

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.

ERIN KASSOUF, Abingdon Elementary School, 4 years, Special Education, Grade 4

Mrs. Kassouf is an exceptional 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 and willingly shares her knowledge. Mrs. Kassouf is a lifelong learner who embraces each day with a positive attitude. She is receptive to new ideas and truly enjoys making a difference in the world of special education. Mrs. Kassouf continually goes above and beyond for children. Mrs. Kassouf prides herself on her ability to engage her students with relevant, active learning. Mrs. Kassouf is a very organized individual who adheres to all timelines. Mrs. Kassouf is easy to work with due to her optimistic, flexible nature and is an inspiration to her colleagues. She provides supports to her teammates and mentors new special educators. Mrs. Kassouf is the pivotal difference between a child's success and failure.

ASHLEY JOHNSON, Bakerfield Elementary School, 7 years, Grade 4

Ms. Johnson is the teacher that every parent would want for their child. She is a dynamic person that makes everyone feel validated. She demonstrates a true passion for teaching and compassion for the students and families she works with. She does whatever is needed to help all children succeed while making sure the teachers and families she works with feel supported. Her willingness to think outside of the box has provided many students a path to success. At Bakerfield Elementary, she has stepped up as a true leader. She provides her grade level and the math goal team with knowledge and a drive to always learn more. We have seen Ashley grow and flourish into a professional resource that many rely on. Ashley Johnson is a true Hero that exemplifies the word Excellence!

JO-ELLEN SHANNON, Bel Air Elementary School, 15 years, Math, Grade 5

Jo-Ellen Shannon teaches 5th grade math, at Bel Air Elementary School. She is an exemplary teacher who makes math fun and engaging. She is knowledgeable of her craft and seeks ways to increase her knowledge through professional development opportunities. She supports students beyond the school day through her Math Club, she supports our teachers through professional development, and she supports our county through curriculum writing. As our SIT Facilitator, she assists us in determining our instructional focus, data collection, and analysis. Mrs. Shannon is our Math Hero, our SIT HERO, our Everyday HERO.

MICHAEL BROGLEY, C. Milton Wright High School, 10 years, Social Studies, Grades 9-12

'Fostering true citizenship for all students' would be the appropriate subtitle for Mr. Michael Brogley's daily mission at C. Milton Wright High School. In the classroom Mr. Brogley creates student-centered lessons connecting to current events which not only generate high level student interest in the subject of American Government, but also results in outstanding student achievement on both the Government High School Assessment and Advanced Placement exams with passing scores for virtually all test takers. Outside the classroom, Mr. Brogley engenders a spirit of altruism among students and community heading up the Autism Speaks fund-raiser. This annual event, spreads the word about autism, breaks down barriers to understanding, and builds compassion and genuine involvement. It is truly magical to see our students with autism

VALERIE SCHAFFER, Churchville Elementary School, 15 years, Grade 2

Mrs. Schaffer is a teacher in room 218 of Churchville Elementary School. Inside room 218, you will see a rug, inspirational sayings, anchor charts, and displays of student artwork and letters. As years end, her students move on, shine bright, and always remember their time in room 218. Those students are not necessarily the ones who sit behind her desks; they are all who come in contact with her. Valerie is a leader who is always willing to lend a helping hand, guide you through your first year, and teach you. I know this from experience because I was one of Valerie's seeds during my first year of teaching.

ALISHA WELK, Deerfield Elementary School, 5 years, Grade 5

Mrs. Welk is a passionate 5th grade teacher. For over 5 years now she has been there for the students in her community while living in the same area. Mrs. Welk has engaged students academically over the years and has represented her grade level on the School Improvement Team for a few years now. Mrs. Welk has gone above and beyond as a teacher by attending many events for her students outside of school hours and has kept in contact with many students after they leave 5th grade. Mrs. Welk understands that building relationships are a priority before learning can take place. Students have a teacher for a lifetime with Mrs. Welk.

JOHN WOJCIECHOWSKI, Edgewood High School, 6 years, Instrumental and IB Music, Grades 9-12

Mr. Wojciechowski is a hero because he is committed to the success of all of his students as evidenced through his extreme passion for the EHS Marching Band. Now in his sixth year of teaching, and fifth year as Band Director, he has afforded his students many valuable community experiences: participation in all holiday parades, many local business events, and this year, is planning a trip to Disney World in Florida! Mr. Wojciechowski is also a hero for preparing his students for college and career readiness through his forward thinking of utilizing technology in his classroom which enhances musical literacy and facilitates interdisciplinary connections. His students are exposed to, and benefit from communicating and responding in the way they are most comfortable—their phones, and other HCPS approved electronic devices. His patience, and passion for building the learning capacity of his students is exceptional!

KRISTIE SMITH, Edgewood Middle School

Mrs. Kristie Smith displays a positive attitude about teaching and learning. She works hard to build positive relationships with students, parents, and colleagues. She builds community through her work in the classroom, on committees, and on school projects. She is well-respected for her willingness to work hard and support others. She is a hero who acts with humility every day.

JAMES BROWN, Fallston Middle School, 22 years, French and German, Grade 8

Jimmie Brown teaches French and German in the eighth grade at Fallston Middle School. In addition to teaching, he is the School Improvement Team (SIT) Facilitator, department liaison, field trip coordinator, and organizer for the end-of-year awards assembly. Jimmie approaches teaching with a sense of humor. He believes that if he can motivate students to engage in lessons, explore with the language, and have fun while using it, solid test scores will follow. He ardently believes all students can learn and be active participants in their education. His approach to instruction is innovative and engaging, encouraging even the most reluctant student to learn.

WILLIAM CARPENTER, Southampton Middle School, 43 years, Science, Grade 7

Bill Carpenter is an outstanding, selfless teacher who goes the "extra-mile" every day with students and staff. He runs a model classroom with his positive environment where students feel warm and welcome. He works tirelessly to ensure his students are engaged, successful and passionate about science (he is our Bill Nye). He leads his students to volunteer with: American Red Cross Blood Drives, The SMS Patriotism Program, The SMS Marathon of Achievement, A Talent Show benefitting Casey Cares Foundation, SMS Dream Foundation which benefits: military families, Perry Point VA Medical Center, Paul's Place, Bel Air Volunteer Fire Company, SMS families in need, Operation Christmas Child, Community Food Drives, Salvation Army Bell Ringers and much more. He has taught exclusively at SMS for years, he was department chair for much of that time, he has been nominated several times as HCPS Teacher of the Year and serves on our SIT team.

PAM MARKOWSKI, William Paca Old Post Road Elementary School, 30 years, Grade 3

Mrs. Markowski exemplifies the characteristics of a master teacher through her in-depth knowledge of curriculum, exceptional instructional practices, and positive relationships with all students. Mrs. Markowski has the exceptional ability to maintain a balance with teaching to grade level outcomes and remembering the importance of creating a classroom environment that builds student excitement and commitment to life-long learning. She makes it her priority to get to know the whole child and establishes a partnership with the parents and community in order to build a supportive relationship that will ensure the success of all of her students. Throughout Mrs. Markowski's thirty years with Harford County Public Schools, she has continued to seek out professional learning opportunities that have allowed her dedication to be acknowledged through educational partnerships. Those who have had the opportunity to work alongside Mrs. Markowski and learn from her professional attributes are truly considered the lucky ones.

SUSAN SMITH, William S James Elementary School, 9 years, School Counselor

Mrs. Smith is an outstanding educator and teacher leader. She ensures the students and staff at William S. James Elementary feel safe, happy and comfortable in the school environment. You will often find Mrs. Smith in classrooms teaching lessons, working with small groups or comforting a teary eyed student (or parent!). Mrs. Smith is an advocate for all children. She puts their needs ahead of her own and exhibits what it means to be an outstanding educator. Mrs. Smith connects to the community and works with many outside partnerships to support families throughout the year. Each morning, you will find Mrs. Smith greeting students with a smile and ensuring we are ready for learning. Mrs. Smith truly exemplifies a hard-working, caring, compassionate and truly professional educator in all that she does. The students, staff and community are so fortunate to have Mrs. Smith as our school counselor.

NITREASE QUICKLEY, Joppatowne High School, 15 years, English

Nitrease Quickley is a role model and supportive colleague at Joppatowne High School. She strives to impart motivation to our students about academic achievement and personal growth. Ms. Quickley tutors students; including those not in her classes, before and after school. Always a cheerful spirit, Ms. Quickley is present at many of the extra-curricular activities occurring at school. She is there to let Joppatowne students know that she cares about them in varied aspects of their lives. Ms. Quickley is a teacher Department Chair, coach for sports, tutor for intervention. Most importantly, she has a generous spirit that radiates to her students and our school community.

KIM KEATING, North Harford Elementary School, Reading Specialist, 24 years

Mrs. Kim Keating is a dedicated professional and teacher leader whose first goal is always to do whatever is needed to help each child find success. As a reading specialist she co-teaches with classroom teachers in multiple grades in order to provide each student with an educational program designed just for their needs. Additionally, she provides teachers with training in new programs, analyzes data with, and for, teams of teachers, organizes interventions, secures needed materials, and provides whatever support is needed so that our students are able to see their own accomplishments. In addition to her work in classrooms, Mrs. Keating is an active member of the NHES SIT, the new FIT club for students and staff, and volunteers at many of our numerous afterschool and evening activities. If something needs to be done, Mrs. Keating offers input, solutions, and her own time to help get it done. Along with her colleagues, she has been instrumental in helping NHES to be recognized as a 2016 Maryland and National Blue Ribbon School. We are proud to have Mrs. Keating representing NHES as our Everyday Hero!

SCOTT GROVE, Norrisville Elementary School, 20 years, Grade 5

Mr. Grove goes above and beyond for the staff and students of Norrisville Elementary School. You will often see Mr. Grove attending PTA meetings, planning and participating in virtually every school event, weeding the courtyard during the summer, and making connections with every student in the building even though he teaches 5th grade. Additionally, Mr. Grove has served on the Safety, Green School, Science, and School Improvement Teams and also serves as our Teacher-in-Charge. In his work with students, Mr. Grove displays an enthusiasm and passion that is contagious. He is highly respected by the staff, students, and families and we are proud that he is our GEEF Everyday Hero!

HEATHER MORRIS, Roye-Williams Elementary School, 15 years, Reading Specialist

Heather has been teaching for 19 years, including 15 years for HCPS and 6 years at Roye-Williams Elementary. Heather goes above and beyond to help our teachers and students. She has provided many after-school book studies; the most recent focused on the book Notice and Note. Additionally, Heather works daily with teachers and students utilizing techniques that best support learning. Heather also oversees our monthly Black-Eyed Susan Book Club for 4th and 5th grade students. One teacher summed it up best when she said, "I have always admired Heather, but after co-teaching with her the past two years, hearing her story at the Ignite Leadership Summit, and watching her spark so much passion and excitement in our Roye-Williams students, I can't think of anyone else that is more deserving of the Everyday Hero Award."

JULIE LINDNER, Forest Lakes Elementary School, 5 years, Special Educator

Ms. Lindner is an exceptional special educator. She works hard to ensure all students' needs are met. General educators enjoy working with Ms. Lindner and collaborating with her to create and implement well structured, differentiated lessons for students in the co-teaching environment. Ms. Lindner goes above and beyond to form relationships with all of her students and believes in all of her students. Students in Ms. Lindner's classes are held to a high standard of learning. The Forest Lakes Staff appreciates all that Ms. Lindner does and enjoys working with her on a daily basis.

JOANNA SCOTT, George D. Lisby Elementary School at Hillsdale, 8 years

Ms. Scott began her career as an Inclusion Helper at Lisby-Hillsdale, completed her student internship at the school, and has spent all eight years of her teaching career there; her dedication to the students and community is obvious. Her instruction is intentional and she strives to make learning meaningful and fun in a warm, caring environment. Joanna is known for her quick wit and connects to students through her humor and upbeat manner. Ms. Scott serves the school in numerous capacities beyond her classroom; she is the Teacher in Charge, a member of the School Improvement Team, teaches a summer STEM program, and attends morning and evening family events. Her teammate noted, "Even though she has a heavy workload of her own she always makes time to help me and others. She goes above and beyond for her colleagues and her students."

RICK HAUF, Havre de Grace High School, 23 years, Music, Grades 9-12

For over 20 years, Richard Hauf has lead the instrumental music program at Havre de Grace High School. His performance groups have earned superior ratings on many occasions and have traveled to various destinations, including Disney World and Universal Studios in Orlando, the Veteran's Day parade in New York City, the Cherry Blossom parade in Washington D.C., and the Miss America parade in Atlantic City. Richard coordinates the Hall of Fame program, co-advises the National Honor Society, assists with stage productions, and coaches girls' volleyball. He is adored by his students and the community.

MARGARET MILLER, Homestead-Wakefield Elementary School, 25 years, Grade 4

Mrs. Margaret "Peggy" Miller is an outstanding educator because she understands and values the importance of strong relationships with the students and families she serves. Mrs. Miller is the teacher who can always make a connection with a child regardless of his/her strengths and needs. She exercises an amazing level of patience and care with regards to students who need additional support. She truly is an active listener and seeks to understand the viewpoints of each child. Her warm smiles and hugs are appreciated by those who are lucky to be in her class.

TRACI FREY, Jarrettsville Elementary School, 22 years, Grade 5

Mrs. Traci Frey is a kind, soft spoken educator dedicated to enhancing every child's quality of life - academically, socially and emotionally. In order to educate the whole child, Mrs. Frey leads by example. She is the JVES PTA liaison, organizer of annual food drives for Manna House, and is the Team Leader and Patriot Program Coordinator for fifth grade. She is responsible for creating and implementing the annual JVES Bingo, which was inspired by the desire to have fifth grade students visit Philadelphia as a culminating activity for successful completion of the Patriot Program. Mrs. Frey also works after school with students who would like to submit an entry in the annual JEMS Fair. Finally, as if this is not enough, she is also an active member of the Fallston High School PTA.