DISTINGUISHED TEACHERS AWARDS

Celebrating Excellence

The Distinguished Teachers Awards Ceremony

Tuesday, May 5, 2009

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 Connie Barrett and Mercy Vaillancourt

Western Middle School Jazz Emsemble
Conducted by Karen Anderson

Program Introduction and Master of Ceremonies

Louise Williamson
Chairman, Distinguished Teachers Awards Committee

Betty J. Sternberg
Superintendent of Schools

Anthony Mullen
2009 National Teacher of the Year

Presentation of 2009 Distinguished Teachers

Nominators of Recipients

Nancy Weissler
Chairman, Board of Education

L. Scott Frantz
State Senator

Please join us after the ceremony for a reception

2008-09
Distinguished Teachers Awards
Committee

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

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Kim Eves Ex-Officio

Distinguished Teachers 2009

Gretchen Crandall
North Mianus School
Grade 2 Teacher

Kathleen Harbort
Eastern Middle School
Grade 8, Science

Anne Haymon
Western Middle School
Grades 6-8, Art

Aaron Hull
Greenwich High School
Grades 10-11, History

Susan Tracey
Greenwich Public Schools Preschool @ Old Greenwich
Preschool Teacher

Judith Wren
Parkway School / Old Greenwich School
Instructional Coach

Nominators of Recipients

Gretchen Crandall
Nominated by Janine Wakim

Kathleen Harbort
Nominated by Stephanie Stich

Anne Haymon
Nominated by Kim Sitarz

Aaron Hull
Nominated by Joyce Allyson Mahoney

Susan Tracey
Nominated by Elizabeth Matys-Rahbar

Judith Wren
Nominated by Jacqueline Carlin

Gretchen Crandall

North Mianus School
Grade 2 Teacher

"Each child feels special! Personal best is expected from each student in Gretchen's (Crandall) class. She (creates) a nurturing, respectful environment that encourages every learner to reach his or her potential," declares Alisa Lewis, a colleague. Her nominators agree, Gretchen Crandall has a talent for differentiating her lessons to meet the needs of each child in her class. Her colleague continues, "(Gretchen) provides challenging enrichment for those students who have mastered the basic skills, while simultaneously readdressing a skill for those students who need it taught in an alternate way." This individualized approach extends to written, comprehensive feedback on all classroom assignments, homework and report cards. Her parent nominator, Janine Wakim said, "Such painstaking detail provides students with constructive feedback and parents with transparent view into overall classroom objectives and their child's specific progress." Ms. Crandall's principal, Bonnie Butera, concurs, "I keep a folder of her report card comments to share with new teachers...(serving) as a model they can aspire to achieve."

Ms. Crandall began teaching at Brunswick School, Greenwich, CT in 1981 . She taught various grade levels from Kindergarten through Fifth grade at this independent boy's school for seven years before coming to the Greenwich Public Schools. At Brunswick, Ms. Crandall also served as chair for the History

Curriculum Committee and participated on the Admissions and the Lower School Head Search Committees. In 1988, she took a position as a second grade teacher at North Mianus School. For more than 10 years, Ms. Crandall has been teaching North Mianus students at various grade levels and has contributed to the improvement efforts at both the school and District levels. She has been a grade team leader, student council advisor, spelling superstars teacher and an intern mentor. She has also been a valued member of the North Mianus School Strategic Improvement Team.

Ms. Crandall received a B.A. in history and elementary education from the College of Wooster, Wooster. OH in 1981; a M.A. in elementary education from Manhattanville College. Purchase, N.Y. in 1986; and is currently pursuing her Sixth-Year Degree from the University of Laverne, Oceanside, CA.

Kathleen Harbort

Eastern Middle School
Grades 8, Science

"Ms. Harbort…transformed me from a student who struggled to a student who learned to love science," said her student nominator, Stephanie Stich. Kathleen Harbort is committed to ensuring that her students are engaged in the learning process. Her principal, Ralph Mayo, said, "Kathy is a superior Science teacher who cares deeply about the well-being of each student assigned to her class. She literally spends hours upon hours beyond the regular school day preparing for the day's next lesson, reviewing and grading student work, and providing additional support to students who need it." Ms. Harbort's commitment extends beyond the classroom, supporting the students and her colleagues in extra-curricular activities at the school, attending sports events to cheer on her students, and as the 'official' EMS photographer. Her colleague, Erica Gerber marvels, "I have watched her former students parade in and out of the classroom year after year to just talk with Ms. Harbort. She delights in hearing about their successes in life and in helping them to problem solve through difficult times." Her student nominator agrees, "There are legions of devoted former students and colleagues far too numerous for me to keep track of that she regularly communicates with. This should come as no surprise after 33 years of being such a remarkable educator, colleague and friend."

Ms. Harbort has dedicated her teaching career to the Greenwich Public Schools, specifically at Eastern Middle School. She began teaching at what was formerly, Eastern Junior High School in 1976 and has taught Biology, Life Science and Physical Science to 7th and 8th grade students. She has also participated in numerous committees and programs that help to enhance the Science program, the school and the District. Ms. Harbort is currently participating in her fourth review of the Science curriculum in her 33 years with the Greenwich Public Schools. She is a member of the Eastern Middle School Strategic Improvement Team, and an annual chaperone on the 8th grade trip to Washington D.C. She has been the school photographer since 1981, documenting school sporting events, plays, musicals, and various events, service projects and school trips. She has acted as the Assistant Director for the annual Talent Show and Show Chorus performances for many years.

Ms. Harbort received a B.A. in Biology from Manhattanville College, Purchase, N.Y. in 1973; a Masters in Education from Boston University, Boston, MA in 1974; and a Sixth-Year degree in 2004. She also spent six summers in training at the Lincoln Center Institute (1990-1995) and two summers at the Colorado School of Mines (1996, 1997).

Anne Haymon

Western Middle School
Grades 6-8, Art

"She creates an atmosphere within her classroom that inspires students' enthusiasm for learning and continually nurtures their natural love of art. Artistic risk taking is encouraged in a supportive, caring environment and all efforts are treated with dignity and respect," said Anne Haymon's principal, Stacey Gross. A recent project of Ms. Haymon's design to celebrate Black History Month represents her commitment to engaging students of varying abilities in the learning process, exposing students to new techniques, creating interdisciplinary units, and celebrating and displaying one's work. Students researched two historically significant men, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and President Barack Obama. Using micrography art and miniscule script, they created two four-foot portraits of these men writing about their research findings and personal insights. These portraits were celebrated at Western's WOW Fest and are currently on display at the Rich Forum Rosenthal Gallery in Stamford. Ms. Haymon's colleague, Barbara Gotch, notes, "By engaging students and offering them opportunities for self expression, art can make positive changes in their lives. Anne prepares, supports, and instructs students and helps them to believe in themselves." Western parent, Kim Sitarz, adds, "During the last 31 years, Ms. Haymon's exceptional teaching and outstanding contributions have benefited all students, parents and teachers."

Ms. Haymon began teaching art to middle school students in 1974 in Mexico, N.Y. at the Fravor Road Middle School. Then after one year as a permanent art substitute teacher at Southern Lehigh High School in Center Valley, PA in 1977-78, she came to the Greenwich Public Schools and Western Middle School in 1978. For the last thirty-one (31) years, Ms. Haymon has been a dedicated art teacher, mentor, colleague and friend to students and staff at Western. She is the Learning Facilitator for Western's Unified Arts, World Languages and Media Services Departments chairing and organizing daily Team Meetings and advocating for teachers' needs. She has served on the Advisor Base, Social Emotional Learning, Scheduling, and Staff Development Committees at the school among numerous others. She also served as the WMS Yearbook advisor for twenty years and has directed the set and scenery design for 29 school musical productions. In addition, she established the Greenwich Arts Council Student Docent Program, and coordinates student art shows at the Byram Shubert Library and at the Board of Education's Havemeyer Building.

Ms. Haymon received her B.A. in Education/Art Education from the University of Missouri, Columbia, MO; her M.A. in Education from Fairfield University, Fairfield, CT; and has taken Sixth-Year credits at various area colleges.

Aaron Hull

Greenwich High School
Grades 10-11, History

"It is not that it is important to me to win just because I want to win, it's more that I don't want the way we are learning to end," said one of Aaron Hull's students. She was referencing the We The People competition for which Mr. Hull serves as advisor. This quote encompasses sentiments felt by parents, colleagues and – most importantly – students. Mr. Hull began this program at the high school five years ago. His teams have won the State Competition in the last two years and this year's team was one of the top ten in the National Competition. Whether in his Advanced Placement, Honors, or United States history classes, Mr. Hull is noted for his ability to engage his students, target instruction, and motivate students to pursue learning beyond the classroom. His colleague, Steven Swidler said, "Aaron challenges his students to go beyond their comfort zone in order for them to see that they can achieve greatness." Mr. Hull is innovative, actively pursuing ways to connect students to the world around them. In the classroom, he uses the SmartBoard technologies to incorporate resources from around the world into daily instruction. Outside the classroom, he involves students in serving their community, taking 24 Habitat for Humanity students to Greensburg, KS last year to aid in the tornado recovery efforts. Mr. Hull was recently awarded the International Politics Summer School Program Fellowship at Oxford University, U.K. by the English Speaking Union.

Mr. Hull began his teaching career as a tutor and "Teaching

Parent" at the Achievement Place for Boys, Inc. in Lawrence, KS in 1995. The Achievement Place serves as an alternative approach to supporting at-risk and/or delinquent youths, placing them in a family-like environment to teach students new social, self-help and academic behaviors. In 1998, Mr. Hull began teaching at Maize High School in Maize, KS where he led History Day, We the People competitions and Model Legislature trips. In 2003, he moved to Connecticut and began teaching Social Studies/ History at Greenwich High School. At GHS, Mr. Hull has been actively involved in developing curriculum and new courses, coaching the freshman girls' basketball and sailing teams, and the Greenwich Education Association (GEA), and the Members' Credit Union.

Mr. Hull received a B.A. in History from Bethel College in North Newton, KS in 1994, graduating Magna Cum Laude; and a M.A. in Political Science from the University of Kansas in Lawrence, KS in 1998. He also earned his Sixth-Year step in 2005.

Susan Tracey

Greenwich Public Schools
Preschool@ Old Greenwich School
Preschool Teacher

"(Ms. Tracey) truly goes beyond what anyone would expect from a teacher to show her students and their parents how much she truly cares for them. She is a beacon model of what an excellent teacher should be," notes the parent of one of Ms. Tracey's students. For over thirty years, Susan Tracey has been a dedicated teacher to typically developing students and students with special needs in Preschool through high school. Parents, colleagues and students all remark on her high expectations for each student, and her ability to help them set and achieve academic as well as personal goals. Her colleague nominator, Elizabeth Matys-Rahbar acknowledges, "She has always held high expectations for all of her students and therefore, students have achieved high levels of individual success as a result." Administrator, Karen Mabee, adds, "She is the teacher that does whatever it takes – goes the extra mile – to ensure that every student achieves or exceeds grade level academic expectations. She is the visionary, the leader, the friend, the communicator, the counsel, the instructor, the worker, THE teacher."

Ms. Tracey began teaching in 1971, and for eleven years taught preschool through first grade classes. After a brief hiatus from teaching, she came to Connecticut in 1989, began working at the Gengras Center and received her Masters degree in Special

Education. In 1993, she moved to Simsbury High School, Simsbury, CT as a Special Education teacher, acting also as an inclusion facilitator and team teacher. In 2001, Ms. Tracey taught at Horizons Middle School in New York, N.Y. for one year before coming to the Greenwich Public Schools (GPS) in 2002. From 2002 to 2006, she taught at Western Middle School as a Special Education teacher. Since 2006, Ms. Tracey has taught in the GPS Preschool program. In addition to the Distinguished Teachers Award, she has been recognized for her exemplary teaching skills in receiving the Special Education Services (SES) Award in 2005. She has designed and led professional development workshops, spent twelve years working with children in the Special Olympics, and assisted in the development of the Farmington Valley Transition Academy at the University of Hartford – giving students with significant disabilities the opportunity to attend school in an age appropriate environment (18-21 year olds) under the auspices of their home school system.

Ms. Tracey received her B.S. in Elementary Education from Northern Illinois University in DeKalb, IL in 1971; her M.A. in Special Education from St. Joseph College in West Hartford, CT in 1991; and her Sixth-Year from the University of New England in 2007.

Judith Wren

Parkway School/Old Greenwich School
Instructional Coach

Judith Wren is a teacher of teachers, and ultimately of students, as her colleague nominator describes, "Judy has remained the constant in maintaining intellectual rigor in the classroom. She has done all of this as a partner. She has earned respect and admiration through her dedication to teachers and the gentle hand with which she guides us. Because of her commitment to teachers, hundreds of Parkway and Old Greenwich students have reaped the benefits." An experienced teacher in her own right, Ms. Wren has gone on to enhance her instructional expertise in support of her colleagues. The consummate teacher is a continuous learner. Ms. Wren embodies this in her relentless pursuit of strategies and techniques to help teachers teach. She recently implemented "coaching cycles" to work with teachers to hone in on a particular strategy using a 4-6 week process. Parkway School principal, Paul Bleakley, describes another recently employed strategy that Judy studied at a three-day training at the UCLA School of Management – teacher-led Classroom Walkthroughs. As a result of implementing this collaborative technique, Ms. Bleakley notes, "teachers regularly spend time observing in each other's classrooms….they are open to feedback and coaching, energized by discussions with their peers and excited about the results that they are getting with their students." Parkway parent, Alison Burns, adds, "she has

taught our teaching staff with devotion, rigor, a commitment to excellence, and kindness. All of our teachers are better at what they do as a result of spending time with Judy. Judy sets the standard for our teachers to aspire to – and then helps them to reach the goal of creating the best possible learning environment for our students."

Ms. Wren has worked with teachers of the Greenwich Public Schools in professional development for ten years, beginning in 1999 as Staff Development Program Associate (K-12) and then as the Instructional Coach for Parkway and Old Greenwich Schools (2001-present). In the 25 years prior to coming to the Greenwich Public Schools, Ms. Wren served as teacher and/or administrator in various Districts in the U.S. and abroad: St. Peter's School, Hartford, CT (1974-75), Westbrook Public Schools, Westbrook, CT (1975-83, 1985-86, 1987-88), American Community School of London, Cobham, Surrey, England (1983-85, 1986-87), American School of Madrid, Madrid, Spain (1988-90), Stamford Public Schools, Stamford, CT (1990-97), and Wilton Public Schools, Wilton, CT (1997-99). She was recently named as the PreK-5 Science Coach for the District, effective July 1, 2009.

Ms. Wren received her B.A. in Child Study in 1974 and her M.A. in Special Education in 1978 from St. Joseph College in West Hartford, CT; her Certificate of Advanced Study from Fairfield University in Fairfield, CT in 1993; and completed course work in curriculum and teaching at Teachers College, Columbia University in New York, N.Y. in 1999.

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

Greenwich Rotary Club of Greenwich
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Hamilton Avenue School PTA
International School at Dundee PTA
New Lebanon School PTA
North Mianus School PTA
North Street School PTA
Old Greenwich School PTA
Parkway School PTA
Riverside School PTA

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

Distinguished Teachers 1985 - 2008

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 Piotrzkowski
Carol Rosenberg
Ardith Williams

1988
Martha Awdziewicz
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

- Inspire 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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