



THE UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT
**EDUCATION AND
SOCIAL SERVICES**

41st Vermont Outstanding Teachers' Day

**Wednesday, March 23, 2022
4:30 P.M.**

The thing in civilization we most prize are not of ourselves. They exist by grace of the doings and sufferings of the continuous human community in which we are a link. Ours in the responsibility of conserving, transmitting, rectifying and expanding the heritage of values we have received that those who come after us may receive more solid and secure, more widely accessible and more generously shared than we have received it.*

A Common Faith

*quoted from the John Dewey Memorial located near Ira Allen Chapel on the University Green

Presented in collaboration with the VT Agency of Education





41st

**VERMONT
OUTSTANDING
TEACHERS'
RECOGNITION
DAY**

&

**VT AGENCY OF
EDUCATION
2022 TEACHER
OF THE YEAR
ANNOUNCEMENT**

**MARCH 23, 2022
4:30 P.M.**

Schedule of Events

College of Education and
Social Services Interim Dean
Katharine Shepherd Welcome
and Introductions

Vermont National Education
Association President Donald
Tinney Welcome and Recognition
of Outstanding Teachers

Vermont Agency of Education
Secretary Daniel French
Recognition of Outstanding
Teachers and 2022 Vermont
Teacher of the Year

Keynote Speaker Susan Rosato,
2021 Vermont Teacher of the
Year, Colchester High School

Presentation of 2021 Outstanding
Teacher Awardees by UVM
Department of Education
Chairperson Kimberley Vannest
and Director of Educator
Licensure Programs Ellen Baker

Closing Remarks by Interim
Dean Katharine Shepherd



THE UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT
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“Teachers, I believe, are the most responsible and important members of society because their professional efforts affect the fate of the earth.”

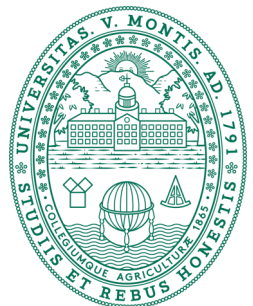
-Helen Caldicott, author and peace activist

Dear Outstanding Teachers,

Welcome to the UVM College of Education and Social Services' 41st annual Outstanding Teacher Day. This is a day to honor Vermont's Outstanding Teachers, including the 2022 Teacher of the Year. We thank you for allowing us to publicly honor you today for educating the next generation of Vermont students. Each day, you help them to develop skills and to become more creative and humane. Today we gather to recognize the long hours, patience, perseverance, and passion defining your important work. We honor your commitment, your successes as well as your trials, and the powerful impact you have had on the children of Vermont and our future. Thank you for your service and your inspiration to all of us. You make a great difference every day, and we appreciate all that you do.

Best Regards,

Katharine G. Shepherd
Interim Dean
College of Education and Social Services
go.uvm.edu/vtoted





AWARD RECIPIENTS

Brian Audette

**West Rutland School
Greater Rutland County SU**

Brian has been a middle school math teacher at West Rutland School for the past nineteen years. Brian always facilitates learning in his classroom with a combination of best practices, humor and real world experiences. He is active in the West Rutland community, attending just about every athletic, civic and music events on his own time. Brian builds relationships with his students and colleagues and is respected by all in the West Rutland School community. We can think of no greater honor than to nominate Brian for Outstanding Teachers' Day!

Jason Barney

**Missisquoi Valley Union High School
Missisquoi Valley SD**

Jason's hands-on approach to teaching history creates an interesting and meaningful experience for students. He gets to know each student individually and coaches them to find their personal connection to history. Jason inspires students to be curious and excited about their own local history. He has a talent of drawing them into his lessons about local history and igniting a passion and interest in topics they never thought they would care about.

Ralph Bernardini

**Vergennes Union High School
Addison Northwest SD**

Ralph is an outstanding math teacher and a strong advocate for students. He is creative, flexible, and puts student well-being at the center of his work. He approaches his work with optimism and positivity, he is energized by an authentic joy of teaching and learning, and he has made a real and lasting difference in the lives of many of our students.

Michael Bjella

**Alburgh Community Education Center
Grand Isle SU**

Michael has rejuvenated the band program through COVID . He has gone above and beyond in virtual lessons. For younger students he promotes the love of music, his classroom has a ZEN feel, he makes all comfortable. He is student orientated and supports the school community in so many ways.

Kristina Bowen

**Montgomery Center School
Franklin Northeast SU**

Kristina is a veteran educator and teacher leader who regularly goes above and beyond for the benefit of her students and school community. She is caring, flexible, and committed to making her classroom an engaging, inviting, and safe space for students to learn and grow. She rises to the challenge of teacher leadership and is often the first to volunteer to help her school community.

Arlyn Bruccoli

**East Montpelier Elementary School
Washington Central Unified Union SD**

Arlyn has served as our Librarian and Tech Integrationist for eleven years. Her skills, knowledge, compassion, and dedication are outstanding. Whether it's engaging students in a read-aloud, sharing new books via booktalks, building robotics, coding, integrating curriculum, teaching social justice issues, fixing broken down computers, printers, phones, etc., Arlyn does it all.

Shawn Cassidy

**Hartford Area Career & Technical Center
Hartford SD**

Race car driver, artist, and multi-talented collision repair professional, Shawn, is an incredibly talented educator. After twenty-five years in the industry, Shawn came to the HACTC in 2015. Shawn's colleagues in his shops once exclaimed that he was "one of the best painters in New England"; we are fortunate to have this expertise in our school where students in his program feel supported by his patience and his belief in them. An unassuming, skilled teacher, Shawn's philosophy is evident in the classroom where detail, patience and methodical processes are instrumental and relationships are a priority. Programmatically, Shawn has worked diligently to maintain national certification in his shop and serves as advisor to the Career Technical Student Organization: Automotive and Collision Enthusiasts (ACE). He is a mentor for new staff. Although he likes to call himself a '1st-year, 6th-year teacher' he is anything but. He is a consistent, caring, calm presence for his students. He carefully plans and crafts his lessons and then connects them directly to work in the shop and real life examples.

Rose Castor

**Brewster Pierce Elementary School
Mount Mansfield Unified Union SD**

Rose is a truly outstanding educator; she shines in every area of her teaching responsibilities. She is a calm, caring and compassionate educator. Rose's many strengths include her ability to work with a diverse groups of students with complex needs and behaviors, a willingness to collaborate on different teams and the desire to continually improve her technical skill set. Rose has a natural awareness for the needs of young children. She is sensitive, yet clear with her expectations. She makes connections with her students and they sense that she genuinely cares about them and their learning. She works tirelessly on many teams within the school setting. She shares knowledge with teachers and staff for children with speech and social cognition needs, even for students not on her caseload. She is an ultimate team player. Rose's compassion and developmental understanding of children and teaching is apparent the moment you meet her. Her upbeat, positive nature, maturity and her fresh ideas set her apart from others.

Paul Cherrier

**Middlebury Union Middle School
Addison Central SD**

Paul has worked as a mathematics teacher and team leader at the Middlebury Union Middle School since August 1997. Paul is a former Marine and lives up to the "always faithful" motto. He embodies this philosophy with his work and tireless dedication to his students, families and the community at large. He is described as empathetic, responsive, and willing to help where needed. Paul's mantra (from the Marines) is "Improvise, Adapt and Overcome" has never been more accurate than now. During the pandemic he guided his team to uphold clear priorities for student's physical & mental wellbeing, harmony at home and engagement & academic progress. He works to empower student voices by modeling reflective thinking, responsiveness and resilience.

Lynn Churchill

**Northeast Primary School
Rutland City SD**

Lynn has been a teacher with Rutland City for twenty-six years. Her first five years were as a special educator and then as a primary school teacher. Lynn is skilled at providing differentiated instruction and at providing the kind of consistent, calm and caring environment that is craved by students who have had stress and trauma in their lives. She values team efforts and is a strong and collaborative coworker. She is flexible and willing to take extraordinary measures in extraordinary times.

Amy Clapp

**Salisbury Community School
Addison Central SD**

Amy has worked as a Classroom and Science Program Teacher at Salisbury Community School since January 1999. Amy is an inspiration to students and colleagues. Her passion for all things science and her commitment to taking care of the natural world is contagious. Amy is an ACSD Science Teacher Leader, and recently created an outdoor classroom that some describe as a "magic natural wonderland" allowing students to bond with their surroundings in a way that influences them to be good stewards of the land for life. Amy is a dedicated educator, and a lifelong learner. As a leader, she asks the tough questions in meetings and developing curriculum encouraging everyone to examine their practice with a lens toward equity and deep learning for all.

Danielle Conley

**Glover Community School
Orleans Central SU**

Danielle truly embodies someone who is both humble and kind. She is one of the most compassionate individuals that I've ever met. She is a strong advocate for her special education students, working tirelessly to be sure that they have IEPs that truly reflect their abilities, needs, and goals. Danielle works closely with classroom teachers and paras to ensure that her students are well supported in the classroom. Her positive rapport with students, parents, and colleagues is well deserved.

Jordan Cota
St. Johnsbury Schools
St. Johnsbury SD

As a special educator in the 4th and 5th grade house, Jordan demonstrates her commitment and dedication to her students, their families, and to her colleagues each and every day. Jordan's desire and drive to meet the needs of each of her students is unmatched. She works hard to form close relationships with each of her students and their families and uses those relationships to support students to grow and achieve to their fullest potential. She is continually seeking new strategies and structures to support her students in and out of the classroom. Jordan consistently demonstrates a kind, caring and understanding approach with all students, regardless of the challenges and circumstances. Jordan is the utmost professional in all facets of the job of special educator.

Erin Danner
Mill River Union High School
Mill River Unified Union SD

Erin is an enthusiastic, incredibly skilled, dedicated math teacher who goes above and beyond to advocate for students and to create a vibrant and rigorous classroom.

Caryl Davidson
South Burlington High School
South Burlington SD

Caryl has served as South Burlington High School's School Nurse Educator for over two decades. Caryl is a true professional educator and a medical wizard. She has cared for the students and staff of SBHS in ways that extend well beyond her role in the health office. Caryl regularly co-teaches with members of the faculty and often trains students and staff in areas where she holds expertise. Throughout the pandemic, Caryl was the school's most important and trusted educator.

Ellie Davine
Rutland High School
Rutland City SD

Ellie is a veteran social studies teacher who has provided leadership to both her students and her colleagues. When asked to describe her, her colleagues say, "She is the epitome of hard work, professionalism, teamwork, and dedication to her students." Also, "Ellie is an exemplary professional, dedicated and seasoned educator, and a compassionate colleague. As I walk by her room each day, I see students engaged in learning. I hear her expertise and her kind regard for all people. Ellie has devoted her time not only to excellent teaching but to NEASC, coordination of student teachers, and other efforts that have contributed positively and productively to the whole school community. Ellie does not complain. She is optimistic and patient. She always gives the benefit of the doubt. She models these qualities for students and adults alike."

Mary Davis

**Leland and Gray Union High School
Windham Central SU**

In her tenth year of teaching science, Mary does many things well for the Leland & Gray community. She pushes her students to understand the intricacies of the courses she teaches, by using creative, hands-on approaches. Her role as a teacher leader has contributed immeasurably to our PBGR and standards-based grading implementation. And in her spare time, she leads a student environmental activism group (LEAF).

Renee Davis

**St. Johnsbury Schools
St. Johnsbury SD**

As a special educator who has worked across grade levels, and now mostly at the high school level, Renee demonstrates her commitment and dedication to students, families, and her colleagues on a daily basis. Renee strives to develop strong, collaborative relationships with area schools and outside agencies in her position as high school/out-of-district case manager. She is a tremendous ambassador for our school district! Renee shows her passion for learning through her support of self-advocacy for students and her ability to develop and maintain positive relationships with families. She takes her time in meetings, asking questions of the team to foster understanding, while supporting students to advocate for their needs. Her personal connection to this work is something that she is happy to share whenever appropriate. Through her personal experiences, Renee is able to support and guide parents to make informed decisions for their children.

Anne Demars

**Morristown Elementary School
Lamoille South Unified Union SD**

Anne demonstrates a lifelong dedication to teaching and learning – in the classroom, as a member of the Curriculum Council, as a mentor for new teachers, and as the primary organizer and facilitator of Morristown Elementary School's tutoring program and summer school.

Erin Dezell

**Harwood Union High School
Harwood Unified Union SD**

Erin conducts herself with integrity and demonstrates empathy for all. She uses these qualities in every aspect of her job. She works to create systems and schedules to support student learning. She helps students navigate their academic path as well as supporting their social emotional well being. Erin has effectively created two bell schedules this past year to support a hybrid model during COVID-19 and then all students reentering school this fall. When working on a schedule she uses a proficiency based learning environment lens. She knows a bell schedule has a direct impact on creating equity for all students. Her belief in creating equity has guided her through endless hours of work creating these two schedules. She demonstrates true compassion when working with her students, taking the time to know them both as a person and as a student allowing them to feel safe, seen, heard, supported and understood. She gives all her students a voice and shares their needs with others when necessary. Erin guides from the heart but uses her mind as she engages with students and families. She communicates with parents in a positive manner that reassures them that their child's needs are understood and respected. Erin is a positive member of the Harwood team. She is always up to a challenge and always looks at what is best for all students.

Victoria DiMonda
Dorset School
Bennington-Rutland SU

Victoria excelled in very challenging circumstances this past year. In the three years that Victoria has been at The Dorset School she has worked diligently to upgrade our student record keeping and to promote health and wellness to students and staff on a consistent basis. She is calm, extremely knowledgeable, and supportive of our students and teachers. She is focused and dependable in a crisis. She deals calmly with serious illness, broken bones and significant wounds, and she is still able to be sympathetic to the child who just needs someone to listen. During the pandemic, Victoria has stayed up to date as COVID-19 requirements have continued to evolve. She has an ability to assuage the fears of the community and at the same time can have the tough conversations with parents regarding why their children need to go home or why they need to quarantine. She is a tremendous source of comfort and support for the entire school community!

Jennifer Dube
Blue Mountain Union School
Orange East SU

Jennifer teaches K-12 art. Additionally, through the 2020/2021 school year, she was our EST advocate, a class advisor, Unified Arts Team Leader, a Teacher Mentor, and executive member of the BMEA. Jennifer is truly a dynamic educator and always keeps the whole child in perspective. She strives each day to deliver top-notch instruction and perseveres for her student's best interest, which then sparks high engagement and performance outcomes. Jennifer endures the personal characteristics necessary to be a role model and leader for her students and colleagues and we are lucky to have her as part of our BMU and OESU families!

Michelle Fountain
Woodstock Union High School
Windsor Central SU

Michelle is the 9th Grade Team Leader, as well as the Journalism and English Teacher at Woodstock Union High School and Middle School. Michelle's passion to bring about positive change for climate, equity, and racial justice issues inspires her students and colleagues every day.

Leslie Fry
Union Street School
Springfield SD

Leslie is devoted to her job and to her students, spending ample time in the school after hours to make sure everything is ready. Never afraid to ask questions, Leslie pushes the thinking of her colleagues with the overall goal of improving the school for the benefit of students and staff alike.

Mary Geibel
Porters Point School
Colchester SD

Mary, a 1st grade teacher, deeply understands how to support academic and social-emotional growth of young learners. Her excellent instruction and caring went beyond the classroom last year when she embraced remote instruction for grade 1 virtual learners in our district.

Abigail "Abi" Gershon

Braintree School

Orange Southwest Unified SD

Abi is the K-6 math and literacy interventionist at Braintree Elementary School. She holds an Environmental Studies BS from UVM, MA in Education from Antioch University, and post graduate studies in Educating Children Outdoors. She is a highly effective teacher and team member who collaborates to achieve shared learning goals for each child.

Olivia Goddard

Milton Elementary School

Milton Town SD

Olivia has been teaching young learners for fourteen years. She has natural teaching talents and is a collaborator. Olivia is kind and compassionate with her students, families and colleagues.

Michael Gonneville

Northfield Elementary School

Central Vermont SU

Mike has dedicated over forty-three years to the students of Northfield. As a physical education teacher he gives SO much of himself each day and asks for nothing in return except for students to try their best. He will do anything for a colleague and expects nothing in return as he is truly selfless. He teaches with purpose and always takes time for self reflection, especially if he thinks that a student wasn't successful that day during a specific lesson. He will talk to other colleagues to get their feedback on how he can help to make this child successful the next time. There is a saying that goes, "The best teachers are those who show you where to look but don't tell you what to see". This describes Mr. G as he will always be right there standing beside our students guiding them, but also allowing them to flourish in their own way that celebrates each and every one of their accomplishments no matter how small. He is truly here for "his kids" each and everyday.

Pamela Hancock

Swanton Elementary School

Missisquoi Valley SD

Pam demonstrates quiet but consistent leadership with an unwavering focus on student success. Her efforts extend far beyond her classroom and she is highly respected by her colleagues. Swanton School is extremely honored to have her serving our students and community.

Anne Hanson

Craftsbury Elementary Schools

Orleans Southwest SU

Anne has strong communication with her students' parents and guardians regularly. She offers regular parent/teacher conferences during the school year, organized Meet and Greets for families and children to meet each other before the start of each school year (and during the year), weekly emails sharing the practiced or anticipated 2nd Step social/emotional lessons students receive instruction and practice on in class, and parenting instructional opportunities available for helping their children in specific areas. Parents and guardians can easily access her for questions or concerns because of her regular communication and they are always informed about what's happening in the classroom through the weekly emails. She is dedicated to maintaining her enriching program, especially in the area of outdoor education.

Felicia Hayes
Hartford High School
Hartford SD

The past year has seen Felicia become a school and district-level go-to for all things related to COVID-19 and she has led us in amazing ways. It is safe to say that none of us was prepared when our school was required to deal with a global pandemic. Felicia's calm demeanor provided all of us with the assurance and confidence that we needed to know what to do and how to do it. Felicia patiently answered questions from staff, students, and families (often the same questions repeatedly) while making sure that all of us left the conversation with the answers that we needed. She was patient in her interactions and always took the time needed to help us understand what was going on and what was expected and required of us. Felicia was a resource for all of us and during COVID-19 saw her school nurse responsibilities change significantly. In addition to providing exceptional nursing services to Hartford High School, the Regional Resource Center, and the Hartford Area Career and Technical Center, Felicia was also one of the district's COVID-19 coordinators. Felicia communicated with sensitivity and compassion with our students, families, and staff when they thought that they might need to quarantine or just had a question about a potential contact. Felicia regularly provided our school and district with an understanding of the state's guidance and was a great partner with all of our school community.

Larissa Hebert
Bellows Free Academy (St. Albans)
Maple Run Unified SD

In a year in which we had to employ teaching strategies that were foreign to many of us and had to engage both remote and in-person students simultaneously, Larissa also was newly charged with working with a journalism program/school paper that needed an update. Not only did Larissa completely overhaul the Mercury, she provided a much-needed injection of energy and passion which served to spark a new level of enthusiasm amongst the student writers. Under her tutelage, students wrote in-depth articles or series of articles regarding activities and issues that were many times not only of importance to the BFA community but to our state and sometimes our nation. Some of her students' writings were also featured in state-wide publications. In addition, Larissa used social media platforms to broaden the reach of the Mercury and to help the students, the paper, and BFA earn positive recognition. She did all of this while challenging and helping the students in her English classes to strive for and achieve excellence in their work.

Brian Hoffman
Burlington High School
Burlington SD

Brian is entering into his twenty-second year of teaching at BHS. Known for his kindness, sensitivity, and the way he takes time to get to know each of his students, he has been dedicated to ensuring quality instruction for over fifteen hundred of Burlington's young adults. Just last year Brian's dedication was on display when during the pandemic and school closure, Brian needed better internet on remote days, and he would commute to a concrete bunker at Property Services to teach online. Known not only for his love of science, but also the outdoors, our faculty member of the year has made lasting memories with some of this year's seniors through his Year End Studies programming. As one student reflected, "I had Mr. Hoffman for YES my freshman year. I was always interested in fishing, but had no knowledge of it. Mr. Hoffman was a great mentor to everyone in the YES program and we had a good bond after this and through the two years I had him as a teacher." Another student reflected, "Mr. Hoffman is one of the few teachers that truly knows his students. He takes the time to ensure that his students succeed by checking in with them about their lives, grades, and the content at hand. The environment he has created in his classroom is welcoming to all students and it's very clear to see upon walking into his space, that he cares about what he does. His genuine excitement and joy for his class is easily transferred to the students as he makes his class interactive and fun! The friendships I've made in his class through group work and group activities still hold strong to this day. It is clear through his teaching, enthusiasm, and general atmosphere, that Mr. Hoffman cares about his class and his students." This student goes on to say, "Mr. Hoffman is an environmental science teacher at BHS, so I am inclined to say that he is the rock of BHS. He has been able to offer stability in an unstable environment, he has provided materials and additional tools to those in need of extra support, and he has upheld the BHS spirit in a time when a BHS building didn't exist. But in truth, Mr. Hoffman is not a rock at all, he is a gem at BHS. Thank you Mr. Hoffman for your dedication to the profession, but more importantly, for the deep impact you continue to have on the young people of Burlington."

Ry Hoffman
Spaulding High School
Barre Unified Union SD

Head of School Counseling, Ry was chosen by students, staff and parents for his outstanding work as a student advocate, his flexibility in changing the schedule, and being a support to fellow staff members. Ry always is there for others.

Terry Hopper
Moretown Elementary School
Harwood Unified Union SD

Terry is the type of teacher I wish I had at the most awkward stage in my development. She is warm and funny, with the right kind of humor for 5th and 6th graders. She is welcoming with the right amount of boundaries and expectations. Students feel comfortable in her class while learning and growing, which can be uncomfortable feats. I think the most telling thing about Terry is that a student said in her graduation speech last year that "Ms. Hopper made school the place she wanted to be even during a global pandemic."

Kelley Houde
Newbury Elementary School
Orange East SU

Kelley has taught at NES for over twenty years, first working as a special educator in Warren, NH before joining NES as a Special Educator for her first few years at NES. She embarked on classroom teaching in 2002, spending half of her time teaching as a 2nd and 3rd grade teacher and the other half as a Special Educator. She has organized the in-school theater program over the past two years and is currently the Head Coach of the NES "Finding Our Stride" Running Program. Her co-workers describe Kelley as being kind, hard-working, detail-oriented, helpful and professional (Noting that she always takes the high road!). Most importantly, she has strength in differentiating learning for all students, is loved by her students and colleagues alike and utilizes her flexible, positive, easy going attitude to be a true cheerleader for Newbury!

Paula Jensvold
Rick Marcotte Central School
South Burlington SD

Paula started at RMCS as a student teacher and has been here since! She was an outstanding teacher and Math Coach, and is our Instructional Coach. She is invaluable. She's a voice of reason, and brought staff together to solve dilemmas. Her ideas are thoughtful, and applicable. From report cards and assessments, to schedules, she guides us in questioning, data walls, and suggests how to move forward. Things people say about Paula: "I could listen to her all day.", "How did she get to be so smart?", "I want to be Paula when I grow up." She is our hero!

John Kennedy
Stowe High School
Lamoille South Unified Union SD

John is a dedicated member of the Stowe High School faculty who has an amazing rapport with students. His classes are always engaged in interesting conversations, and he is always willing to listen to and assist his colleagues. John is a building representative for LSEA and is also a mentor for new teachers.

Angela LaCroix
Washington Village School
Central Vermont SU

Angela is an outstanding math educator and immeasurable asset to the CVSU professional community. Her knowledge of primary math development and instruction creates a solid foundational understanding of numeracy and additive reasoning for the students in her classroom. She has grown into an educational leader by providing professional development to teachers across, and outside of our SU. Angela's commitment to Echo Valley extends well beyond her classroom. Her input and participation on multiple teams has strengthened our academic and SEL systems. Angela is an irreplaceable member of the ECVSD and CVSU community. Her focus on putting students first, and ability to collaborate with anyone to work towards this common goal continue to be an enormous benefit for us all.

James Lamar
Barnet Elementary School
Caledonia Central SU

James is an outstanding and dedicated educator, a true team player, and a mentor. He provides unconditional support to all of his students. He is a member of several committees: PBIS, MTSS, and CIP teams. James is always polite, honest, and respectful, all qualities of a true leader.

Josie Lang
Malletts Bay School
Colchester SD

Josie, school nurse, has a deep understanding of nursing practices and the developmental needs of elementary students. Josie is a natural leader and she has been instrumental in developing the CSD COVID-19 Response Protocols and training our students, families, employees and our community. She has gone above and beyond during the past year, taking care of everyone in the MBS community, and working tirelessly inside and outside of the school day to keep our school community safe and informed.

Stephen Lawrence
Springfield High School
Springfield SD

SHS created a graduation tradition where students, as their name gets called, have the opportunity to recognize a staff member that has helped them along their path. One of the remarkable things about SHS is the diversity of staff members that get recognized; but if we had a leaderboard, it wouldn't even be close. Stephen is the adult that students routinely recognize for his excellent instruction & mentorship, and there is no one more deserving of being a UVM outstanding teacher.

Sarah Loveless
Central Vermont Career Center
Montpelier Roxbury SD

Sarah is a truly gifted educator who has done so much for our Community Based Learning program. A fellow teacher recently called Sarah "a champion of creating equitable access for all students." She sees the value in each and every one of her students and works tirelessly to find placements within our community that honor their strengths and their needs. Sarah is also a realist and has spent much time crafting structures within her department that allow for the flexibility and clarity that help our students find success. She is an incredibly caring individual and one who I greatly enjoy working with. I would do almost anything for just a fraction of her calm, creativity, and perseverance!

Aziza Malik
Champlain Elementary School
Burlington SD

It is my firm belief that the role of a master elementary educator is to bring opportunities to life for their students. Aziza has proven herself to be exactly this, a master at bringing opportunities to life, expanding the horizons, creating greater hopes and dreams for her students. In a year where education had been the normal, as we had known it to be, Aziza would have been recognized for her outstanding efforts, but in this year, where innovation was key, Aziza went so far beyond what could have been imagined that I truly believe she deserves this honor. In recognizing that we needed to be prepared to teach from the lens of social justice, building a community for the future that all students and families deserve, Aziza helped to develop a relationship with Juniper Creative Arts. What developed was a bold statement of antiracism that our entire community continues to benefit from. The mural, *Kelis the Afronaut*, is a beautiful work of art, each student having contributed to the work, brings pride and love to the south end of Burlington for everyone to behold. Aziza began working with the artists in August to bring this project to life, and it truly is an inspiring work. Students in grades K-6, and beyond Champlain's campus came together to create this work. Aziza continues to teach with a culturally responsive approach that makes her classroom a place where students feel their voice contributes to the good of the whole.

Mary Lou Massucco
Bellows Falls Middle School
School Administrative Unit

Mary Lou is easily recognizable by her quick smile and wit while working with students, colleagues, and community members. She is truly a part of the very fabric of our school community. She works tirelessly for all students. When students come to her out of interest, she pulls them closer and provides additional opportunities for them to grow their skills. Year to year the assignments she designs change in order to engage and excite students. In addition, She works in our after-school program, displays student work throughout the area towns, as well as building and maintaining numerous gardens with students.

Trevor "TJ" Mead
Champlain Valley Union High School
Champlain Valley SD

In the ever-changing landscape of health education, the need for trusted adults who authentically engage students in meaningful work is paramount. TJ is one of those adults. Trusted by students and colleagues alike, TJ embraces challenges and empowers students to do the same all while navigating sensitive topics. TJ understands the importance of relationships; and it's clearly evident when observing his classroom and team.

Steven Menz

Smilie Memorial Elementary School Mount Mansfield Unified Union SD

Steven is an exceptional educator who has been working as a teacher at Smilie Memorial School for the past twenty years. He is smart, kind, inspirational and a quintessential gentleman. He has taught 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th grades. Steve has a natural ability to engage students and keep them excited about learning. He has a great sense of humor and likes joking around with his students. The students hold Steve in high regard and our youngest students can often be heard saying that they "can't wait until they have Mr. Menz for a teacher". Steve believes in authentic learning for his students. He has his students create their "dream houses", using all that they have learned in the area and perimeter unit. Students make blueprints of their houses and then actually build them with light pieces of wood. One year, the students actually rigged up lighting for their houses; they were incredibly proud of their work. Steve is well organized, prepared for his students every day, flexible and goes with the flow when schedules change in a school day. Steve plays the guitar and has serenaded the entire school for our weekly "Smilie Family Sing-a-Longs". He volunteers at our after school ski program at Bolton Valley Resort each winter. Steve is a dedicated professional colleague. He is always willing to help a fellow teacher, or employee, regardless of the task at hand. Steve can be counted on to help out wherever there is a need in our small school.

Shannon Merritt

Wallingford Elementary School Mill River Unified Union SD

Shannon is a dedicated kindergarten teacher who works tirelessly to provide her students with a happy, loving, challenging and rigorous classroom.

Katharine Monje

Winooski High School Winooski SD

Nurse Katharine is a calm, steady, professional presence in the Winooski SD Health Office. She finds an easy connection with every student who seeks her care at school. Katharine cares deeply about social justice and approaches much of her work through this lens. Katharine advocated on behalf of the Winooski Students for Antiracism and spent hours listening to School Board meetings last summer and fall to understand and further the district's journey to becoming an antiracist school district. When COVID-19 began to disrupt life as we knew it, Katharine immediately accepted the role of COVID-19 Co-Coordinator for the district. She effortlessly pivoted from providing high-quality care to students at school to supporting families with their COVID-19 and medical needs while they were at home during remote learning. Katharine spent countless hours monitoring the district's COVID-19 hotline and patiently answered every parent and staff member's questions and concerns. When case rates were high in Winooski, she helped make the very difficult decision to move to remote learning until conditions were safer for students and staff. Her goal was to keep COVID-19 out of the school, so she has helped to ensure all the proper mitigation measures are in place, and that the district's vaccine clinics and surveillance testing went smoothly. In addition, she continued to facilitate our school-based dental program so students could access delta care as soon as it was safe to do so. Katharine is always quick to suggest a mindful solution to complicated problems and has a talent for seeing and honoring all points of view.

Linda Mullin
Rutland Town School
Greater Rutland County SU

Throughout her career, Linda's goal has been to stay current with best practices and continuously refine her teaching. She is the epitome of a lifelong learner. Linda has served as a PLC leader and has presented PLP's at VTfest on more than one occasion. She has taught multiple grades and subject areas over the years, ranging from Kindergarten to reading intervention, and next year she will be serving as our middle school math interventionist. She pushes each of her students to be the best they can each and every day. She is the most positive individual you will ever meet and it is an honor to work with her.

Danya Nelson
Wolcott Elementary School
Orleans Southwest SU

Danya has done a great job of learning and applying the Orton Gillingham reading instruction methodologies. She is taking on advanced training after taking the initial coursework. She does a great job as a member of our MTSS team advocating and monitoring student performance. She will bring up suggestions on how best to support students by identifying new student groupings to support the greatest number of students possible. She is always willing to step in to cover classrooms at the last minute to help a colleague who has an emergency or is ill. She also is willing to help with student reading assessments in classrooms. She does not miss meetings or standing scheduled events with students or colleagues. She is very consistent and this dedication shows in the positive reading and learning gains made by the students she works with.

Cheryl Niedzweicki
Burlington Technical Center
Burlington SD

Chef Cheryl is an exemplar of providing students with opportunities to move forward beyond high school through her efforts to create a product sold at local grocery stores, to her work with DECA, her afterschool work, her Iron Chef work, her continued work on Friday menus, her efforts to find jobs in the community for students, and her work on the NTHS. Cheryl is a model for how CTE teachers can get involved and establish a positive learning environment during and after high school. Cheryl's approach is extremely hands-on, but also very pragmatic...with a focus on continuously purchasing new and interesting gear (ice cream maker, food cart), the Champlain Cafe, and by creating a product sold in stores. This ties the learning to real life and provides the students with many pathways to consider and develop their skills within. Cheryl has consistently been open to working with others at BTC. She is on numerous committees, and works to better the experiences of her co-workers by creating opportunities for us to celebrate each other and consider our shared humanity at work. Cheryl also has worked with me to improve her after school video productions (with editing and cameras), she has previously met with Design and Illustration to create photos for her cafe and packaging for her brownies, and she has worked with Tyler and Jason C to construct her cart.

Melissa Parker
Main Street Middle School
Montpelier Roxbury SD

Melissa embodies the idea of "all means all." She is a fierce advocate for all of her students, and will not let them fail if she can help it. She wants every single child to experience success. Students recognize this about her and ADORE her in return.

Catherine Parlante
Albert D. Lawton Intermediate School
Essex Westford Community Educational Center Union SD

Catherine is a distinguished special educator who quietly and consistently leads by example. Catherine models exemplary collaboration with classroom teachers and designs thoughtful, high quality instruction to advance learning outcomes for all students. She is highly proactive and works diligently to identify very specific strategies that will work for students to ensure their needs are being met across all settings. Catherine supports others in building collective efficacy- she helps others believe they can support all students and that students with disabilities can! As a special education teacher for seventeen years, Catherine has supported students with special needs to be included in the regular education environment, to meet and exceed learning goals and to flourish as young people. Throughout the pandemic, Catherine sustained this level of practice and did not waver in her commitment and effort to ensure successful outcomes for all of her students. Catherine is continuously seeking ways to improve her practice to benefit students as evidenced by her engagement in ongoing professional learning every year. Catherine has also been a critical team member behind the planning and implementation of the Unified Sports team at our school which has created a deeper sense of connection and community across differences and built a sense of belonging in ways that we could not imagine before having this program at our school.

Elizabeth "Liz" Parris
J. F. Kennedy School
Winooski SD

Liz is an absolute life-changer! As a Winooski SD school nurse, she treats all 850 students as if they were her own children. She knows all of them by name, knows their likes, dislikes, stresses and what brings them joy! She makes each child feel special when they enter the health office. She provides day-to-day health care to any student in need with efficiency, skill, and compassion while working seamlessly with her teammate, school nurse Katharine Monje,. As if that wasn't enough, Nurse Liz also spent countless hours developing the district's School-Based Health Center (SBHC). Currently, pediatricians visit the health office three times a week to serve students at the school. This incredible service is a true life changer as many students might simply go without regular care due to the barriers of accessing doctor's appointments off-site. Nurse Liz has spent countless hours protecting our learning community from COVID-19 over the past nineteen months. She volunteered to be in a video showing families about her choice to be among the first in the state to get vaccinated, and worked tirelessly to design mitigation plans, arrange for in-school vaccination clinics, and staff surveillance testing to keep COVID-19 out of our schools. The Winooski SD is so grateful to call such a true professional who embodies compassion and a "git r' done" attitude one of our own!

Kristen Partesi

**Fair Haven Union High School
Slate Valley Unified Union SD**

Over the past year, Kristen has taken on a pandemic and dominated in her art space. She has inspired students to paint murals in the building, worked with AP art students on a paint and tile project to beautify the front entrance, served as a senior advisor, planned a graduation, a senior trip and a prom. She has gone above and beyond for her kids this year and every year.

Johanna Pastel

**Lake Region Union High School
Orleans Central SU**

Johanna is a social studies teacher. She is a strong advocate for equity and has been a core staff member in our school's work to improve our practice. In addition to her commitment to equity and academics, she has expanded her reach by leading the school's drama program and being the editor of the school newspaper. These activities were even more critical during the pandemic last year, and her creativity allowed for our students to have these important outlets and experiences.

Virginia Rainville

**Richford Junior & Senior High School
Franklin Northeast SU**

Virginia is an exceptional special educator. She forms strong relationships with students, especially reluctant learners. As a result, her students engage deeply in learning and demonstrate incredible growth. She is a true instructional leader and works with her colleagues to analyze data and plan instruction at every MTSS level. She is someone both students and colleagues respect and look up to.

Taeryn Robbins

**Cabot School
Caledonia Central SU**

Taeryn is a teacher who goes above and beyond her role. As an interventionist, she strives to ensure that all students are challenged and engaged in mathematical problem solving and as a coach she focuses on supporting teachers so that they can support students. Taeryn leads by example through thoughtful reflection and our students and staff are lucky to have her as a leader in our community.

Dorothy Sacca

**Grand Isle School Campus
Grand Isle SU**

Dorothy has really gone above and beyond to ensure that students have a multi-sensory experience. She also has an excellent and respectful way with students and ensures students follow classroom expectations

Erin Schmitt

**Essex High School
Essex Westford Community Educational Center Union SD**

Erin considers ALL students when she designs curriculum, ensuring there is something engaging for everyone. She cares deeply about each student's growth, honors each individual's pace, and values their unique creative expression. She is an inspiration and is truly an outstanding educator.

Jenna Schultz
Milton High School
Milton Town SD

Jenna exemplifies advocacy, collegiality and professional knowledge. She works extremely hard; she is patient, kind, friendly and our students absolutely adore her. The past two years have not been easy with COVID-19 restrictions forcing music to become nearly impossible. It was due to Jenna's consistent advocacy and hard work, as well as creativity and flexibility that she was able to provide new and amazing musical experiences for students. Jenna is a gifted educator and Milton High School is both fortunate and grateful to have her work with our students.

Steven Sheeler
U32 Middle School
Washington Central Unified Union SD

Steve exhibits enthusiasm for bringing the wider world to his students with engaging classroom discussions. He encourages active dialogue helping students fall in love with our planet and different cultures. Steve's students say: "He makes a subject that I hadn't liked before one of my favorites"; "I feel really appreciated and heard."

Julie Sines
Bellows Falls Middle School
Windham Northeast SU

Julie has been an important member of the WNESU Special Education and Bellows Falls School community for over forty years as a Special Educator. She has been building successful relationships with students and families and in some cases multi-generations. Recently she has worked with some of the most challenging students and does so with a positive attitude and the patience of a saint. Her ability to teach all subjects and provide real life experiences keeps students engaged. Most importantly in her classroom every day is a new day and a fresh start. This educator has the ability to make parents and families feel supported, welcomed, heard and respected during what can be seen as a difficult transition. This educator has a great sense of humor, is able to see the positive in difficult situations, has many stories to share and often is an unofficial mentor to many. She is the one to go to when you have a question about special education. If she doesn't know the answer she will research it and find it. Outside of the classroom, she is a dedicated member of the Bellows Falls community: growing up in Bellows Falls, attending the local schools and returning after college to serve her community. She participates in many community events and is a great supporter of our student athletes at all levels, as well as running the clock for many years at basketball games at the Middle School. This individual has dedicated her career to helping the people in her community through educating its children, helping parents and actively being there for others when they need it.

Jessica Sturtevant
Benson Village School
Slate Valley Unified Union SD

Jessica is a model of grit and resilience. Just three short years into her career, Jessica has accomplished more than many as they approach retirement. She has taught 1st through 4th grades in every possible combination imaginable, completed two years of her VMI Masters program, and never shied away from a committee position or volunteer role.

Joyce VanPamelen
NewBrook Elementary School
Windham Central SU

Joyce has been teaching for over forty years, and she is still fresh and ready to get to know a new group of students. She works long hours, enjoys collaborating with her peers and community members, and makes every decision with her students and their individual needs in mind. She has kept current with the technological changes throughout her career, which, like me, began with paper and pencil, chalk and chalkboard, and the mimeograph. All of us here at NewBrook look to Joyce for her natural leadership, for creative inspiration while planning and problem solving, and for the thoughtful perspective that she is able to offer us all. It is truly one of the great pleasures of my job to have gotten to know Joyce. She is at once an outstanding citizen, an exemplary educator, a thoughtful mentor, and an excellent role model for her students, for their families and for her peers.

Lindsay Wadleigh
Ottauquechee School
Hartford SD

Lindsay teaches music at the Ottauquechee School and the White River School. Lindsay excels at creating a stellar choral program. In "normal" times, her concerts are a highlight of the year for faculty, students and families. During the 2020-21 school year, everyone had to be flexible, but Lindsay went above and beyond! She took a brave leap and pioneered new ways of teaching music. Without the option of singing, Lindsay was creative with the skills she taught and the materials she used, and every music class was fun. Students drummed on buckets, played ukuleles, and played fun musical games. How many music teachers use basketballs to teach rhythm? In addition, Lindsay kept a smile on her face. She modeled positivity, optimism and kindness for everyone around her -- wheeling her cart to classes for part of the year, teaching outside in the forest classroom in good weather, and even moving music to the library for several months to allow a classroom to socially distance. Lindsay not only kept the love of music alive for our students; she brought hope and joy to kids and adults alike.

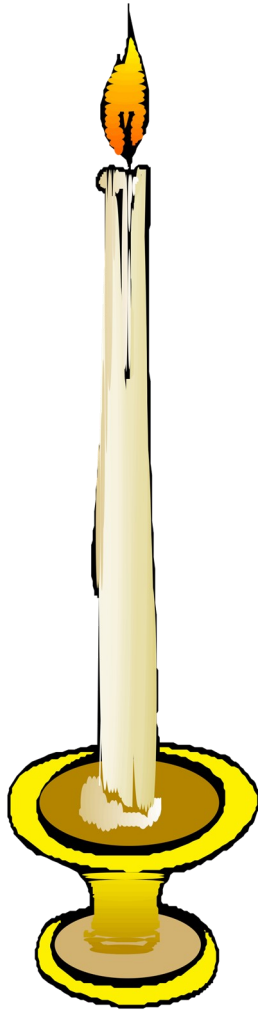
Gregory Walleth
Manchester Elementary School
Bennington-Rutland SU

Greg is a highly regarded Special Education Teacher at Manchester Elementary Middle School. Greg quietly leads by example and always has the best interest of his students at the heart of his educational decisions. He is gifted in developing connections with students and families. He has an eye on the greater school community and culture as he leads The PBIS team. In addition, he has designed professional development training in response to the needs his colleagues have shared with him. Beyond MEMS, he consults with educators throughout our district, offering suggestions, support and empathy. He is a true professional in every sense of the word!

Denise Wood
Canaan Schools
Essex North SU

Denise was chosen by her peers as Canaan Schools' Outstanding Teacher. When her fellow teachers were asked why she deserves this honor they spoke of her skills in the classroom as well as her importance to the school as a whole. In her three years at Canaan she has built a business program that is rigorous and engaging for her students. When the pandemic hit and we all switched to remote learning, Denise ran classes on how to use the Google Apps for her fellow teachers to help them transition to the new mode of teaching. This past summer, when our school was without an IT position, Denise came in to make sure that the student and staff computers were updated and ready for the start of the school year. Denise's dedication to education has had an enormous impact on the students and staff at Canaan Schools.

Congratulations to all on your nomination!



A good teacher is like a candle
– it consumes itself to light
the way for others.

– Anonymous

Mill River Library and Tech Integration Specialist Named 2022 Vermont Teacher of the Year

CLARENDON, Vt. - The Vermont Agency of Education is pleased to announce that Karen McCalla, a School Librarian/Technology Integration Specialist at Mill River Union High School, is the 2022 Vermont Teacher of the Year. Ms. McCalla will begin her tenure as Vermont Teacher of the Year on Jan. 1, 2022.

Also recognized are the 2022 Vermont Teacher of the Year Distinguished Finalists Kyle Chadburn, Middle Level Humanities Teacher at Orleans Elementary School and Susannah Cowden, Secondary Level Science Teacher at Harwood Union HS.

Karen McCalla has been a School Librarian/Technology Integration Specialist at Mill River Union High School for 19 years. At Mill River, Ms. McCalla provides opportunities for STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Math) enrichment through the library's makerspace, and as Vermont Teacher of the Year, she plans to focus on the importance of a hands-on STEAM education for all students. Ms. McCalla also coaches robotics for upper elementary, middle and high school students through the FIRST robotics program and volunteers as Coordinator of Member Services and Education and as a Maker Evangelist at The MINT: Rutland's Makerspace. In 2020, Ms. McCalla's robotics teams were part of a volunteer labor force that produced thousands of face shields designed at the MINT makerspace for their local hospital, ambulance crews and healthcare workers.

"Karen McCalla's advocacy for a STEAM education for all students is timely and important. The STEAM focus on technical skills and a creative mindset provides lifelong benefits for our students, in their careers and everyday lives." said Dan French, Vermont Secretary of Education. "Ms. McCalla is providing her students with the tools and the confidence to pursue real world solutions to real world problems."

"Karen is the type of educator every school building needs," said Tyler Weideman, Principal of Mill River Union High School. "She is one of those rare educators who always goes above and beyond in everything she does. She is always cheerful and ready to give a boost of confidence to any of her colleagues at every moment in the day. Given her background in technology, Karen, during diverse and challenging times, has held MRU together over the last two years, providing support to our students, teachers, and community. Karen is a fantastic educator. We are lucky to have her."

“Karen McCalla brings the INTANGIBLE to every scenario that she engages,” said David Younce, Superintendent of Schools for Mill River Unified Union School District. “Her deliberate and focused work on behalf of our students from marginalized communities and support for work centered around educational equity is the backbone of our progress where that work is not always easy to do. Her expertise and can-do attitude set up colleagues and events for assured success - with her behind the scenes work and support always providing the context and conditions for seamless delivery on the public side of an activity. Put more directly, if there is good work happening, it is safe to assume that Karen McCalla has been involved in some capacity. She brings that much quality and supportive expertise to each and every situation she encounters.”

Since 1964, the Agency of Education has recognized outstanding Vermont teachers through the Vermont Teacher of the Year award. As the 2022 Vermont Teacher of the Year, Ms. McCalla will serve as an advocate for the teaching profession, education and students. She is also Vermont’s candidate for the 2022 National Teacher of the Year award, sponsored by the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO). Ms. McCalla will represent Vermont next spring for the National Teacher of the Year program, typically held in Washington D.C.

Karen McCalla will also be honored at the University of Vermont’s Outstanding Teacher Day, scheduled to be held remotely March 23, 2022. For 40 years, UVM has annually recognized outstanding teachers throughout the state. The event honors educators from each supervisory union or school district, which are invited to nominate one teacher at the elementary or middle school level, one at the secondary level, and one at the technical center level.

Special Thanks To:

VT Agency of Education

VT National Education Association

UVM Department of Education

University Event Services at UVM

UVM Print & Mail Center

UVM College of Education and Social Services

All the family and friends of our honored teachers!

41st Vermont Outstanding Teachers' Day

Wednesday, March 23, 2022