

WVHSA NEWSLETTER

Universal Pre K Teachers Recognized

By Traci Dalton, Head Start State Collaboration Director

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William Foster stated, "Quality is never an accident; it is always the result of high intention, sincere effort, intelligent direction and skillful execution; it represents the wise choice of many alternatives." In February, Outstanding Pre K Teachers from across our state were recognized for the demonstration of these characteristics in their classrooms and programs.

Superintendent James Phares, the West Virginia Department of Education Office of Early Learning, and the West Virginia Pre K Steering Team honored fourteen educators across all settings during Celebrating Connections in a ceremony that culminated in the naming of the first WV Outstanding Pre K Teacher Award winner. These nominees were selected as a result of a statewide nomination and review process and each received a Samsung galaxy tablet and a Kaplan gift card. Congratulations to Pamela Smith, the 2012-2013 Outstanding WV Pre K Teacher of the Year and all of the following 14 Outstanding WV Pre K Teacher nominees that exemplify dedication, inspiration and collaboration:

1. Connie Bowers, Lubeck Elementary, Wood County
2. Linda Coulter, Birch River Early Learning Center, Nicholas County
3. Cindy Durham, Rainelle Elementary, Greenbrier County
4. Connie Edwards, New Hope Head Start Center, Mercer County
5. Angela Gumm, Hinton Area Elementary, Summers County
6. Mary Ann McBride, Cedar Groves Head Start Center, Wood County
7. Tanya McGregor, Moorefield Elementary, Hardy County
8. Lori Ann Parr, Gateway Christian Education Center, Kanawha County
9. Brandon Riffle, George Ward Elementary, Randolph County
10. *Pamela Smith, Buffalo Elementary School, Putnam County
11. Sara Smouse, Hardy County Child Care Center, Hardy County
12. Tammy Strong, Elm Grove Elementary, Ohio County
13. Beth Wallace, Easter Seals, Ohio County
14. Carolyn Walls, Hamlin PK-8, Lincoln County

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West Virginia Universal Pre-K Outstanding Teacher Award Nominees

By Darlene Martin, Director CASE Head Start

The West Virginia Universal Pre-K Outstanding Teacher Award was designed to honor teachers in WV Universal Pre-K who demonstrate superlative dedication and commitment in early childhood education.

Each county collaborative early childhood team across the state nominated two pre-k educators to the West Virginia Regional Education Service Agencies (RESA). Each of the eight RESAs submitted one or two teachers from the nominations to the West Virginia Department of Education's Universal Pre-K Steering Team as finalists for the West Virginia Universal Pre-K Outstanding Teacher Award. The final 14 nominees from all around the state were recognized at the West Virginia Universal Pre-K Outstanding Teacher Award Recognition Reception held in conjunction with the 2013 Celebrating Connections at the Charleston Civic Center on February 21, 2013.

The 14 nominees included Connie Edwards, Lead Teacher at the New Hope Head Start Center in Mercer County and Angel Gumm, Pre-K Teacher for Hinton Area Elementary, a collaborative partner in Summers County.

The 14 nominees were honored at the reception with remarks from Dr. James B. Phares, State Superintendent of Schools, a musical performance by Caretunes, and a certificate with a gift bag of goodies for their classrooms.

Huge congratulations to Mrs. Edwards and Mrs. Gumm for making it to the final round of nominations!

My Head Start Story

I am a Head Start Family Resource Worker for the Kanawha County Schools Program in West Virginia. I didn't start off being a Family Resource worker for the program but as a parent 15 years ago.

Without the program I'm not sure where I would be today. I was made to feel very welcomed & as a young mother that was much needed. I was a parent volunteer for three years and even participated on the Policy Council. I was a very active participant of the Policy Council as the vice chairperson.

After my years of being a parent, I went on to work in the classroom as a teaching assistant to the classroom teacher. I worked many years in the classroom with the children and loved it. I could see first hand how meaningful the program is for these young children.

For the last four years I have a new aspect on the program. Now I work on the management side of it as a Family Resource Worker and the Policy Council Liaison. I get to work with those parents who were just like me.... It is such a rewarding program not only to the student but to the families. Not only the individual families.....but the "Head Start" Families in the communities.

Whether it be the classrooms, offices or our Policy Council Family, we all want what is best for our children.

Charity B. | Dunbar, WV

A Look at the 2012 WV School Readiness Profile

By Monica DellaMea, Lead Coordinator,
WVDE Office of Early Learning

Nationally, a philosophical shift of looking at school readiness as indicative of children's holistic development across domains has gained momentum. As states continue to increase access to programming for four-old-children each year, the ability to capture the status of children at kindergarten entry across a variety of domains evolves yearly. To provide county collaborative early childhood teams with data regarding their early childhood programming as well as the status of children at kindergarten entry, the West Virginia Department of Education's Office of Early Learning and collaborative partners have worked diligently over the past several months to compile an inaugural WV School Readiness Profile. This profile will be available online at <http://wvde.state.wv.us/oel/> with a targeted publication date of late March, 2013.

This inaugural edition of the WV School Readiness Profile provides information for individual counties as they continue to refine practices that support school readiness throughout their early childhood and early elementary programs. The intent of this resource is not to dictate school readiness goals for county collaborative early childhood teams, but instead to provide data to assist teams as they develop school readiness goals.

A wealth of data is now available to the WVDE and collaborative partners regarding both programmatic and child outcomes of the WV Universal Pre-K Program. These data can be shared with those in counties who make decisions regarding strategic planning, programming, curriculum, professional development, and other components of a comprehensive early childhood education approach. It can be noted that having a thorough understanding of how children are supported and fare as they enter kindergarten from various settings can help inform kindergarten instruction and ultimately, help close the achievement gaps that are so prevalent in our state.

The various types of data presented in the 2012 WV School Readiness Profile are arranged to provide county collaborative early childhood teams, administrators, and other stakeholders with valuable information about the status of young children during the years prior to kindergarten entry. Those groups utilizing this document are asked to collectively analyze data elements to make informed decisions regarding programming, professional development, and other services to assist with continuous quality improvement across programs.

The 2012 WV School Readiness Profile can be utilized to facilitate dialogue among early childhood stakeholders and to promote continuous quality improvement throughout the early childhood community. Strategies to employ through use of this resource may include (but are not limited to) engaging in ongoing communication with other stakeholders and groups to:

- Increase the quality of a county's early childhood programs, including not just WV Universal Pre-K but also the entire birth through age five community;
- Increase the relationship between medical providers and other stakeholders, including families, administrators, and educators;
- Strengthen the health status of West Virginia's early learners;
- Focus on methods to ensure more reliable data collection and use to better articulate school readiness (such as methods for ensuring WV Pre-K attendance is captured properly in WVEIS);
- Prioritize professional development efforts for educators, administrators, and families; and
- Increase parental engagement opportunities.

It is important that groups using this profile understand that the elements contained within are not a checklist, but instead provide a comprehensive view of several data elements available to them to help design efficient school readiness strategies. By combining the information contained in this resource with the strategies contained in the WV Kindergarten Transitions Toolkit and the **Ready, Set, Go! WV Comprehensive Framework for School Readiness and Transitions**, groups will be able to tailor specific components of the model to best serve the young children in their communities as they enter kindergarten. For additional information about Ready, Set, Go! WV, visit <http://wvde.state.wv.us/ready-set-go/> or email mdellamea@access.k12.wv.us.

***Your West Virginia Head Start Association
2012-13 Board of Directors***

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UP & COMING

2013 WVHS Association Meeting Dates

3/20 & 3/21/13 Charleston, WV

6/12 & 6/13/13 Charleston, WV

2012-13 WVHSA Board of Directors Meeting Dates

11/28/12 Conference call

12/13/12 Conference call

1/10/13 Conference call

2/14/13 Conference call

4/11/13 Conference call

5/09/13 Conference call

7/11/13 Conference call

8/08/13 Conference call

9/12/13 Conference call

10/10/13 Conference call

11/14/13 TBA

***MISSION
STATEMENT***

***The West Virginia Head Start
Association's Mission Statement for
2010-2012***

Speaking with one voice for West Virginia's young children and families by:

- involving parents as decision makers,
- advocating for high quality services,
- strengthening partnerships on the local and state level,
- providing statewide training for early childhood programs, and
- circulating key information to local Head Start programs.