



Excellence in Education Awards Ceremony

November 19, 2014

By Robyn Bera

In recognition of their outstanding teachers, staff, and programs within Lake County schools, the annual Educator of the Year and Excellence in Education awards ceremony was held on Saturday November 16at the Soper Reese Theatre. The annual event honored educators and community members who inspire and teach with passion, innovation, and a commitment to excellence.

County Superintendant of Schools Brock Falkenberg adds, "The evening is a chance to recognize the great capacity that exists within Lake County schools to support the educational needs of our children."

Classified Employees of the Year

The evening began by honoring outstanding achievement by classified employees from each school district.

Vivian Feola: Lakeport Unified School District Classified Employee of the Year. "She is a pillar of strength with a heart of gold ... upbeat and always going beyond in her role as a paraeducator," said Lakeport Elementary teacher Cathy Sylar.

Tami Stogner: Upper Lake Union High School District Classified Employee of the Year. "She goes the extra mile without hesitation or complaint and best of all, she has a contagious sense of humor that brightens our day," added Principal Pat Iaccino.

Brenda Howe: Kelseyville Unified School District Classified Employee of the Year. "One of Brenda's finest qualities is that she loves the children and makes them feel comfortable coming to her should they need anything," said Director of Food Services Michelle Malm.

Jon Buege & Theresa Copas: Konocti Unified School District Classified Co-Employees of the Year. "John and Theresa displayed great teamwork in collaborating together to implement the online SBAC assessment system district-wide during the initial field test last year," added Tom Hoskins.

Mary Sutton: Middletown Unified School District Classified Employee. "Mrs. Sutton is equal to all our teachers in her strength, management, expertise and professionalism," said Principal Shelley Tan.

Special Program Recognition

Special recognition was given to the following recipients for outstanding work in the following areas:

Lake County Mock Trial Champions led by advisor Danielle Bruns

Lake County Academic Decathlon Champions led by advisor Jim Rogers

Angle Whitson: 2014 Early Childhood Educator of the Year Leading the Field award

Wally Holbrook: Lake County Administrator of the Year (ACSA)

Educator of the Year Award

Superintendents and/or Principals from each district presented awards to their Teacher of the Year.

Angel Hayenga: Upper Lake High School District Teacher of the Year. "Angel is an exemplary teacher ... no teacher is responsible for subject matter that impacts a school more than Angel. The enthusiasm she brings to this difficult task is contagious. It would be easy to just teach the subject, but she lives the subject!" said Principal Pat Iaccino.

Charlene Norwood: Upper Lake Union Elementary School District Teacher of the Year. "Char represents our district and school with a high level of professionalism. Her sense of humor is contagious and her hardworking work ethic is

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to be admired and honored," added Valerie Gardner, Superintendent.

Kristen Hiatt: Lakeport Unified School District Teacher of the Year. "One of Mrs. Hiatt's exemplary traits is that she is kind. She reaches her students and their parents with her kindness. From the smartest students to the ones who need extra help, she treats each one with dignity," said Principal Anita Swanson.

Karen Facey: Kelseyville Unified School District Teacher of the Year. "Karen works together to combine the successful lessons already taught, with some new lessons to create more hands-on work, to motivate the students to try new concepts and figure out new ways to complete a task," added Principal Barbara Gleason.

Davina Pyzer: Middletown Unified District Teacher of the Year. "She is a team player that works diligently to support her students, parents and staff members. She collaborates with grace and ease," said Principal Lura Vieira.

Lake County Teacher of the Year

Katherine Perkins was honored as the Konocti Unified School District Teacher of the Year and Lake County Teacher of the Year. "The passion for seeing all children succeed has led Mrs. Perkins to be a grade level team leader and push for equity for all students," said Principal Chris Schoeneman.

Champion of Education

The final award of the evening was the Champion of Education award presented to the Lake County Office of Education Communications Director Shelly Mascari. The Champion for Education award is given each year to a person that continues to have a tremendous impact on education and the children and families in Lake County. Although Mascari was not in attendance, she received a standing ovation due to her work as Director of the Lake County Child Care Planning Council and the Hero Project.

The evening concluded with a short video presentation which highlighted photos of each award winner.

"The classroom is a really special place," adds Falkenberg. "It's important that we take time each year to honor those passionate and committed to excellence in education. For every educator honored tonight, there are many more that go unrecognized for their hard work. Teaching takes effort. Thanks to all of those that continue to make the effort each and every day."

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