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Hoosic Valley Education Foundation Announces Inaugural Excellence in Education Award Winners

Schaghticoke, NY — The Hoosic Valley Education Foundation announced the winners of their first ever Excellence in Education Award at the Character Counts and Academic Awards ceremonies on June 7.

The purpose of this award is to recognize educators in our district who exceed expectations and make the classroom an exciting place for their students. The HVEF wants to honor teachers who go above and beyond.

The HVEF encouraged students, teachers, and community members to nominate educators who use innovative and productive methods in their teaching. They particularly sought those who make use of new technology, incorporate creativity in their lesson plans, or challenge students to direct their own learning. From the many excellent nominees, they selected four educators committed to constantly improving the techniques and methods they use to educate.

The HVEF honored Bryan Zajesky, high school social studies, and Ericka Silverman, third grade in the community-nominated category, and Colleen Kross, high school special education, and Sandra Fancher, second grade, in the peer-nominated category.

Sandra Fancher: Fancher's peers nominated her because "she challenges her students to be independent, to take control of their learning, to be problem solvers, to think outside the box, and to feel good about themselves." They also noted that "creativity overflows from Ms. Fancher's classroom" and praised her for how she "stays up to date on the latest research and tries out new techniques that she thinks might help her students."

Ericka Silverman: Silverman was praised by parents not only because she "helped organize many programs at our school like PARP (Pick A Reading Partner), STEAM, and many more" but also because she "has a knack for showcasing each child's strengths" to "create a successful and happy learning experience!"

Colleen Kross: Of Kross, peers said she "goes above and beyond to keep her students organized and ready to learn, as well as keeping parents informed about what is going on in the 8th grade" and "incorporates lessons that help students grasp new concepts as well as connect them to previous content."

Bryan Zajesky: Students and parents noted that Zajesky "blends the subject matter with real world examples of current issues as well as a variety of mediums to teach (novels, texts,

popular movies)” and “has also taught [students] writing and reading skills [they] will need for college.”

As part of the award, each educator will receive a \$175 grant from the Foundation to continue the excellent work they do in the 2018-2019 school year. The HVEF is proud to recognize these award winners for their contributions to the Hoosic Valley school district and looks forward to many years of honoring innovative educators.

About HVEF

The Hoosic Valley Educational Foundation is a volunteer organization created to acquire and distribute funds to provide for innovative programs that enhance the quality of education within the Hoosic Valley School District.

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