



DISTINGUISHED TEACHERS AWARDS  
Celebrating Excellence

THE DISTINGUISHED TEACHERS  
AWARDS CEREMONY



TUESDAY, MAY 4, 2010

4:00 - 5:30 P.M.

WESTERN MIDDLE SCHOOL



## DISTINGUISHED TEACHERS AWARDS

The Distinguished Teachers Awards Committee, Inc. is a nonprofit organization established to recognize and celebrate excellence among the dedicated teaching staff of the Greenwich Public Schools. The Distinguished Teachers Awards Committee has worked on the selection process for this year's recipients for the last eight months. The committee selects the Distinguished Teacher recipients from nominations made by colleagues, administrators, parents, students and/or community members. The committee reviews the nominations and selects a maximum of six Distinguished Teachers based on the criteria outlined in the Nomination Packet. To be eligible, a nominee must be a full-time Greenwich Public Schools staff member who is a certified teacher. A nominee must have completed at least five years of teaching, three of them in Greenwich. The criteria for identifying a distinguished teacher include, among others, that he/she inspires enthusiasm for learning and academic excellence, elicits a high level of achievement from students in relation to their ability, encourages students to take responsibility for their own learning and shows mastery of subject matter. The six teachers selected this year personify the criteria of a Distinguished Teacher.

PROGRAM

WELCOME

Stacey Gross  
Principal, Western Middle School

MUSICAL SELECTIONS

Greenwich Public Schools Festival Orchestra  
Conducted by Bethany Cook and Connie Barrett

PROGRAM INTRODUCTION AND MASTER OF CEREMONIES

Barbara Tormondsen  
Chairman, Distinguished Teachers Awards Committee

COMMENTS

Sidney A. Freund  
Superintendent of Schools

PRESENTATION OF 2010 DISTINGUISHED TEACHERS

Nominators of Recipients

CLOSING COMMENTS

Steven B. Anderson  
Chairman, Board of Education

Please join the Distinguished Teachers after the ceremony  
for a reception in their honor.

2009-10  
DISTINGUISHED TEACHERS AWARDS  
COMMITTEE

Barbara Tormondsen Chairman, Community  
Jo Frame Vice-Chairman, GOSA  
Anne Miller Secretary, Community  
Kevin Coutant Assistant Treasurer, Community

Susan Batcheller, Community  
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Donna Curtis, Community  
Cathy Delehanty, GEA  
Bianka Kortlan-Cox, PTAC  
Brenda Macri, Community  
Lillian Perone, GEA  
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Patricia Raneri, GOSA  
Margaret Santhanam, PTAC  
Melissa Schreff, Community  
Fran Schapperle, Community, Kiwanis  
John Wachowski, Community  
Caralliene Westbrook, Community  
Kay Yamamoto, Community, Rotary  
Kim Eves, Ex-Officio

## DISTINGUISHED TEACHERS 2010

ALISON ALLERTON  
Eastern Middle School  
Music/Choral – Grades 6-8

JESSICA BAKER  
North Street School  
ALP, Grades 2-5

RITA BAKER  
Greenwich High School  
World Languages – German, French

CHARILL PIERCE  
Parkway School  
Grade 1

KATHLEEN STEINER  
Greenwich High School  
Wellness Education

SHERI LYN WOLLARD  
Central Middle School  
Science, Grade 8

## NOMINATORS OF RECIPIENTS

**KAREN MAIR**

NOMINATED ALISON ALLERTON

**LIESBETH CARBALLO**

NOMINATED JESSICA BAKER

**MARCIA SCHENKER**

NOMINATED RITA BAKER

**LAURA GLANVILLE**

NOMINATED CHARILL PIERCE

**LORRAINE DUFFY**

NOMINATED KATHLEEN STEINER

**CONSTANCE BARRETT**

NOMINATED SHERI LYN WOLLARD



## ALISON ALLERTON

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EASTERN MIDDLE SCHOOL  
MUSIC/CHORAL GRADES 6-8

Patrick Taylor, a colleague, lauded, "(Alison Allerton) is one of the most articulate, intelligent, and passionate people I know and when those qualities are recombined with her depth of knowledge and wide-ranging skill set, she is truly a force to be reckoned with." In her eight, relatively short, years with the Greenwich Public Schools, Ms. Allerton has taught music and choral instruction to all grade levels, created new music curriculum, designed and implemented new courses at the middle and high school level, directed musical productions that yielded record-breaking attendance, earned her Masters degree, and garnered the respect and admiration of her colleagues, parents, and most importantly her students. Alison Allerton's nominator, Karen Mair, said, "Her profound impact on students and the music education program across Greenwich continues to raise the bar. Everyone who has had the privilege of performing in or attending the inspirational performances her numerous music ensembles deliver comes away knowing that Alison Allerton is, unquestionably, an outstanding Distinguished Teacher."

Ms. Allerton has been teaching for the Greenwich Public Schools since 2001 with a one-year leave to pursue her Masters degree in 2007-2008 at the prestigious Eastman School of Music. She has taught music and/or choral instruction to all grade levels, beginning with Riverside School in 2001 directing

the fourth and fifth grade chorus. She also taught general music, K-5, and served on a District Committee to re-write the Music curriculum in 2001-2002. In 2004, she began teaching at Eastern Middle School and in 2006 added Greenwich High School to her 'repertoire.' At Greenwich High School, Ms. Allerton directed the Freshman Chorale, assisted in the direction of the grade 10-12 Concert Choir, and taught Music Theory to students in grades 9-12 – a new course for which she created the curriculum and the syllabus. Ms. Allerton is currently working full time at Eastern Middle School. Remarkably, she teaches General Music to sixth and seventh graders, Guitar to eighth graders; she directs the boys and girls auditioned choirs – the Eastmen and Treble Choir respectively, as well the Grade 6-8 Chorus; and created a new Choral Music class for each grade level to provide small group voice instruction. In addition, she is the Director for Eastern's talent show and musical theater production. Ms. Allerton is currently the Chair of the District Committee to rewrite the District Arts Curriculum. She also served on the Secondary Schools Review Committee (2008-2009), participating in the creation of the District's "Vision of the Graduate."

Ms. Allerton received her Bachelor of Music in Music Education, graduating magna cum laude from James Madison University, Harrisonburg, VA in 2000. She received her Master of Music Education with an emphasis in Choral Conducting from The Eastman School of Music at the University of Rochester, Rochester, NY in 2008.







## JESSICA BAKER

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NORTH STREET SCHOOL  
ALP, GRADES 2-5

Chuck Smith, North Street School Principal, said, “Jessica (Baker) has an exceptional command of subject matter and instructional practice, as well as an unparalleled understanding of the unique needs of every student with whom she works. I am amazed by her remarkable ability to make all students feel valued and included as equal and contributing members of the classroom.” As someone who has ‘degrees in psychology and math, interests in poetry and literature, and awards for writing and photography,’ her knowledge, skills and talents have served all learners at North Street School and across the District. While Ms. Baker’s teaching assignment is focused on students in the Advanced Learning Program (ALP), her varied roles as Coach, Learning Facilitator, School Improvement Team Co-Chair, and as part of the District’s Teacher Evaluation and Professional Learning (TEPL) Turnkey Training Committee and two Leadership Interview Committees have had widespread impact. Committed to improving the learning environment and addressing the needs of each of her students, Ms. Baker describes her work, “I am challenged every day by students who are smart, self-motivated, and thrive on learning. The challenge is to help them recognize and value the difference between learning and understanding. It is my responsibility to make learning personal and meaningful; to give it purpose and a context; to turn a thirst for information into a quest for knowledge and understanding.”

Ms. Baker began her career in education at North Street School in 2001 as a teacher for the Advanced Learning Program, Grades 2-5. She has designed and implemented the curriculum for high ability learners in the areas of Language Arts, Mathematics, and Science. As a Learning Facilitator for the school, Ms. Baker is the Co-Chair of the NSS Building Data Team, charged with reviewing and analyzing student data to inform instructional practice and to use in setting goals for continuous improvement. She is also Co-Chair of the school's Strategic Improvement Team and is involved in the school's Social-Emotional Learning Committee. This committee has developed an exemplary rubric to assess the traits of NSS Takes Action (Accept, Contribute, Think, Initiate, Own, Navigate). At the District level, Ms. Baker has been tapped twice to be a turnkey trainer – trained in implementing TEPL and facilitating a discussion around the Achievement Gap in our schools – she then works with staff at NSS to train them and/or to facilitate a discussion. She is currently a member of the Math Transition/Evaluation Committee, analyzing student data, and reviewing/revising guidelines for middle school placement in math.

Ms. Baker received her Bachelor of Arts – with a major in Psychology and a minor in Mathematics - from Loyola College in Baltimore, MD in 1999. She received her Master of Arts in Teaching from Sacred Heart University, Fairfield, CT in 2001.





## RITA BAKER

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GREENWICH HIGH SCHOOL  
WORLD LANGUAGES -GERMAN,  
FRENCH

The District's Program Coordinator for World Languages, Marcia Schenker, notes, "(Rita Baker) believes that all students can learn, and she sees her role to be one of motivator, friend, role model, coach, safety net when needed, cheerleader when needed, and most of all, partner, with both students and parents, in finding the secret to each child's success." A lifelong resident of Greenwich, a Greenwich High School graduate, and an educator for thirty-five years at the high school, Rita Baker is committed to each student that walks through her classroom door. In 'Frau' Baker's class - no matter their proclivity for language learning - each student is engaged in the pursuit of language acquisition, the respect for learning, and in the study of different cultures. Many of her students continue their language studies in college and throughout their lives. Ms. Baker is not only the 'goto' teacher when her colleagues need guidance, she is the consummate learner herself. She has immersed herself in learning new technologies, such as the SmartBoard, to enhance instruction and bring German and French cultures alive in her classroom. Ms. Schenker continues, "She is the quintessential teacher and the optimum collaborator."

Ms. Baker began teaching at Greenwich High School in 1975, as an English as a Second Language (ESL) and French teacher. She developed the original ESL program at the high school and

wrote the curriculum for the growing, multi-level program. In 1983, she became a German teacher, taking over a floundering program and turning it into a language of interest for the students, doubling the number of classes. She subsequently expanded the curriculum and added Level 4 and Advanced Placement classes. Since 2002, Ms. Baker has added Learning Facilitator and Staff Development Coach to her responsibilities. She has been lauded by her colleagues for her mentorship in submitting their BEST portfolios and in working towards tenure, and for her expertise and availability to coach teachers as they strive to address the needs of their students. In 1999, she chaired the World Language self-study committee for NEASC Accreditation and she is currently working with the World Language Program Coordinator in the program's curriculum review. Ms. Schenker commented that Ms. Baker's contributions to the program revisions "made a stunning impact on the entire K-12 curriculum document."

Ms. Baker received her Bachelor of Arts in French and German from Duke University, Durham, NC in 1975, graduating summa cum laude. She received her Masters in Teaching of English as a Second Language from Columbia University's Teachers College, NY, NY in 1980.





CHARILL PIERCE

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PARKWAY SCHOOL  
GRADE 1

Charill Pierce's nominator, parent Laura Glanville, states, "Charill works to determine what motivates each child on an individual basis and then reflects what works in each child's daily and long term development plan. Charill organizes her classroom to promote self-motivated activity, working hard to ensure that distractions are minimized and independent thought is encouraged...Charill stands out for her passion and intense love for her profession - a passion and love evident in each day the children spend with her in her classroom." Known for reflecting on her own teaching, embracing new instructional strategies, and mentoring colleagues new to the profession, Ms. Pierce is the consummate learner and educator. Several years ago she attended a workshop on teacher-led classroom walk-throughs at UCLA's School of Management. She brought the model to Parkway, where teachers have implemented the practice as a way to continuously reflect on and improve their instructional practice. Parkway Principal, Paula Bleakley said, "Ms. Pierce is a dedicated, reflective, creative person who is able to see the "big picture" in regard to education. Although she teaches first grade, which emphasizes many very specific reading skills, she ultimately understands her role in preparing students for the 21st century." She develops her instructional plan consistently balancing "content with process such as independence, higher order thinking, choice, reflection, and the application of new knowledge to real world situations."

Ms. Pierce began teaching in 1965 for the Easton Area Schools in Easton, PA. From 1965 to 1983, she worked as a substitute teacher while raising her three children. From 1983 to 1985 she taught at the Emma Willard School in Troy, NY and then moved to CT and taught with the New Canaan Schools from 1985 to 1990. A teacher with the Greenwich Public Schools since 1990, she has taught at New Lebanon School (1990-1992), Hamilton Avenue School (1992-1993), and at Parkway School since 1993. Ms. Pierce received the State's Celebration of Excellence Award in 1991 for innovation in teaching. As a primary grade teacher with experience teaching grades K-3, Ms. Pierce has contributed to multiple curriculum reviews - in Social Studies, Language Arts, Math, Science and Health. She is a member of Parkway's Higher-Order Thinking data team and the school's Core Student Assistance Team. She hosts Greenwich High School interns interested in the teaching profession every year and has been the Chair of the Parkway Social Committee for many years.

Ms. Pierce received her Bachelor of Science in Education from the University of Bridgeport, Bridgeport, CT in 1965. She received her Masters in Elementary Education from Kutztown University, Kutztown, PA in 1971.





KATHLEEN STEINER

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GREENWICH HIGH SCHOOL  
WELLNESS EDUCATION

Kathleen (Kathy) Steiner's colleague and nominator, Lorraine Duffy, said, "The breadth of her knowledge is extensive, but her unique forte is her ability to address the affective domain. She understands the pressures on today's teenagers and gives them the tools to deal with them in a constructive way. Personally, she is the embodiment of her message by living the lifestyle she advocates." With a passion for and an expertise in teaching students to make positive and healthy choices, Ms. Steiner strives to reach her students in the classroom and in their extra-curricular activities. As a faculty advisor/coach for the Girls Varsity Dance Team, Outreach Club and Fit 4 Life, Ms. Steiner works with her students to make connections between what is taught in the classroom and real life experiences. One of Ms. Steiner's students said, "(She) is the most amazing faculty advisor that any student organization or club could ask for. On top of her busy schedule, she puts forth an unbelievable amount of effort and support for Outreach and always makes herself available for conferences or questions. Any student would be lucky to work with a teacher that is so cooperative and has as much patience as Ms. Steiner."

Ms. Steiner began teaching in 1983 as a Special Education teacher with BOCES in Binghamton, NY. From 1986 to 1989

she worked for the Browning School in New York City as a Special Education teacher and a Math/Reading Assistant, and as an Associate Professor for Swimming & Fitness at Hunter College while pursuing her Masters in Health Education. In 1989 she came to Greenwich as a Special Education teacher with the vocational program at Greenwich High School. In 1991, after one year as the District's Substance Abuse Prevention Specialist, she became the Acting Program Coordinator for K-12 Health Education, developing a comprehensive health curriculum for the District. From 1994 to 1999, she taught at New Lebanon School, before returning to the high school as a Wellness Education Teacher. As a part of the high school team, Ms. Steiner has acted as club advisor to a number of student organizations and is developing a new Peer-to-Peer Support Group. She also developed a new course at the High School: Body Image & the Media, implemented in 2005. In addition to working with her colleagues to continuously update and improve the comprehensive health and wellness curriculum, she has been a member of the NEASC Accreditation, Whole Student Development, and Stress Management Committees at the high school. She is a Student Assistance Team facilitator and volunteers with the Names Day program. She is an Aerobics Coach at a local fitness center, a smoking cessation coordinator, and presents at numerous meetings, conferences, and community organizations on the topics of Nutrition, Fitness, and Alcohol Abuse Awareness

Ms. Steiner received her B.S. in Elementary and Special Education from SUNY Geneseo, Geneseo, NY in 1983. She received her M. S. in Health Education from Hunter College, New York City, NY in 1989.







SHERI LYN WOLLARD

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CENTRAL MIDDLE SCHOOL  
SCIENCE, GRADE 8

"Her commitment to creating thoughtful, diligent, and creative citizens of the world through her dedication to seeing that students assume responsibility for the way they treat themselves, their environment, and the people around them – ... in short her Social Action – is truly what makes her a Distinguished Teacher," noted her colleague and nominator, Connie Barrett. Whether she is working with her students as part of an extra-curricular service club or in the classroom, she guides her students in making connections and applying their learning to real world experiences. Each year she has her students collect data on the arrival of Spring as a way to track the effects of local weather on a biotic factor. She was invited to present her students' data to a gathering of scientists at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in Boston at a "Soap Box Lecture" as part of a regional discussion on climate trends and changes in weather patterns. Ms. Wollard strives to identify curriculum, programs and projects that will engage her students in learning – in and outside of the classroom. One of Ms. Wollard's students captures the learning experience after working with her and his peer on a service project, "This was an incredibly fun experience because we had to rely on each other and use teamwork as a main skill to pull this off. And the best part was that all the funds went to the Haiti earthquake recovery effort."

Ms. Wollard has been teaching Science at Central Middle School for sixteen of her eighteen years as an educator. She has taught at each of the three grade levels (6-8) including the advanced Science classes at Central. Ms. Wollard notes, "Each lesson is designed to encourage the enduring retention of concepts, and I believe if you give kids the tools to be amazing and a chance to explore in a manner which intrigues them, then they will rarely fail to grow, develop their interests and talents, and find their own passions. . . . I am a believer in the hands-on, minds-on, integrated approach to teaching. . . ." Ms. Wollard extends this belief beyond the classroom. As founder of Central's environmental, service and social club for students, Just Cause, she works with students on various activities throughout the year including a Thanksgiving Food Drive that provides meals for over 90 Greenwich families each year. She also started a Marine Biology Club – C.L.A.M.S. (Children Learning About Marine Systems) and a Physics Club, building and launching rockets. She coached the middle school field hockey team for eleven years and the girl's basketball team for several undefeated seasons. She has worked with colleagues to raise funds for "Building with Books" for the construction of a school in Africa.

Ms. Wollard received her Bachelor's degree from Plymouth State University, Plymouth, NH and her Master's degree from Southern Connecticut State University, New Haven, CT.



The Distinguished Teachers Awards Committee wishes to thank the following for their generous contributions:

Greenwich Rotary Club of Greenwich  
Greenwich Kiwanis Club of Greenwich

A special thank you to The Rotary Club of Greenwich for sponsoring the reception following the ceremony.

# DISTINGUISHED TEACHERS 1985 - 2009

2009

Gretchen Crandall  
Kathleen Harbort  
Anne Haymon  
Aaron Hull  
Susan Tracey  
Judith Wren

2008

Karen Anderson  
Rita Clair  
Camille Fusco  
Arianne Haley-Banez  
Christine Kovac  
Anthony Mullen

2007

Phyllis Dale  
Karen Maher-Cochran  
Mary Ann Murray  
Christina Shaw  
Gloria Sprigg  
Dana Tulotta

2006

Nan Barrett  
Liz Black  
William Bogardus  
Charles DiSapio  
Karen Harris  
Robert Wilson

2005

Mary Fike  
Diane Garofalo  
Cathy Mayo  
Gene Schmidt  
Patrick Taylor  
Julie Wang

2004

Andrea Abbott  
Rae Baczek  
Elaine Casale  
Karen Nagy  
Alice Neal  
Jonathan Smith

2003

Donna Conway  
Mark Epstein  
Courtney Hawes  
Brenda Macri  
Karen Riordan  
Medard Thomas

2002

Margot Bittenbender  
Jean Di Vincenzo  
Mariko Iwai  
Georgia Tedla  
Curtis Tipton  
John Whalen

2001

Michael Batcheller  
Alisa Lewis  
Jane Niwa  
Kathryn Onofrio  
Susan Whalen  
John Yoon

2000

Susan Batcheller  
Valerie Bolling  
Barbara O'Neill  
Francis Pierce II  
Susan Striker  
Louise Williamson

1999

Kenneth Alcorn  
A. Ray Hamilton  
Patricia Kohn  
Frederic Stewart  
Carole Tierney  
Doreen Zahn

1998

Nancy-AnneFitzgibbons  
Ledell Mulvaney  
Mary Pierce  
Barbara Schutzman  
Steve Rosenberg  
Judith Fell Woods

1997

Emma Oberheuser  
Susan Valenzi  
Dwight Wall  
Erica Wiberg  
Joanne Zammit  
Robert Zapor

1996

Christine Anderson  
Joan Beiser  
William Dinnean  
Carolyn Gilbert  
Barbara Gotch  
Carol Sutton

1995

Daniel Barrett  
Anne Gilhuly  
Chris Kazanas  
Susan Lickwar  
Judith Petersen  
Caralliene Westbrook

1994

Frank Arnone  
Lissa Bentley  
Victor Mazmanian  
Paul Rosenblum  
Marcie Schoenfeld  
Jerry Snyder

1993

Jory Lockwood  
Gail Montgomery  
Philip Nobile  
Sara Reilly  
Candace Robinson  
Janet Stroble

1992

John Boyton  
Jane Carlin  
Susan Hart  
Dena Phelps  
Carmel Signa  
Martha Taylor

1991

Brigid Barry  
William Bechem  
Elinor Carr  
Richard Kohn  
Jane Kahn  
Camilla Rogers

1990

Joan Lowe  
Terrence Lowe  
Julie Machen  
Mary Seitzer  
Lee Spong  
Steve Wallerstein

1989

Joel Adelberg  
Dolores Kenny  
Ralph Pettie  
Richard Piotrkowski  
Carol Rosenberg  
Ardith Williams

1988

Martha Awdziejewicz  
Carmelita Brooks  
Marjorie Klar  
Harry Kropp  
Kenneth Lyon  
Lorraine Termini

1987

Esther Bushell  
Christine Gunn  
Jeanete Hotchkiss  
George Mathes  
Anne Modugno  
Harold Trachtenburg

1986

Elizabeth Hughes  
Shirle Janowich  
Mary Livezey  
Marilyn Maxwell  
David Ross  
Lynn Washington

1985

Ellwood Autuori

Kathy Barnes

Josephine Frame

Lois Hebert

Barbara Lewis

Betsy Perna-Smith

## CRITERIA FOR IDENTIFYING DISTINGUISHED TEACHERS

- Inspires enthusiasm for learning and academic excellence
- Elicits a high level of achievement from students in relation to their ability
- Expects students to take responsibility for their own learning
- Shows a high mastery of subject matter
- Has the respect of students and colleagues
- Communicates well with parents
- Pursues personal and professional development above and beyond what is required of GPS teachers
- Contributes to curriculum and/or program development for the school or district
- Contributes to the school and/or community beyond the classroom





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