



## WASHINGTONVILLE CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

52 West Main Street, Washingtonville, New York 10992

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Larry Washington, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools

Barbara Quinn, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction

Lorine Van Put-Lamerand, Assistant Superintendent for Business

Michael Cogliano, Ed.D., Assistant Superintendent for Pupil Personnel Services

Paul Nienstadt, Assistant Superintendent for Operations and Safety

Lynn Imperato, Director of Personnel and Staff Development

### 2020 Board of Education Award for Excellence

Diana Barone, School Psychologist @ High School  
Submitted by Paul Saladino

Diana Barone has been a psychologist with the Washingtonville Central School District for over 15 years. She has worked with students at all levels (Elementary, Middle and High School) in several different buildings. She currently is responsible for all classified special education students in grades 9&10 providing mandated related services counseling support and coordinating each student's Committee on Special Education (CSE) Annual Review Meeting. Diana is always very kind, honest and straightforward when dealing with the students and families she so diligently serves. She handles a wide variety of crisis situations always in a calm and professional manner. She is our front line building go-to-person for all suicide risk assessments. She is currently actively involved with monitoring the social emotional well-being of students using our high school TLC Room and is also a trained DBT practitioner. Diana is smart, savvy, organized and offers a keen sense of authenticity sprinkled with a wonderful sense of humor. In addition to her continued dedication to excellent in her primary function as a Psychologist in the Washingtonville Central School District, Diana is also the mom to three wonderful sons while likely holding the distinction of having one of the longest daily commutes from her home in the Bronx. Diana receives my highest recommendation for a BOE recognition award.



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### 2020 Board of Education Award for Excellence

Judy Biagini, Special Education Teacher @ High School

Submitted by Tom Rigney

Over the course of her career, Judy has excelled at her ability to assist students with special needs in the areas of English, Reading and Life Skills. Judy has helped countless students with significant reading disabilities to achieve at a high level in their classes. Additionally, she has helped many students earn passing scores or competency on the English Regents. In her Reading Skills classes, she has provided masterful instruction to numerous students with dyslexia, whose subsequent successes at the high school and beyond can be attributed to Judy's efforts. She is a masterful and compassionate teacher.

Over the years, Judy has mentored many of the younger special education teachers in our high school, teaching them to put the students' needs above all else. She has taught our colleagues to stay attuned to the needs of the whole student, not just their academic needs. Judy has promoted this philosophy not only with her words, but also in her compassionate interactions with our students. In this manner, Judy has provided real leadership both to her students and to her colleagues.

When I first came to the HS five years ago as chair of the department, I quickly learned how fortunate I was to have Judy on our team. She was always there with advice and a listening ear when I needed it. Judy epitomizes the true compassionate professional that we should all aspire to be.

Submitted by Tom Rigney





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## 2020 Board of Education Award for Excellence

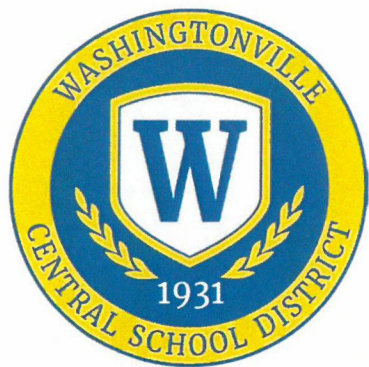
Lori Brennan, Kindergarten Teacher @ Round Hill  
Submitted by Erin Milteer

I am nominating Mrs. Lori Brennan, Kindergarten Teacher, for the Board of Education Award for Accomplishment. There are numerous and immeasurable reasons that demonstrate why Mrs. Brennan is an appropriate candidate for this award. She is a remarkable teacher and asset to our entire school community.

To begin, this school year is the first year that I have had the opportunity to work with Mrs. Brennan since kindergarten is now housed at Round Hill. As you know, this is also the first year of full-day kindergarten. As we all adjusted to housing 13 classrooms full of kindergarteners there were undoubtedly some bumps in the road. From day one Mrs. Brennan's positive attitude, enthusiasm, and warm spirit were evident as we navigated new territory together. Where there's a problem, Mrs. Brennan sees solutions. I've heard her say countless times "No worries, now we know for next time."

Mrs. Brennan continuously shares her enthusiasm, offers positive feedback to others, and recognizes others for their efforts. She is the epitome of a supportive colleague. She is literally (almost) always the first person to post a positive classroom or teacher experience or comment with words of positivity on Round Hill's Highlights google classroom page.

I have the unique experience of having an office in the main hallway of the building so I often get to see or hear how people greet one another in the morning. Mrs. Brennan is always willing to lend a helping hand to someone carrying materials for the day down the hallway; despite having her own rolling cart, multiple bags, and extra large coffee. She helps make copies for others, she offers materials and shares ideas. She greets others with positivity, authentic excitement, and realistic expectations for the day and challenges ahead. She works tirelessly to prepare creative lessons and activities for her students. She's reliable and flexible when there's unforeseen changes.



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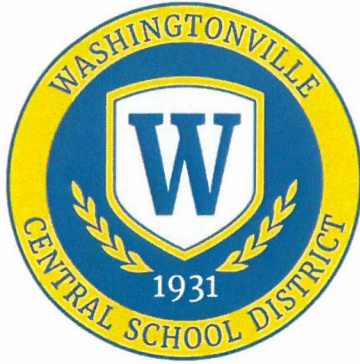
Not only have I had the opportunity to get to know Mrs. Brennan as a colleague this year, I have also had the absolute privilege of being the parent of one of Mrs. Brennan's students this year. And I will forever be grateful for it. Mrs. Brennan created a classroom environment, "Mrs. Brennan's Rock Stars", that is everything kindergarten should be. The first week of school, her students (4 and 5 year olds!) learned about the "power of Yet!" and perseverance. She truly believes that with patience, role models, and effort, her students can accomplish anything they put their minds to- and her students begin to believe it too. She models loving, caring, listening, and cooperation, all day, every single day, and with every single interaction, for her students. She is patient. She is kind. They feel it and they show it to one another- every day. She teaches academics in fun and practical yet thought-provoking ways. Her enthusiasm, hard work, and dedication is evident every single day. She communicates with parents, welcomes feedback, meets each student and family where we're at- and without judgement.

Because of the introduction to education Mrs. Brennan provided this year, my son Jake LOVES school. When I asked Jake what he loves about Mrs. Brennan, he got a big smile on his face and said "she taught me my letters and how to make a pumpkin vomit!" She taught him to read, she taught him math. Most importantly, she taught him to LOVE learning. She taught him that school is fun. She taught him that school is about authentic connections, helping one another, laughing, making mistakes, trying again, clapping for one another's accomplishments, and knowing that someone cares.

I could go on and on about all the things Mrs. Brennan does, big and small, throughout the school year that demonstrate how she goes above and beyond for students and families. She shares pictures and videos, her students have 3rd grade reading buddies, they play, they sing, they dance, they hug, she is flexible with our schedules for parties and celebrations, she clearly and kindly communicates expectations to parents and students creating a community among the parents, etc. etc.

When school closed in March due to the COVID crisis, as a parent I had many tearful moments thinking of the possibility that Jake would not get to say goodbye to Mrs. Brennan. He moves to Little Britain for 1st grade, where I know he will be well taken care of, but he will sadly not get to see his kindergarten teacher anymore. For him, not being able to give her a hug goodbye will be the hardest part of this strange, unprecedented transition. And due to the circumstances, it's heart-breaking that they didn't get a proper goodbye.





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However, the thing is, Mrs. Brennan will always be his kindergarten teacher and they don't have to say goodbye because they will always have that connection. And she will make sure he knows that. I know she will always, genuinely and with her warm, enthusiastic spirit, love hearing about her student's future accomplishments and experiences. That's the type of teacher she is. I know the next time she sees Jake, or any of her former students, she will embrace them with the same warmth and enthusiasm that she shows others every day.

Each year, she builds a community of future rock stars that will go on to do amazing things. There's no doubt about it, the students, families, and staff of Washingtonville Central School District are better because of people like Mrs. Brennan.

Sincerely,  
Erin Milteer



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### **2020 Board of Education Award for Excellence**

Lori Brennan, Kindergarten Teacher @ Round Hill

Submitted by Melissa Stegenga

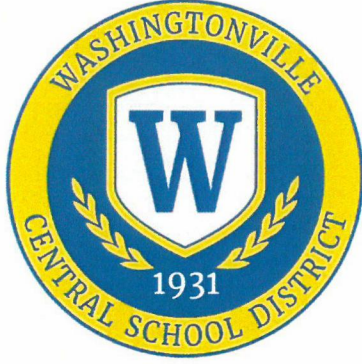
I have been working this year with Lori Brennan at Round Hill. Not only is my son lucky enough to be in her class, but my 3rd grade class has been reading buddies with them for the entire year.

Working alongside of Lori, I am able to say that she truly loves what she does. She loves every child in her room and accepts them for uniqueness of the individual. She is patient and kind, and always has great ideas for the times the 3rd graders and kindergarteners are together.

In addition, I see and hear the wonderful things she does with her class. She is creative and comes up with the most clever learning experiences. She had doctor equipment donated to her class and the class learned about spelling letters. She shares special moments in class by sharing pictures with the parents on a regular basis.

Lori is a gem to this school district and community. Please take serious consideration when choosing this award for accomplishment and choose Lori Brennan.





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### 2020 Board of Education Award for Excellence

Lori Brennan, Kindergarten Teacher @ Round Hill

Submitted by Kerilee and Evelyn Berben

Mrs. Brennan deserves recognition for her outstanding performance as an educator and colleague. My daughter has been blessed to have her as her kindergarten teacher this year. Mrs. Brennan engages the students in developmentally appropriate learning activities and acts a facilitator to guide each child to their own next level. She makes learning fun by developing and implementing creative lessons to meet the standards of the curriculum. She takes time to get to know each child's strengths and weaknesses and differentiates instruction to help each child grow. Her classroom environment is inviting, warm, and nurturing. Her love of children and teaching shines through in all that she does. Throughout online instruction, she has been readily available to support students (and their parents). My daughter looks forward to her reading meeting each week with Mrs. Brennan. She is an exceptional educator and person. Washingtonville is so fortunate to have her as part of their community.



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### 2020 Board of Education Award for Excellence

Leanne Bucco, Special Education Teacher @ Taft Elementary  
Submitted by Colleen Doyle

Mrs. Bucco is a consummate professional. However, that is not the reason I am nominating her. Leann Bucco is a warm caring individual, who gives her all to everything she does. Whether she is making signs to welcome home a Taft Dad from Afghanistan, or spending a Saturday morning trying to help Washingtonville win a town makeover from HGTV. Whether a student is struggling and needs a little extra help, or an encouraging word. It might be a 77-year-old veteran's birthday whose son is serving in Afghanistan, Leann is there cheering from across the street with her mask on, holding an American flag and just trying to always help our school district and our community be a better place!!!!!!!!!!!!





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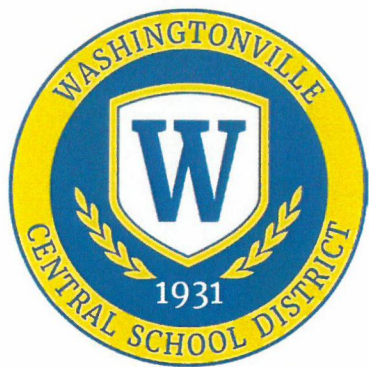
Paul Nienstadt, Assistant Superintendent for Operations and Safety

Lynn Imperato, Director of Personnel and Staff Development

### 2020 Board of Education Award for Excellence

Brian Connolly, High School Principal  
Submitted by Karen Casey

Mr. Connolly has been a constant exemplar of "Once a Wizard Always a Wizard." He assumed the position of Principal in the most unconventional way nearly ten years ago. From day one he proved to be the consummate administrator that had, and continues to have the best of intention for the students of Washingtonville High School. Mr. Connolly is more than willing to have a conversation with parents and students alike. He is willing to field any and all ideas to solve a problem and will explore them at every. angle. The past few years have been trying in the high school community between loss of faculty and student members of the Wizard family and the current SARS-Cov-2 pandemic. He continues to be a calm for the parents and students alike and while the situation with graduation is not ideal he continued to explore ideas even after initial plans were made public. He is working with members of the Junior class to preserve one of the premier events of the high school experience, prom. While this is a trying time and all members of administration, faculty, and staff deserve to be acknowledged for all their efforts Mr. Connolly continues to go above and beyond his call of duty for the members of his Wizard family!!



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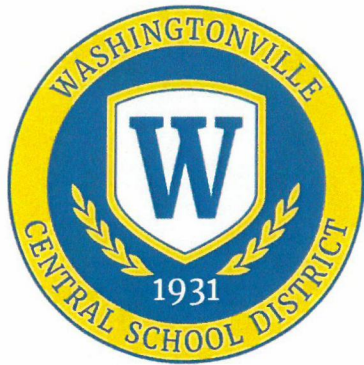
### 2020 Board of Education Award for Excellence

Brian Connolly, High School Principal

Submitted by Kevin Radday

Many things over the years has impressed me about Mr. Connolly. His leadership, connection to students, his ability to juggle and manage all the challenges faced by a high school principle and his commitment to our school district. On a recent morning in the middle of a driving rain storm I bumped into Mr. Connolly who was in the parking lot of village hall distributing food to the most vulnerable of our community. Leading from the front! Mr. Connolly has also led our district through many difficult times these past several years. Suicides, sudden deaths of faculty, and now this latest pandemic. I am not sure if he has received an award lately or his eligibility but this year could be a good year for it.





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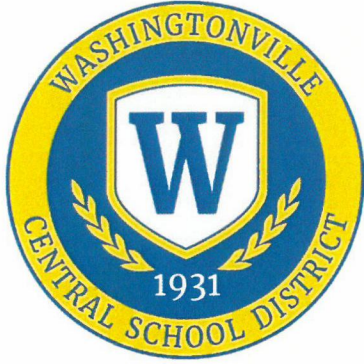
Lynn Imperato, Director of Personnel and Staff Development

### 2020 Board of Education Award for Excellence

Astrid Delbue, Middle School PTO

Submitted by Teresa Thompson

Mrs. Delbue and Mrs. Mongello have been executive board members for the Middle School PTO for the last seven years. Their leadership, initiative, volunteerism, and dedication to the students of Washingtonville has been unwavering. During a time when getting volunteers has been a challenging endeavor, Stacy and Astrid have taken on most of the responsibility for fundraising, planning, facilitating and coordinating trips, Book Fairs, Picture Days, and assemblies. Their dedication to our students and determination to provide them with enriching educational experiences is to be admired. The Middle School PTO has played a vital role in ensuring a strong connection between school and community. Mrs. Mongello and Mrs. Delbue are always seeking opportunities to enhance student learning through educational experiences that are fun and inspiring. When it comes to providing students with opportunities, they never see obstacles. They work through problems and seek solutions. Students write a reflective essay at the end of their 8<sup>th</sup> grade year in which they share their good experiences, challenging experiences, as well as make suggestions to improve our school. (They are not shy about that!) In all the years I have been reading these essays, there has always been a reoccurring theme. They always reflect on their field trips, whether it was the Museum of Natural History in 7<sup>th</sup> grade or the Archeological Dig in 6<sup>th</sup> grade, and share how these were the most memorable and fun times they had in school. There is also an excitement in the air at the end of their 8<sup>th</sup> grade year when they are preparing for their trip to Lake Compounce as this marks their last true Middle School experience together. These things all happen because of the Middle School PTO. These events get planned, organized, and come to fruition because of the countless hours that our volunteers put in. Leading all of this work and doing most of it themselves are Mrs. Delbue and Mrs. Mongello. Without their effort and dedication many of these opportunities for students would fall by the wayside. There was a year that Mrs. Delbue did not even have a student in the Middle School yet she stayed on in the Middle School because there was no one else to do the work. THAT is dedication. I cannot thank them enough for all that they do. It has been a true partnership and absolute pleasure working with them all of these years. It is my hope that Mrs. Delbue and Mrs. Mongello be recognized by our Board of Education for their commitment to students and service to the district.



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### 2020 Board of Education Award for Excellence

Jeanne DeLongis, Purchasing Agent, Central Administration

Submitted by Paul Nienstadt and Lorine Van Put-Lamerand

Jeanne goes above and beyond her job description on a daily basis. This has never been more evident than what she been able to accomplish during the COVID-19 crisis. She has tirelessly ordered, tracked and full-filled disinfecting supplies and materials that have been needed to maintain a clean environment. She has made herself available continuously on call for whatever is needed. Jeanne created and established a central supply process that has saved the District money since its inception. She continues to look for ways to save money while still meeting the needs of the students. Jeanne is an asset to the District.





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### 2020 Board of Education Award for Excellence

Denise Evans, Math Teacher, High School

Submitted by Samantha Frisbee

*"Teachers affect eternity; no one can tell where their influence stops."*

Henry Brooks Adams

Throughout the last four years, I have had the distinct pleasure to know Mrs. Denise not just my father's colleague/ friend but as MY teacher and the Class of 2020 Advisor. Mrs. Evans has always shown a great commitment to her students both in the classroom and outside.

Mrs. Evans has gone over and beyond for the kids. She exemplifies the way I dream to be as a teacher. During my math class last year, she would always incorporate a life lesson into each 'actual' lesson. Sometimes it's about how we, as in my generation, spend too much time on our phones. Another example is if she can't hear a student's answer, she asks them to speak up, explaining how we must be confident in our answer, because most of the time it isn't wrong, it's just that we are being timid. She showed us how college doesn't have to be about the name, but about the price. She taught us how women continue to discuss this 'need' a role model, a strong figure. Mrs. Evans is that strong figure, she has her own opinion, follows and enforces the rules, and has great public speaking and charisma.

For the past four years, Mrs. Evans, along with my father, advised the Class of 2020. With the Class of 2020, she helped us grow. She can always tell when someone wants to say something, that usually defies what the group is saying and makes sure we spoke up so our voice could be heard. She was a true advisor, helping us, without doing the work, because she knows that this is a student council, run by the students. Other advisors might do more, but with ours, both Mrs. Evans and Mr. Frisbee keep a "laissez-faire" way. It allowed us to grow and mature. It allowed us to make mistakes and successes and to own both. Mrs. Evans gives up her afternoons, nights, and lunches to help us; be that through general meetings, babysitting nights, buying carnations, selling the prom tickets, helping shape the future generation.



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Most recently with quarantine and the sudden loss of my father Mrs. Evans has had to help us even more, in completely uncharted waters as we lose many of our senior events, prepare for a graduation unlike any other and as well as console and support us through the loss of our other advisor. She has done this with her enduring strength, her practicality and devotion, that even through the computer is there.

Many first meet Mrs. Evans, and think she is mean, or terrifying; that she is really strict, and won't let you have any freedom. However, what she has done is show that people can do great things and adhere to rules and guidelines. She will follow people down the hall, until they take their hoods, and headphones off. I've never thought of her that way. She has always been there for whoever needs help, afterschool Tuesdays, and Wednesdays. One quote from one of my classes that truly shows a part of Mrs. Evans, and spoken by her is "Math is a four letter-word, fun is three. Work, hard, some other words, are four letters. Math isn't fun."

This might seem like a strange quote to say as a teacher, but the heart of it is that anything worth doing is going to be hard and to be successful we need to work. Mrs. Evans has never failed to help teach her children something that will help them in the real world. Her ethics, teaching and support show how she has all the qualifications to receive the Board of Education of Excellence Award.





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### 2020 Board of Education Award for Excellence

Michelle Henn, Physical Education Teacher, Taft Elementary  
Submitted by Laurisa Sampson

It is with great pleasure I write to nominate Michelle Henn, Physical Education Teacher at Taft Elementary School for the Washingtonville Central School District Board of Education's Accomplishment Award. Ms. Henn is a dedicated teacher who goes above and beyond when it comes to her students.

It is her inspiration and dedication to teaching students about a healthy lifestyle and being active that transforms the mindset of our children. There are so many activities and events in the physical education program at Taft my children have enjoyed throughout the years. Programs such as Jump Rope for Heart, The Pumpkin Run, Girl's Running Club, Project Fit America, you name it!

What impresses me most is how Ms. Henn encourages children to think, act and move outside of their comfort zone. She challenges students to try the things they might never have considered becoming involved with. I am so proud that my 5th grader was inspired to participate in the Pumpkin Run last year **and** this year. My daughter's goal that first year was not to win, but to try something she never considered doing before. Her goals this year was to try and improve upon her time...and she did! To add to that, she even joined the Girl's Running Club, and we are talking about a child who doesn't like to run! My daughter even joined the CYO Travel Team simply because she thought Ms. Henn would be proud of her. We all were very proud of her!

But Ms. Henn's motivation doesn't stop there. Because of Ms. Henn's encouragement, my daughter has our entire family up and moving! As the pandemic has curtailed one's ability to get to a gym to workout, our family, along with 4 other families, take weekly walks/bike rides on the Heritage Trail together. I can assure you 100% that it is because of Ms. Henn that *I am joining in on those reindeer games!* Her enthusiasm for a healthy and active lifestyle has inspired us all to give it a try in support of good health and encouraging our youngest to be physically active. It is one thing to teach a child, but quite another thing when one can inspire a family to get up and get moving.



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Lynn Imperato, *Director of Personnel and Staff Development*

According to my 5th grader, Cheyenne, Ms. Henn is very encouraging of her students, she makes physical education something that is fun to participate in, and she always has a smile on her face. Her reach is beyond the classroom and touches the lifestyles of her students, their families, their neighbors and community.





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### 2020 Board of Education Award for Excellence

Jimmy Kolar, Foreign Language Teacher, Middle School  
Submitted by Lela Dunbar

Jimmy Kolar has dedicated countless hours to the school community of the Washingtonville Central School District. He is very involved in the Middle School in many ways. He teaches, advises student council, runs the homework club, and runs middle school dances. Jimmy tutors students at home and supervises sporting events. In the past, he chaperoned trips to Europe and Central America, enabling many people to travel abroad in a safe and secure manner. He chaperoned many field trips to various locations including Broadway shows, sharing our culture with many young minds. He continues to organize trips to Broadway shows, imparting the charms of New York City with many who otherwise would not travel there.

Jimmy has mentored countless teachers. He has attended almost all Board of Education meetings and participates in community events such as the Memorial Day Parade.

Jimmy serves his colleagues and in turn his students as the Vice President of the Washingtonville Teachers' Association. He also negotiates with the negotiations committee. His leadership enables our members to give their best to the district and its stakeholders.

Some people refer to Jimmy as "Mr. Middle School." Jimmy is always at school, always helping someone, always giving his time and effort for the betterment of others. He has been a role model and friend to thousands. With his imminent retirement, the middle school and the district will lose an irreplaceable piece of itself.



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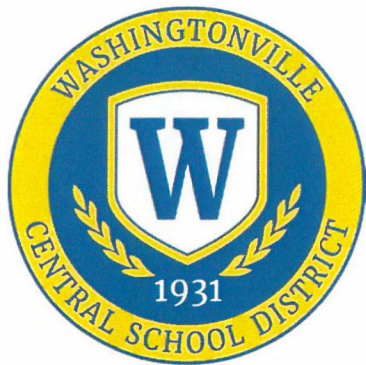
## 2020 Board of Education Award for Excellence

Jimmy Kolar, Foreign Language Teacher, Middle School

Submitted by Hugh Gallagher

James has been a team builder throughout the part of his career that I was fortunate enough to observe. He has been instrumental creating the "middle school staff as family" atmosphere that has been such a part of our success. He has organized many activities for both staff and students to achieve that atmosphere. The greater Washingtonville community will have a difficult time replacing the role that Mr. Kolar has played in Washingtonville Middle School. Although over time I'm sure the next "Mr. Kolar" will emerge.





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### 2020 Board of Education Award for Excellence

Kathy Martin-Brown, Guidance Counselor, Middle School

Submitted by Adele and John Hastings

I would like to nominate Mrs. Kathy Martin-Brown. She was my son's Guidance Counselor. For that matter she was my Counselor too. Let me begin by saying that I also work for the School. I am a TA at Taft Elementary School. This is my 32nd year and my 22nd year with Washingtonville.

Back when my son was in Middle School he had some learning disabilities. He had an IEP and Mrs. Martin-Brown was wonderful along with his teachers. On September 20th, 2012 John was put in Beth Israel Hospital in NYC and was told that he had epilepsy. This crushed my husband and I since he wanted to become a police officer. He would never be able to get his driver's license. Mrs. Martin Brown always reassured us that he might outgrow it and to take it one day at a time. One month later to the day, my husband passed away unexpectedly. How do I tell my 12-year-old his best friend just died? I went to school and set up a meeting with Mrs. Martin-Brown. She hugged me, cried with me and made a plan to help my son. That school year in 2012 was very challenging for Mrs. Brown. Several children lost their parents that year. 3 right after my husband. Mrs. Martin-Brown started a group for these children. A grieving group. My son happened to be the only boy but it truly helped him. There were days when my son wouldn't get out of bed due to depression. I would call Mrs. Martin-Brown and she would say "I'll be right over". She would drive to my house to help get John ready for school. She encouraged him, loved him like he was her own. She took all my calls when I was feeling down. She helped my son write a poem about my husband and took a picture off the internet to put on the poem. She actually went out of her way to buy a frame for the poem to wrap for me that first Christmas without my husband. The last day of school before Christmas break, my son was sick. The weather was like a hurricane that day. She drove to Taft to make sure I would get that gift from my son. I'm crying writing this and it's 8 years later. She has gone to most of his award nights, graduation, graduation party and many other things. She is not your average Counselor. She is family. I have nominated her before but she was not recognized. I wish I had my original letter because it was just beautiful. I am nominating her again this year since it is her last. This is not how she wanted to leave just like other retirees. Please consider her for this award as it's my last chance to recognize her while she is still at Washingtonville. Even if she doesn't win, SHE WON MY HEART AND MY SON'S and we will forever be grateful. Thank you for reading my nomination.





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### 2020 Board of Education Award for Excellence

Stacy Mongello, Middle School PTO  
Submitted by Teresa Thompson

Mrs. Delbue and Mrs. Mongello have been executive board members for the Middle School PTO for the last seven years. Their leadership, initiative, volunteerism, and dedication to the students of Washingtonville has been unwavering. During a time when getting volunteers has been a challenging endeavor, Stacy and Astrid have taken on most of the responsibility for fundraising, planning, facilitating and coordinating trips, Book Fairs, Picture Days, and assemblies. Their dedication to our students and determination to provide them with enriching educational experiences is to be admired. The Middle School PTO has played a vital role in ensuring a strong connection between school and community. Mrs. Mongello and Mrs. Delbue are always seeking opportunities to enhance student learning through educational experiences that are fun and inspiring. When it comes to providing students with opportunities, they never see obstacles. They work through problems and seek solutions. Students write a reflective essay at the end of their 8<sup>th</sup> grade year in which they share their good experiences, challenging experiences, as well as make suggestions to improve our school. (They are not shy about that!) In all the years I have been reading these essays, there has always been a reoccurring theme. They always reflect on their field trips, whether it was the Museum of Natural History in 7<sup>th</sup> grade or the Archeological Dig in 6<sup>th</sup> grade, and share how these were the most memorable and fun times they had in school. There is also an excitement in the air at the end of their 8<sup>th</sup> grade year when they are preparing for their trip to Lake Compounce as this marks their last true Middle School experience together. These things all happen because of the Middle School PTO. These events get planned, organized, and come to fruition because of the countless hours that our volunteers put in. Leading all of this work and doing most of it themselves are Mrs. Delbue and Mrs. Mongello. Without their effort and dedication many of these opportunities for students would fall by the wayside. There was a year that Mrs. Delbue did not even have a student in the Middle School yet she stayed on in the Middle School because there was no one else to do the work. THAT is dedication. I cannot thank them enough for all that they do. It has been a true partnership and absolute pleasure working with them all of these years. It is my hope that Mrs. Delbue and Mrs. Mongello be recognized by our Board of Education for their commitment to students and service to the district.





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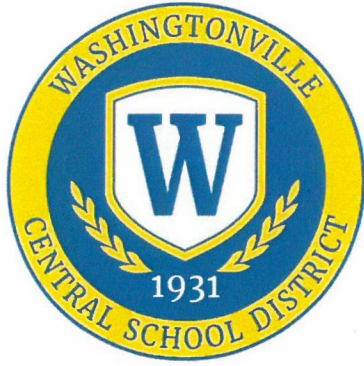
### 2020 Board of Education Award for Excellence

Michael Ohm, Rebecca Ohm and Alex Rosen, Attorneys at Law

Submitted by Scott Lerner and Peter Sale

Scott and I are nominating Michael, Rebecca and Alex for their countless hours of time that they have put in with our students throughout this year to prepare the students on our Mock Trial Team for the State Mock Trial Competition. All three of them volunteered nights at school to meet with the students along with doing preparation in their own time in order to help us prepare for the case.

The team was dependent on their guidance and expertise, and without them we couldn't be a part of the State run competition. Beginning at the end of September and right up until March they joined us for two to three hours an evening either once or twice a week to help the students to be prepared. They have done this for the past two school years (we started the team last year) and have really found tremendous connections with the students on the team. Quite simply, without them we wouldn't have a team. Their patience, expertise and rapport with the students and advisors is the true reason why we experienced success in our first year (making the county semi-finals) and why we were prepared to compete this year on March 14<sup>th</sup>. All three of our Attorneys are truly wonderful members of the community and we feel should be recognized for their commitment to our students. In February we were able to give the Board of Education a glimpse of our team at a Board Meeting, and while we were disappointed that the competition was cancelled in March after months of hard work, all three Attorneys are committed to continuing to working with us in the future.



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### 2020 Board of Education Award for Excellence

Technology Team: Joe Catania, Preston Davis, Nick Disy, Lynn Gilson, Gail Mitchell, Mary Nally

Submitted by Lynn Imperato and Barbara Quinn

The IT Department, led by Director Joseph Catania, has faced extraordinary challenges in the 2019-2020 school year and they have handled every difficulty with professionalism, dedication, and the best interests of the District at the center of their responses. Beginning with the new state mandates over the summer related to ED2D, to cyber-attacks in September, to a total shift to remote learning in March, this year has demanded flexibility, critical thinking and problem solving, and unending hours of work for this team of 6. The Department mobilized approximately 1,000 Chromebooks to be delivered to students and have maintained a help desk to assist staff and families. Additionally, the Department with the support of the BOCES Technology Coaches, have provided professional development opportunities for staff throughout the closure, including a Parent University to help families navigate the software needed for distance learning. The District as a whole has faced extraordinary challenges this year, but the IT Department deserves special recognition for going above and beyond!





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## 2020 Board of Education Award for Excellence

Elena Wakeham, ASPIRE Teacher, High School

Submitted by Laurisa Sampson

Mrs. Wakeham, who teaches the Aspire class at the Washingtonville High School has done an amazing job with her class and the Friday Morning Bistro.

I have had the pleasure of attending the Bistro. It is wonderful to see the students do their assigned tasks with an incredible sense of **pride**. The Bistro is a wonderful opportunity for students to learn to run a business through hands-on experience. The students serve as:

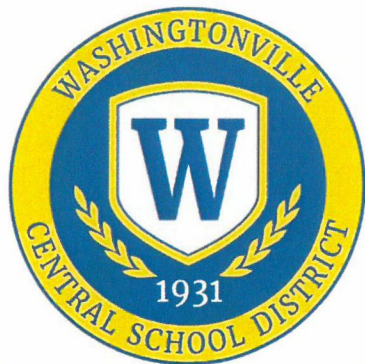
- Host/Hostess
- Waiter/Waitress
- Cashier.

They make the best cup of coffee, cookies and banana bread in town!

This year, I was blessed to have had the opportunity to attend the class production of C.C. Moore's "Twas the Night Before Christmas." I love how every single student was afforded an opportunity to be featured in the show. It was great to see the adaptive technology that was used to make that happen. The **passion** they put into the production was evident. We are so very fortunate to see that our district provides this type of technology so that all of our students have a voice. BRAVO!

It is nice to see so many students come in and purchase the delicious food available at the Bistro, and show their support of the students in the Aspire class who run it. It shows how each and every student at Washingtonville High School fulfills a **purpose** which can positively impact the Bistro. It is a pleasure to see that Mrs. Wakeham and the TA Staff know so many of the students who are outside of the Aspire Class.

We are very fortunate to have a teacher who does so much not only for her students, but the community. Mrs. Wakeham is a Girl Scout Leader and is very instrumental in helping the Washingtonville Girl Scout Service Unit. Even in the midst of a Global Pandemic, she strives to *make the world a better place*. This is a lesson she obviously shares with her class. It was evident when I learned the Aspire Class, and their teaching team went above and beyond the call of duty by providing meals to the Washingtonville Post Office and the Blooming Grove



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Volunteer Ambulance Corps. What an incredible lesson to teach our students to think of others in a time of crisis. Furthermore, with proceeds from the money raised at the Bistro, they are providing scholarships to graduating seniors! Mrs. Wakeham most certainly demonstrates #WizardPride!





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### 2020 Board of Education Legacy Award

Michael Frisbee, Math Teacher, High School  
Submitted by Colleen Doyle

Mike Frisbee taught here in Washingtonville for 24 years. Not only was he an incredible teacher who inspired his students to do their very best, he also showed his students that he believed in them, which in turn taught those same kids to believe in themselves. As far as life skills are concerned confidence and a "can do" attitude are invaluable. Mikes lessons didn't confine themselves to the classroom. As the advisor for the National Honor Society, he taught our students how to throw a senior citizens prom, where not only did our students show the seniors of our community an awesome and beautiful event (year after year) but Mike also encouraged our students to interact with our seniors, by asking the seniors to dance, making sure each and every one had a nice time. This effort in American society, where many times the elderly are overlooked was amazing. Mike helping those students host this event helped the kids respect the seniors as individuals who had a great deal to offer if they would listen.

Mikes efforts were not confined to the school district. Mike was a very active member of St. Mary's Church, was a member of the Knights of Columbus, and was also a library trustee. He will be remembered for always going the extra mile and always being there for whoever needed him. Mike Frisbee will be greatly missed and long remembered!



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### 2020 Board of Education Legacy Award

Sal Mancuso, Substitute Teacher, High School  
Submitted by Robin White

Sal Mancuso was a longtime trusted substitute teacher in the district who was known for his gentle demeanor, loving attentiveness, and ability to connect with students. While it may be rather unusual for a substitute teacher to form bonds with students they see only occasionally, Sal was able to transcend the sporadic nature of substitute teaching and develop real relationships with so many in our district. "Mr. Man" was a favorite among students for his intelligence, his willingness to listen, and his desire to mentor young people. Teachers sought him as a sub because they knew his diligence would mean that learning would not be interrupted due to teacher absence. He provided a shoulder to lean on, a listening ear, and wise counsel to all those with whom he interacted.

Sal was also a dedicated community servant who volunteered his time in many ways; most notably serving with the Blooming Grove Volunteer Ambulance Corps as a driver and member of the Board of Directors. His desire to help people who were in their greatest moment of need is exemplary of the way he lived his life and sadly, it is what cost him his. "Greater love has no one than he who lay his life down for his friends" (John 15:13) and Sal Mancuso considered everyone his friend. Sadly, Sal lost his courageous battle with COVID19, leaving his family to grieve the loss of a loving husband, father and brother and an entire community in mourning for a kind and giving soul. Sal was a man who always led with his heart, and his generous and loving nature provide a beautiful example of a life that was, although cut short, so very well-lived.

I am deeply saddened by the immeasurable loss of such a valued member of our district community, and it is my honor to humbly submit Mr. Sal Mancuso for a BOE Legacy Award.





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### 2020 Board of Education Legacy Award

Mike "Rocky" Stevens, Custodian, High School  
Submitted by Jack Dellova

I am nominating Rocky. He was a great coach at St. Mary's CYO for 42 years. Not only did Rocky teach us how to be our best at basketball, but how to be our best as people. He taught us all about respect. He would have us carry the basketball bag into the gym and he would always have us clean up the gym after we were done. He always told us to work as a team and treat everyone good. He would be at the gym all day long to support all the teams. He would always stay after all the game were over to help clean up and to close up the snack bar. He told us how important it is to respect our parents and work hard in school. Whenever I saw Rocky he was doing something good. Rocky would do anything for anybody. He would help anybody out even if he didn't know them. Rocky had a heart of gold. When I grow up I hope to be a man as good as Rocky.