



New Hampshire

Department of Education

Eighteenth Annual Celebrating Leadership in Education Awards Ceremony

Honoring the:

New Hampshire Recipients of the Presidential Award for
Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching
New Hampshire Teacher of the Year Semi-Finalists,
Finalists and the
New Hampshire Teacher of the Year

December 5, 2019

Every day a New Hampshire teacher makes a difference in the life of a child. Every year the NH Department of Education honors outstanding educators who make their communities, profession, and the world a better place.

Program

Welcome Reception

Welcome and Remarks by Frank Edelblut
Commissioner of Education

Remarks by Keith Noyes
2019 NH Teacher of the Year

Dinner

NH Presidential Award for Excellence in
Mathematics and Science Teaching

NH Teacher of the Year Semi-Finalists,
Finalists and Teacher of the Year

Remarks by Kim Piper Stoddard
2020 NH Teacher of the Year

Close

**Message from Frank Edelblut
New Hampshire's Commissioner of Education**

Tonight, at the 18th Annual Celebrating Leadership in Education Awards Ceremony, we honor educators who are working to provide a quality education to each student in New Hampshire. While all classroom teachers should be recognized on a daily basis, the New Hampshire Department of Education annually honors exemplary educators through various recognition programs, using their example to inspire and motivate others throughout the state.

The goal of these awards is to amplify teacher voice and empower educators to take part in critical conversations regarding decisions affecting students, teachers and education as a whole. Teachers change lives and create futures — not only for our students but for our communities, our state and our nation. I often say there are many paths to bright futures, but all of these paths are made easier with the help of great teachers. It's only fitting that we should celebrate their role.

These awards recognize the total commitment to excellence in education in New Hampshire and all the outstanding teachers devoted to the highest level of student learning in their classrooms for some of our exemplary schools and outstanding educators using measures that go beyond the simple analysis of test scores.

We should all be proud that we are creating more opportunities for our students that meet their individual learning styles and help them reach high levels of achievement. I want to thank all the educators for what they do to provide the best educational opportunities for Granite State children.

Keith Noyes

School: Belmont Middle School
Teaching Experience: 20 Years

Keith Noyes, of Laconia, has been a fifth grade teacher at Belmont Middle School for seven years. He has taught all subjects and is currently finding his groove and passion for teaching fifth grade math to both enthusiastic and struggling mathematicians. Keith was just recently awarded the PSU Alumni Achievement award for 2019 for his commitment and success in New Hampshire public schools.

He believes that building strong relationships with kids is the foundation for all he hopes to achieve with his students. He and his fifth graders just started a Kindness Club at Belmont Middle School, where students and faculty are recognized for having kind hearts and impacting peers and their community. Preserving and working toward a positive school culture is critical to teachers and students and is one of Keith's core beliefs. It is these everyday moments, he says, of how students treat one another that makes teachers begin to see that the results of their labor are working. He says, "the discussions and experiences we expose our students to ultimately impact the culture of our building but, more importantly, allow for these students to enter adulthood being kind hearted citizens."

Keith strongly believes that learning needs to be relevant to student's lives and choices should be offered as frequently as possible. Realizing that all learners obtain, store, and retrieve learning at different rates and through unique experiences, has shifted the way he teaches, assesses, and ultimately determines each child's level of proficiency.

Keith holds a bachelor's degree in elementary education and a master's in reading and writing from Plymouth State. Looking ahead, Keith has been accepted into a doctoral program at Walden University, which he will begin early spring 2020. He is happiest when

challenging students, collaborating with colleagues and trying to make learning engaging and impactful.

Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching (PAEMST)

The PAEMST is administered by the National Science Foundation (NSF) on behalf of the White House. Established by Congress in 1983, the Presidential Awards are the nation's highest honors for teachers of mathematics and science. These New Hampshire recipients are in the running to be selected at the national level

The award recognizes outstanding K-12 teachers for their contributions in the classroom and to their profession, as well as acknowledge educators who are models in both their classrooms and in their communities. In addition this award provides positive examples for pupils and peers alike. The teachers receiving these awards are recognized for greatly improving their students' understanding in science and mathematics, for exemplary teaching, and for demonstrating educational goals that help them maintain positions of professional leadership. The goal of the program is to encourage highly capable individuals to enter and remain in the teaching field.

The competition alternates each year between teachers of grades K-6 and grades 7-12. After an initial selection process at the state level, a national panel of distinguished scientists, mathematicians, and educators recommends teachers to receive a national PAEMST. Winners at the national level receive a \$10,000 award from the NSF, as well as a trip for two to Washington, D.C., for a week of celebratory events and professional development activities.

About the NH Recipients – Math

Michelle Morton-Curit

School: Exeter High School

Teaching Experience: 25 Years

Michelle Morton-Curit uses a variety of instructional methods that balance direct instruction with discovery learning. She strives to be mindful of her questioning techniques, often asking students to “explain how they know,” which can provide clarity to their peers and gives them the opportunity to self-correct when they have made an error. She values the power of mistakes, reminding her students that mistakes provide opportunities for learning. She frequently will inquire, “What questions do you have?” so that her students know that their questions are welcome. She encourages her students to be reflective learners through journal-writing exercises such as writing and reflecting on goals, and analyzing errors made in previously-completed problems.

The lesson that was featured in Mrs. Morton-Curit’s PAEMST video shows her geometry class engaged in an investigation to develop the Law of Sines. The lesson began with a warm-up which tasked students, seated in small groups, with analyzing a completed problem in which the author incorrectly applied right triangle trigonometry strategies to an oblique triangle. This introduced the need to develop a strategy for solving oblique triangles. The main lesson, adapted from NCTM Illuminations, guided students through the derivation of the Law of Sines, necessitating meaningful mathematical discourse within their small groups and requiring minimal teacher guidance. The lesson included questions about whether or not given measurements yielded a unique triangle, thereby connecting to students’ prior knowledge of congruent triangle proofs and setting the stage for the ambiguous case that they will study in precalculus. The investigation also included problems for which the Law of Sines could not be used, which led to the Law of Cosines that they derived the following day. Students then applied their knowledge to a variety of application problems.

Michelle earned her BS in Mathematics Education and her MST in Mathematics from the University of New Hampshire. She currently serves as treasurer of the New Hampshire Teachers of Mathematics, and facilitates the New Hampshire Seacoast Math PLC.

Ane Swift

School: Souhegan High School, Amherst

Teaching Experience: 19 Years

Ane Swift has been teaching high school math for 19 years in New Hampshire and Massachusetts and still loves what she does! In addition to having taught all courses from pre-algebra through AP Calc BC (and statistics), she has served as department coordinator for the past eight years.

As passionate as Ane is about the beauty of mathematics, she is even more passionate about connecting with students. When students were asked what they believe Ane's philosophy of education is, they responded with "student growth," "making sure every kid is up to speed," "always willing to help us but also likes to challenge us," "they [all students] can learn something they don't understand and be good at it later on in life," "believe all students are different and believes in thinking outside the box" and "kindness is key." Within Ane's classroom, the focus is on what students can do, not what they can't do. She is constantly tacking the word "yet" onto statements that students make. S: "I can't solve equations with fractions" T:"yet" or S:"I don't like related rates problems" T:"yet". It is all about perspective and knowing that every student will have a unit where they really shine. We just need to find that unit.

The activity Ane chose for her PAEMST video shows Introduction to Calculus students watching a video to generate questions/curiosity and had students come up with their own questions to investigate. The questions varied from how does the circumference change as we inflate the balloon to how many puffs does it take to pop the balloon to what color will the balloon be when it pops. Even though the color question was not related to the mathematics being studied, it generate interest and a fun atmosphere which puts students at ease and allows them to take more risks in their learning. When students are genuinely curious and comfortable, they are willing to take risks and offer up suggestions or answers that they may not be completely confident in. This allows for deeper learning for everyone.

Ane has earned a BS in Mathematics and a teaching certificate from Bates College and an MA in Mathematics from Boston College. She is also currently working on a Certificate of Advanced Graduate Study (CAGS) program in Competency Based Education.

About the NH Recipients - Science

Lori Christerson

School: Bishop Brady High School, Concord

Teaching Experience: 12 Years

Lori Christerson fosters an innovative learning environment that inspires students to ask questions about the living world. She blends short stretches of instruction with longer periods of student-centered, inquiry-based, and experiential activities. She engages students through small group discussions, Socratic questioning, lab investigations, field trips, simulations, model-building, and role-playing. For instance, students role-play the light reactions in photosynthesis, debate how social media might impact the next pandemic, practice making sutures in a mock surgery, and collect marine debris on a local beach to test their predictions about human impact on the environment.

In the activity featured in her PAEMST video, students were introduced to the concept of natural selection through playing a game using dice and colored disks. The game demonstrates how antibiotic-resistant bacteria develop. Antibiotic resistance in bacteria is an anchoring phenomenon for natural selection. Many students can remember a time when they were prescribed antibiotics for a past bacterial infection. They may also remember being told by their health care professionals that they should not skip doses. This background experience provided a familiar context in which to learn a new concept. Through playing the game, student groups modeled how skipping doses of antibiotic causes an increase in the resistant population of bacteria. A mistake commonly made by students was neglecting to account for the rules of reproductive success. Through making this mistake, students realized how differential reproductive success is critical for natural selection to occur. Students experienced an “aha!” moment, connecting the concept of natural selection to the reason why health care professionals are cautious when prescribing antibiotics. This highly relatable lesson provided a hands-on way for students to model natural selection as an evolutionary change agent.

Dr. Christerson was a finalist for NH Teacher of the Year in 2019. This is her fourth year as a coach for the “Bishop Brady Brainiacs” Science Olympiad team. She loves helping students develop their interests and strengths in the science field. She earned a BS in Chemistry from the University of Tulsa in Oklahoma and a Ph. D. in Genetics and Development from the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center in Dallas, Texas.

Susan Downer

School: Souhegan High School, Amherst

Teaching Experience: 25 Years

Sue Downer has a strong passion for having students “do” science. Content most certainly needs to be learned but science needs to be practiced. She believes that her role has evolved from being a deliverer of information to a facilitator/coach for obtaining, using, and applying knowledge. All of this has led her to the development and use of performance instruction/assessment in her classroom.

The activity featured in Sue’s PAEMST video shows a lesson on the abstract concept of the mole. “The moles on the sidewalk” activity has students determine how many molecules of chalk (calcium carbonate) they used in their sidewalk drawing. To address this, Sue developed a kinesthetic, macroscopic activity that allows students to work with the concept and numeric value of a mole. By weighing and using actual objects such as chalk on the sidewalk, students have a starting point they can connect with. This tends to help breakdown the “I don’t get it” argument that tentative student might have looking at a blank page of problems. A kinesthetic experience also allows students to make more sense of the type of answers that they get.

When students are “doing” science, their work needs to be assessed in the same manner that it is taught. Over time, Sue has developed a number of performance assessments for the major topics in her curriculum. As a result of this work, she became involved in the State of New Hampshire’s pilot project for Performance Assessment for Competency Education (PACE). As a content lead for chemistry, she has collaboratively developed state performance assessments. She uses these tasks along with locally developed performance assessments to truly understand where her students are with the practices of science and the content of chemistry.

Sue received her BA in Chemistry from St. Anselm College and her MS in Chemistry from Boston College. She was a keynote speaker and workshop presenter at the NHST Performance Assessment Symposium in 2018 and has been a PACE content lead for the

past five years. In addition to teaching, Sue also coaches alpine skiing for Souhegan High School.

New Hampshire Teacher of the Year

Each year since 1952, New Hampshire schools have taken part in the State and National Teacher of the Year Program. Educators are selected from any New Hampshire state-approved or accredited school, pre-kindergarten through grade 12, if they are planning to continue in an active teaching status. The purpose of the program is to select a teacher who is capable of speaking for and energizing the teaching profession, and representing the positive contributions of all teachers statewide. The Teacher of the Year serves as a leader and ambassador for all the outstanding teachers devoted to the highest level of student learning. This individual has the respect and admiration of their colleagues and:

- is an expert in their field who guides students of all backgrounds and abilities to achieve excellence;
- collaborates with colleagues, students, and families to create a school culture of respect and success;
- deliberately connects the classroom and key stakeholders to foster a strong community at large;
- demonstrates leadership and innovation in and outside of the classroom walls that embodies lifelong learning;
- expresses themselves in an engaging and articulate way; and
- is committed to improving education.

In New Hampshire, Geskus Studios and Yearbook Publishing is proud to partner with the NH DOE to help sponsor the New Hampshire Teacher of the Year program.

“Day in and day out, we work alongside teachers and experience their passion and dedication. Being part of the selection committee this past year, we witnessed firsthand how much they affect the lives of future generations. With so many astounding teachers in the state, we feel honored to be part of such an important recognition” said Rich Carroll, the president of Geskus. “Congratulations to all the teachers being recognized tonight and thank you to all New Hampshire teachers for their commitment to their profession and advocacy for their students.”

The National Teacher of the Year program, run by the Council of Chief State School Officers and presented by Voya Financial, identifies exceptional teachers in the country, recognizes their effective work in the classroom, amplifies their voices, and empowers them to participate in policy discussions at the state and national levels. It is the oldest and most prestigious honors program to focus public attention on excellence in teaching.

About the Recipient

Kimberly Piper Stoddard

Granite State High School, Concord
Teaching Experience: 17 Years

Kimberly Piper Stoddard is a high school English teacher at Granite State High School, located within the walls of the New Hampshire State Prison for Men and the New Hampshire Correctional Facility for Women, both in Concord. Kim works with incarcerated adult men and women as they strive to achieve a high school diploma. She offers courses in a variety of topics ranging from the required American literature to electives such as

science fiction and Shakespeare. Ms. Piper, as she's known to students, states, "A majority of incarcerated individuals will be released back into society, and our program helps them to fill in the gaps in their education, to leave prison better equipped than when they arrived." She also offers classes for individuals whose native language is not English, supporting their speaking, reading, writing and listening skills in English.

Kim has been in the education field for 25 years, and has experience with students of all ages, from preschool through middle school, in addition to her current position as a high school English teacher at Granite State High School. Granite State High School provides a second chance for those in need of formal education and can be a critical component of self-reflection and rehabilitation. Kim is devoted to helping students see the connections between themselves and others through literature, and finding their voice through writing. "When you read and write stories, both fictional and true, you gain a deeper understanding of yourself, and empathy for others," she says.

Stoddard holds a BA degree in English Teaching and a ME degree in Elementary Education, both from the University of New Hampshire.

2020 New Hampshire Teacher of the Year Semi-Finalists

- Elizabeth Henderson, Marston School, Hampton
- Tina Philibotte, Goffstown High School
- Marsha Zavez, North Hampton School

2020 New Hampshire Teacher of the Year Finalists

- Jeremy Brown, Littleton High School
- Sarah Grossi, Conval Regional High School, Peterborough
- John "Drew" Groves, Bow High School
- Barbara Milliken, Oyster River High School, Durham
- Christine Stilwell, Robert J. Lister Academy, Portsmouth

The New Hampshire Department of Education wishes to thank Geskus Studios and Yearbook Publishing for their support of the New Hampshire Teacher of the Year Program.



Better You
+
Better Me
= Better Us

The mission of the Department of Education is to provide educational leadership and services that promote equal educational opportunities and quality practices and programs that enable New Hampshire residents to become fully productive members of society.