

# GREATER EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION FOUNDATION

## *Honors Our Everyday Heroes*

*Everyday Heroes are outstanding educators who promote exemplary dedication to the education of children and youth in Harford County Public Schools. Nominated by community, parents, students and peers, we applaud them.*

### **JODI JOHNSON, Abingdon Elementary School, 11 years, Grade 1**

Mrs. Johnson is a qualified professional who consistently puts children first. She continually reflects upon her effectiveness as an educator and teacher leader. She readily takes advantage of opportunities to grow professionally, makes a sincere effort to be receptive to new ideas and seeks opportunities for leadership. Mrs. Johnson is dedicated to her students. Her drive to meet the diverse needs of her children is commendable. Mrs. Johnson knows the power of a personal connection and works diligently to establish strong relationships with her students. Mrs. Johnson is exceptional with students who present with special needs. She is willing to adjust her instruction, modify classroom management systems and seek additional outside resources. Mrs. Johnson is to be commended for her work with new HCPS educators. Mrs. Johnson has also been instrumental with hosting several events for the Abingdon Community.

### **ROXANNE DODSON, Aberdeen Middle School, 28 years, Art, Grades 6-8**

Mrs. Roxanne Dodson is an outstanding teacher who routinely goes the "extra mile" to reach students. Recognizing students as individuals, she designs lessons that are multi-sensory in nature, with opportunities for students to demonstrate excellence on many levels. Mrs. Dodson takes great care to scaffold lessons in order to reach all of her students. She has mentored many student teachers over the years. In addition to her classroom contributions, Mrs. Dodson plays a vital role in beautifying the school, whether it's providing seasonal decorations for the faculty lounge, working on landscaping projects, or transforming the Student Union for the end of the year 8th Grade social, to name a few. Mrs. Dodson is also the proud parent of two HCPS Special Educators, twins Megan and Sarah Dodson, who work at Meadowvale Elementary School and Aberdeen Middle School.

### **KIMBERLY BEAN, Alternative Education Program, 4 years, School Psychologist**

Mrs. Bean carries herself in a professional manner and never fails to come up with a strong game plan that works towards improving student achievement. Mrs. Bean's mindset that every student can learn and her approach to building positive relationships have empowered our students towards reaching their individual goals. She provides students with useful strategies to help them focus on what they can do, instead of on what they can't control. Ms. Bean's understanding and caring manner allows her to work well with staff, students, and parents. She displays a genuine understanding and compassion toward her students that is unmatched by her peers. She is a leader in her field as evidenced by her work on both school-based and county committees. Here at the Alternative Education program we are proud to have her on our team and for all that she provides for our school and our communities.

### **SIMONE MORAN, Bakerfield Elementary School, 18 years, Art Teacher K-5**

Mrs. Moran is a dedicated art teacher that finds special talents in each and every one of her students. She plans interactive lessons that engage students and encourage them to try new things. She creates a positive teaching environment where students feel safe to take risks. Her

above and beyond to help students create art work that is amazing. Students are given the opportunity to share a piece of their art at the annual Bakerfield Art Show. The art displayed allows children to share their talents with their families and the community. The school-wide art show is an impressive task that many would shy away from. Mrs. Moran is devoted to the staff and students of Bakerfield Elementary School!

#### **JILL KRABITZ, Bel Air Elementary School, 27 years, Grade 2**

Mrs. Krabitz lives and breathes our Mission: Believe Achieve Empower Succeed. She is an outstanding educator because she herself is a learner. The most effective intervention is the classroom teacher, and Mrs. Krabitz works tirelessly to provide our teachers with instructional support through book studies and the monitoring of our PDS with Towson. Additionally, Mrs. Krabitz researches new and innovative ways to engage students in learning, her most recent initiative was working with students in grades to create a Genius Hour. For the past 3 years, Mrs. Krabitz has collaborated with BAHS Bio-medical Program to establish a Stem Summer Camp.

#### **KATIE SCHMEDES, C. Milton Wright High School, 8 years, Special Education, English, 9-12**

Katie Schmedes exemplifies the definition of Everyday Hero. She currently serves as the Department Chair for the Special Education Department. She is a role model for teachers of all disciplines, and for students of all grades at our high school. Katie's willingness to take on difficult projects (often on her own time), and her amazing focus and attention to detail have resulted in great success for student achievement, and great success for teacher growth as educators. Katie's love for her profession, for the students under her charge, and for the craft that encompasses the role of all educators has garnered her the attachment of "Excellent."

#### **JEEN GREIG, Church Creek Elementary School, 9 years, Kindergarten**

Jeen Greig is a talented educator who teaches with incredible energy and passion for her students. Jeen holds all her students to high expectations but allows room for each student to grow at his or her own pace. Her creative teaching style combined with her outstanding classroom management creates a positive learning environment for her students. Church Creek staff members who co-teach or serve as inclusion helpers or instructional assistants in her classroom describe her as flexible and understanding and compare the classroom atmosphere to that of a family. She is helpful, hardworking and committed to her students and colleagues.

#### **DEBBIE PERRY, Deerfield Elementary School, 23 years, Art**

Mrs. Perry is a graduate from Deerfield Elementary and loves to give back to her former school. Last year she helped organize a beautification project in the main hallway of the school. The school was designed years ago after the theme 'America the Beautiful' and Mrs. Perry wanted to do a staff painting project that represents what makes America unique. The staff was encouraged to paint a flag from any country that represents themselves, or any student, as we all come together to make America the place it is. As a result the main hallway is an inspiration of unity. Mrs. Perry has been a member of various committees in the school and in the county as well.

#### **KIM GLACKIN, Edgewood Elementary School, 10 years, Special Education**

Kim Glackin is truly dedicated to the students, staff, and families of Edgewood Elementary School. She is enthusiastic about teaching and learning and works tirelessly to do whatever it takes to ensure her students are successful and their parents have everything they need to help their students. Mrs. Glackin creates a warm and nurturing environment for students as well as staff, often having special rewards for students and surprise treats for the staff. She is the epitome of the bucket-filling philosophy at Edgewood Elementary and we are very lucky to have her as part of our family!

#### **ALLISON JEFFERSON, Edgewood High School, 10 years, Special Education**

Allison Jefferson is one of the most amazing and selfless teachers to ever work at EHS. She works

#### **KAYLEEN BELZNER, Prospect Mill Elementary School, 16 years, School Counselor**

Mrs. Belzner is an outstanding asset to the Prospect Mill staff and school community. As a school counselor she is caring, compassionate and a valuable resource to the community and children at Prospect Mill. Mrs. Belzner's focus on school climate has led to the recognition of Prospect Mill receiving the Maryland Center for Character Education "2014 - 2015 School of the Year" for Character Education.

Kay Belzner is to be commended for her positive, collaborative and trusting environment that she establishes as a School Counselor. Mrs. Belzner is instrumental in the building of a school counseling program that is modeled after the American School Counselor Association guidelines that addresses the academic, personal/social, and career domains. She continues to foster a climate for students being safe, respectful and responsible.

#### **CAITLIN POTESIO, Roye-Williams Elementary School, 6 years, Mentor Teacher**

Roye- Williams Elementary School would like to nominate Caitlin Potesio for our everyday hero. Caitlin began her teaching career in HCPS at Meadowvale Elementary. For the last 2 years, she has been the mentor teacher at RWES. She is committed to teachers and students. Caitlin goes above and beyond her job expectations, and models what she teaches. You can often find Caitlin planning with teachers, providing PD and supporting in the classrooms. She's is a great support, resource, and friend! Mrs. Potesio is our HERO EVERYDAY!

#### **SUEELLEN NORTH, Southampton Middle School, 33 years, Art**

According to Maya Angelou, "a hero is any person really intent on making this place a better place for all people." Ms. North voluntarily sponsors our after school art club and the Student Service Organization. She organizes faculty "Goodie Days" throughout the year and coordinates meals for sick staff members. She also coordinates our clothing drive and paints the backdrop for our school musicals. In addition, to mentoring new and experienced teachers, she provides the ultimate art education experience for our students. Ms. North wears many hats to make this world a better place.

#### **ASHLEY WAGNER, William Paca/Old Post Rd Elem School, 10 years, Kindergarten**

Ashley epitomizes dedication to teaching. She nurtures each child in her classroom to their fullest potential. Ashley uses innovative strategies to create a bright and exciting classroom that supports her students. Through the use of technology, movement, and arts integration she creates lessons that completely engage her kindergarteners. Ashley also contributes her expertise as a member of county level curriculum writing teams. The support she provides her teammates is unwavering and she always goes above and beyond. Ashley is a wonderful resource, colleague, and person. We are proud to say she is our Everyday Hero at William Paca/Old Post Road.

#### **SARAH DEVAN, Youth's Benefit Elementary School, 9 years, Grade 5**

Ms. DeVan is an excellent educator who continually goes above and beyond for her students and school. She is committed to her students and their overall growth as learners and productive citizens. She strives to learn as much as she can in order to be better prepared to be the best teacher she can be. She hosts parent information nights, attends regular PTA Meetings and is a faculty presenter for school wide professional development. Ms. DeVan is someone who understands the importance of being a contributing member of our school staff. She not only lifts her students higher, she lifts the adults who work with her to another level. This is the true testament of a great educator. Her achievements and drive resonate far beyond her classroom walls. It is my pleasure to recommend Ms. DeVan as she is an invaluable asset to our students, school, and community.

skillfully guiding the most challenging student to success. Mrs. Newby's integrity and her knowledge of her role as a teacher and substitute administrator are superior. She accepts every task with enthusiasm and seeks new challenges.

#### **DEBORAH STEWART, Jarrettsville Elementary School, 36 years, Grade 5**

Mrs. Deborah Stewart is an outstanding educator and consummate professional. She has devoted her life to improving and enriching the lives of children. She derives great satisfaction in watching her students grow academically and emotionally as they become lifelong learners. She also values playing an integral role as a member of the School Improvement and Fifth Grade Teams. Mrs. Stewart embodies the character, stamina and values that makes Jarrettsville Elementary the school it is today. She always puts the needs of others first, and is ready to accept a new challenge or opportunity, many times at a moment's notice. She is known by staff as a fun, dedicated team player. Debbie Stewart is our Everyday Hero, and we are thankful that she is a member of our Jarrettsville family!

#### **MICHAEL HARRIS, Joppatowne High School, years 16, Social Studies/Athletic Director**

Mike Harris is the embodiment of Mariner Pride. As an alumnae of Joppatowne High School, he is a role model to our students and community. Mike Harris was a scholar athlete in high school and he represents both aspects of those traits as the Athletic Director and Social Studies teacher. He continually strives to foster support, empowerment, and achievement for the students of the Joppatowne community. As a "gentle giant", he is an asset to the Joppatowne community and a visible symbol of Mariner pride and spirit.

#### **SHELBI WILHELM, Magnolia Elementary School, 7.5 years, Grade 1**

Ms. Wilhelm is a valuable member of the Magnolia School family. Shelbi provides leadership in her role as our School Improvement Team Facilitator and active member of our Ron Clark/PBIS Quality Improvement Team. Ms. Wilhelm consistently develops strong positive relationships with students and families, and the school wide community. Ms. Wilhelm goes out of her way to welcome parents and volunteers into her classroom as partners in our students' academic journey. Ms. Wilhelm's dedication and commitment to the students and community of Magnolia Elementary School is the reason we believe she is our Everyday Hero.

#### **HEATHER ZUKUS, Magnolia Middle School, 10 years, Physical Education and Health**

"Still waters run deep" perfectly describes Heather Zukus. Working behind the scenes of Magnolia Middle School for ten years, Ms. Zukus has taken positive leaps forward and initiative within the physical education department by organizing field trips, providing professional development and establishing department student incentives. Her innovative use of technology in physical education has made Ms. Zukus instrumental in Magnolia Middle's successful implementation of BYOT. Recently, Ms. Zukus has employed her drive and talent by serving on the PBIS team helping to align P.E. procedures with our school wide culture rubrics. Her work included designing engaging "Training Camp" lessons for students. Ms. Zukus is an example of how physical education teachers can support achievement school wide. Ms. Heather Zukus is definitely a "student first" kind of teacher.

#### **JENNIFER COVERT, North Harford Elementary School, 15 years, Grade 4**

Ms. Jenn Covert loves being a teacher! She is enthusiastic about her students and her curriculum. Ms. Covert is an advocate for each of her students, making sure that they have what they need to be successful and to feel valued. She spends many hours outside the school day to ensure that her lessons are well planned and that her classroom and school environment is ready to welcome students for the day's learning. Her love of life is evident in all that she does and positively impacts her students and their learning. Ms. Covert is truly a hero to the students at North Harford Elementary

in the hallway and she always greets you with a smile. She never complains, always works hard, and loves her students. Allison serves as a resource and support for the parents while being an advocate of the students' needs to parents and the EHS community. She provides her students with authentic learning opportunities that caters to their diverse needs and interests. She embodies the spirit of Edgewood and shows us each day what it means to work from the heart.

#### **SARAH WESTERVELT, Edgewood Middle School, 7 years, Grade 8**

Mrs. Westervelt teaches with her heart and soul. She believes in the capacity of kids and works earnestly to offer academic and social support to all students. She is a champion for students which distinguishes her as an educator. She seeks to understand students' needs in order to best provide the systems of support they need. She is an energetic teacher, positive example, and innovative thinker. Her contributions in the school contribute to the larger community as students leave having been influenced by her consistent goal to inspire them to greater heights. She is worthy of this recognition as a GEEF Everyday Hero as she is a shining example of learning as a lifelong process.

#### **JAIME CORNMAN, Forest Lakes Elementary School, 15 years, Reading Specialist**

Ms. Jaime Cornman is an integral part of the Forest Lakes community. As a reading specialist, she works with students, staff, and parents. Her care and compassion to help those struggling to read combined with her expert knowledge is a winning combination for our students. Her colleagues describe her as "willing to go above and beyond for every grade level and class". Mrs. Cornman provides valuable professional development to every teacher thus helping all students be successful. She is a resource for our parents and organizes many family events. FLES is honored to nominate Ms. Cornman as our Everyday Hero.

#### **ELIZABETH BARNABA, Havre de Grace Elementary School, 9 years, Grade 1**

Elizabeth Barnaba is a hero who touches the future by way of her commitment to students and the school community of Havre de Grace Elementary. She is an educator who is always focused on what she can do for children. She models grace in her interactions with all whom she encounters. She teaches her students to believe they can accomplish anything and then pushes them to move mountains.

Ms. Barnaba is a teacher leader. As the chair of the Positive Behavior and Intervention Supports (PBIS) team and a House Team Leader, she serves students and teachers by developing school wide expectations for student behavior and deportment. Under her stewardship, the PBIS team achieved Gold status for three consecutive years!

#### **DEB MATEER, Havre de Grace High School, 19 years, Math, Cognitive Tutor**

Mrs. Mateer an exceptional teacher who can relate to all levels of students. Whether working with Calculus II students or Cognitive Tutor students, Mrs. Mateer brings the same level of preparedness and commitment to her students. She is able to present information in a manner that allows students to succeed. Mrs. Mateer has had numerous students receive a 5 on the AP Calculus AB and BC exams. In addition to being an amazing teacher, Mrs. Mateer is also a very dedicated member of our faculty. Mrs. Mateer is the math department chair, a member of the School Improvement Team, the social committee, the hall of fame committee, helps with the Warrior Pride Band, and is co-sponsor of the HHS chapter of the National Honor Society.

#### **ELIZABETH NEWBY, Havre de Grace Middle School, 12 years, Grade 8 Language Arts**

Mrs. Newby displays a natural talent for working with staff, students, parents, and administration. Her professionalism, understanding of equality and social justice, and integrity are of the highest caliber. Mrs. Newby understands the importance of reflecting on current teaching practices and she recently became a Nationally Board Certified teacher in the area of English Language Arts. Mrs. Newby demonstrates exceptional high acumen as a classroom manager. She understands the importance of having every student in the classroom and available for instruction. She is capable of