech recovery. Ms. Hoppe has an intense schedule and always makes the most of her time with her students. She openly shares strategies ranging from speech and writing to phonics and behavior. Her presence in Special Education is powerful as she exudes professionalism and shares her wealth of knowledge. Ms. Hoppe's advice is trusted by all. She is an excellent educator, truly deserving of this recognition, and her students sum up her character in three words...nice, happy and sweet!



Time does not permit me to share the adjectives colleagues, parents and students use to describe



JERRY HULL, a fifth-grade teacher at Brumfield. Mr. Hull's numerous methods of teaching include a YouTube page with educational songs he wrote for science, math, and language arts; a science blog; the design of an apartment building to teach students electricity; and the creation of a kelp forest to teach habitats. Mr. Hull's creativity and kindness extend beyond the classroom working with Altrusa to deejay dances for Fauquier community's citizens with special needs and volunteering as an assistant den leader with the Cub Scouts. Students come into his class to find individual notes of encouragement, congratulations, or support taped to their desk. A parent writes that Mr. Hull approaches the act of teaching with such joy that students cannot help but feel it as well. She adds he is an outstanding teacher whose commitment to his community, colleagues and students set him apart and he is most deserving of Teacher of the Year award.

Warrenton Middle School's principal writes that **LINDA HUME's** transition from a grade school teacher



to a middle school 7th-grade English teacher was amazing! Mrs. Hume's students respond to her gentle kind spirit, and she is constantly looking for ways to engage them. A colleague writes that Linda is the epitome of the 5C's of education; Critical thinking, Creativity, Communication, Character, and Collaboration. Linda connected her students to students in Canada when they participated in the "Global Read Aloud." She does not miss an opportunity to turn any situation into a teachable moment. Linda plays a major role with the Student Council Association's activities such as the 2018 Shoe Collection for the needy and organizing Holiday Care Packages for soldiers.

Linda is passionate about community and is proud of her students for participating in the Community Involvement Challenge, which allowed them to deliver 120 rolls of toilet paper to the Warrenton Family Shelter.

CAROLYN LEACH, Ritchie's "Teacher of the Year" nominee, is a 15-year master teacher. She embodies



everything one can think of or wish for in a teacher for their child. Ritchie's principal, Ms. Thorpe, writes that Mrs. Leach is a leader in the school, sponsoring the 24 Club and is the county math representative as well as the go-to person for math instruction. She works professionally and energetically with staff, volunteers, parents and students. Mrs. Leach is a National Board Certified Teacher who is constantly learning and growing as an educator. Her kindergarteners love coming to her classroom and are excited every day to see what Mrs. Leach has planned for them.

She is an expert at building relationships, and her students learn to accept each other and their differences. Warmth, safety, acceptance and highly engaging instruction is what each child receives in Mrs. Leach's classroom.

JEN LINTHICUM goes beyond her math special education classroom at Taylor to help students and



colleagues. She is the lead mentor, VTSS representative, volleyball coach and PBIS coordinator, as well as the number one Tiger cheerleader! A co-teacher writes that Jen challenges her students and encourages them never to let their disability stand in the way of their success. Last year as Taylor was gearing up for its 8th-grade formal, Ms. Linthicum made it her mission to ensure every student who wanted to go to the dance was dressed for the occasion. One of her colleagues writes, "Jen's heart is so big, caring for students parents and staff members as if they were her own family.

Jen is not only an amazing teacher, but she is also an amazing friend. She is a bright source of positivity with the staff. Jen is a sassy, fun-loving, vital member of Taylor and we are very lucky to have her!"

JANELL MASZATICS is the Instructional Technology Resource Teacher at Thompson, and has provided the students with Ozobots, iPads, headphones, computers and more through grants! An ESL teacher and colleague writes that Janell is an active participant in the annual Hispanic Outreach Night, empowering parents with the knowledge of technology resources through her excellent presentations. Another colleague writes that Ms. Maszatics provided extra computer lab time during bus call as an incentive to promote positive work and behavior ethics to a student who was having behavioral issues. She introduced students to “The Night Zookeeper” a creative writing program and set up a visit with this author for an entire day. The children love the Ozobots and express their delight in their supportive letters of why Ms. Maszatics deserves to be Teacher of the Year. According to them, along with the fact that she is awesome, energetic and teaches them skyping and more, she also has very nice hair, and her nails are pretty!



LISA MISTRETTA, Liberty’s Special Education Resource Specialist, treats each student and staff member as an individual and does her best to meet their needs. A colleague writes that the purpose of Special Education is to minimize the impact of the disability and maximize the opportunity for the students to participate in school. With Lisa as their leader, teachers learn to do just that! Teaching and relationships are a top priority of Dr. Mistretta, and her warmth and acceptance of every child, and her gift to provide them with the reassurance of their value, always inspires those involved with the student’s education to give their best. Her students give her high praise writing that she is the kindest person they know, and she has had a huge impact on their lives. Under Dr. Mistretta’s leadership, the Special Ed Department at LHS has flourished with 100 percent of the seniors earning a standard diploma for the past three years. Her motto is E-L-E is “Everyone loves everyone!”



LIZ MONSEUR is a veteran FHS history teacher who has inspired her students for over 30 years with vibrant, rigorous and compelling curriculums. She is diverse, having taught various levels of high school history including special education, regular education and advanced placement. Ms. Monseur has coached academic teams to many victories including a state title. She enjoys providing field trips for her students not only to historical places such as Gettysburg but also to downtown Warrenton so her students can learn more history about the county in which they live. One of her co-workers writes that she is a remarkable and thoughtful colleague and teacher, always willing to help others. She works extremely hard, including weekends, to provide her students with the very best history education. Ms. Monseur’s legacy will be the knowledge she has provided to her students, the county, the school division and her community. It is a privilege to call her a colleague and a close friend.



BETH RATHBONE has found a new love in Family and Consumer Science, which she teaches at Cedar Lee. Her assistant principal writes that she guides her students through the CTE competencies flawlessly and manages high numbers of students due to the popularity of her class. She has a kind demeanor that creates an atmosphere of caring and compassion. Mrs. Rathbone is a sensitive and sweet soul with patience that rivals a saint. Her students write that she is a great teacher who touches the hearts of every student who is lucky enough to take her class. They add that she teaches about kindness toward other people and “a whole bunch of other stuff” that they can use in real life! Her principal writes that Beth inspires her students to give all of themselves every single day and she inspires her colleagues to do the same and to be teachers who, like her, show students how to reach for the stars!



MARY STRIGHT, a 34-year veteran of teaching brings challenges to her kindergarten students, along with affection, kindness, acceptance and a sense of responsibility. She sets high expectations for her students as she teaches collaboration and problem solving to them. A colleague writes, "Mary has her students' best interests at heart. Her students become independent learners and leave her classroom with the skills they need for success." Bradley's principal writes that Mrs. Stright is a servant leader, enriching the lives of individuals, building a better organization and creating a more just and caring world. A parent writes that there is a lot of work in the Room 3 Friends class for these five and six-year-olds, but it soon becomes clear there is a mission and enduring tradition that happens in the classroom, which sets them ahead of their peers. Ms. Straight stimulates her students' learning of new things such as reading, writing and drawing and she allows their imagination to soar!



DIANE SUTPHIN, a veteran teacher for 23 years at Fauquier County Public Schools is dedicated to her first-grade class at Miller Elementary. Her students learn and grow from a variety of strategies, activities and technology. Mrs. Sutphin's colleagues share they realize the importance of focusing on the essential elements of teaching, and ignoring the "clutter" which sometimes comes with instruction through her words of wisdom, "less is more." A parent whose son was easily distracted did not forget how Mrs. Sutphin helped her to understand her son's need for motion and what could help him at home. She collaborated with his homeroom teacher, and the young man became a strong, focused, reader. Mrs. Sutphin was instrumental, along with her first-grade team, in changing classes for reading based on reading level long before it was the norm. Her outreach is exemplary, working for many years with tutoring programs for students with community volunteers. Mrs. Sutphin is a quiet leader – giving her heart to her profession and her students, and always looking ahead to what more she can do.



AIMEE TALOMIE is described by Auburn's principal as one of the schools' most dedicated and compassionate educators, continually going out of her way to ensure her students feel loved and supported, and succeed in and out of the classroom. She brings passion to each aspect of her job as a special education teacher. Ms. Talomie inspires children to be the very best they can be! She has high standards for her students but sets realistic goals, which are specific to the needs of each student. A colleague writes that Aimee goes above and beyond to give full support to all students, teachers, parents, and administrators. She is very knowledgeable and takes time to mentor new staff. Ms. Talomie is even known as the teacher who students love in the cafeteria as she volunteers for every special event, serving lunch, and always doing it with a smile!



CHAD WRIGHT is described by a parent as the beloved history teacher at Kettle Run who teaches valuable life lessons through his example and actions. Mr. Wright is the leader of the Model United Nations Club and the Interact Club. Kettle Run's assistant principal writes "Through Model UN, Mr. Wright provides students the opportunity to debate global issues and become world-class learners through collaboration and cooperation. "Service Above Self" is a phrase you will hear from him as he encourages his students to make our world a better place through activities in the Interact Club. The club completed its revamping of the school courtyard making it more attractive and functional and raised funds for both hurricane relief and Kettle Run students in need. A former student writes, "As a world history teacher, Mr. Wright's expertise and lifelong curiosity for history is evident through his lectures. Having been a student to hundreds of teachers throughout my educational career, I commend Mr. Wright's dedication to ensure the success of all students. The world could use more teachers operating on the same frequency."

