

Hamilton County celebrates excellent educators

Passionate, accomplished, innovative, creative, committed, driven, dedicated, outstanding, memorable, amazing and student-centered.

These are some of the adjectives nominators used to describe 20 Hamilton County educators recently honored at the annual Celebrate Excellence educator recognition breakfast.



Master of Ceremonies Anthony Munoz

The Hamilton County Education Foundation, the non-profit fundraising arm of the Hamilton County Educational Service Center (HCEC), sponsors the event. The foundation recognizes the successes of local public education professionals and works to provide scholarships to students majoring in a special education-related field.

"By annually celebrating the accomplishments of local educators and providing more scholarships for others in the field to further their education, we hope we're creating incentives for teachers and administrators to stay here and serve the children of Hamilton County," said Karen Muse, foundation president.

The 2009 recipient of the Hamilton County Education Foundation/University of Cincinnati scholarship is Leslie Lessig, a teacher at Lincoln Heights Elementary School. The Hamilton County Education Foundation/Xavier University scholarship recipient is Preston Clark, a special education aide at Norwood High School.

"These scholarships are directly addressing the national shortage of special education teachers and since HCEC is one of the largest employers of Special Education personnel in Southwest Ohio, we are in a sense growing our own," Muse told the Cincinnati Community Press.

Business and community leaders in the region play a key role in both the annual recognition event and the foundation's ongoing work.

"Celebrate Excellence provides a unique opportunity to bring school, university, business and civic leaders together to pay tribute to an impressive group of outstanding local educational leaders from across the county," said Dave Distel, HCESC superintendent.

Each school district submits its certificated educator of the year, which this year included 16 teachers, two special education administrators, a music director and a principal.

More than 200 people attended the May 22 event at the Sharonville Convention

Center.

Marilyn Troyer, senior associate superintendent of the Ohio Department of Education, was the keynote speaker.

"I am so impressed by this event. The energy and *synergy* of bringing together educators from 20 school districts – along with corporate, civic and community leaders – is huge. It's wonderful that you have all taken the time to pause and recognize excellence in your schools," she told the gathering.

"When we celebrate excellence, we inspire ourselves and others to *pursue* excellence. We set an example for the rest of the world. And we pass images of success on to our next generation."



LtoR: HCESC Superintendent Dave Distel, ODE Sr. Associate Supt. Marilyn Troyer, Hamilton County Education Foundation President Karen Muse



Celebrate Excellence 2009 Award Winners

Millie Thompson, K-Grade 1 Teacher
Rockdale Elementary
Cincinnati Public Schools

Cindy Homan, Intermediate Teacher
Amity Elementary
Deer Park Community City Schools

Rick Canter, Grades 9-12 Teacher and Music Director
Finneytown Local School District

John English, Spanish Teacher
Turpin HS
Forest Hills Local School District

Jim Hansel, Grades 11 & 12 Horticulture Operations teacher, Diamond
Oaks
Great Oaks Institute of Technology

Anne Hambrick, Grades 3-8 Mathematics Enrichment Teacher
Our Lady of Victory
Hamilton County Educational Service Center

Shiloh Carpenter, Grades 6-8 Mathematics Teacher
Lockland MS
Lockland School District

Bill Croskey, Grades 5-8 School Psychologist
Loveland MS
Loveland City School District

Susan Klein, Special Education Supervisor
Mason City School District

Ken Berry, Special Education Teacher/Coordinator
Mt. Healthy HS
Mt Healthy City School District

Joseph Nickel, Athletic Director, Guidance Counselor, Social Studies
Teacher
North College Hill Jr/Sr HS
North College Hill City School District

Kristin Kauffman, Grades 6-8 French Teacher
Colerain MS
Northwest Local School District

Jill Sennett, Grade 2 Teacher
Williams Ave. Elementary
Norwood City School District

Bob Klotz, Grades 10-12 Social Studies Teacher
Oak Hills HS
Oak Hills Local School District

Kathy Rieder, Kindergarten Teacher
Reading Hilltop Elementary
Reading Community City School District

Nona Waldeck, Grade 6 Language Arts Teacher
Elmwood Place Elementary
St. Bernard-Elmwood Place City School District

Sandy Hollstegge, Language Arts, Mathematics Teacher and Technology
Coordinator

Whitewater Valley Elementary
Southwest Local School District

Maggi Fridman, Mathematics Teacher
E.H. Greene Intermediate School
Sycamore Community City School District

Erin Metz, Grades 9-12 French Teacher
Taylor HS
Three Rivers Local School District

Steve Denny, Principal
Winton Woods Elementary
Winton Woods City School District