

# Education Week 2019

## Inclusive Education

Helping our students and children succeed



# April 14 to 20

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# Inclusive Education

## Helping our Students and Children Succeed

Education Week (April 14 to 20, 2019) provides a special opportunity for the education community to acknowledge educators, school and student support staff, and partners for their outstanding work relative to this year's theme of "inclusive education".

This year's award ceremony recognizes the work of teachers, public school administrators, early childhood educators, and school and student support staff who have gone above and beyond to provide inclusive supports to students and make them feel welcomed, appropriately challenged, and supported in their efforts.

Education Week is a co-operative project between the following education partners: the Nova Scotia Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (EECD), the Nova Scotia Federation of Home and School Associations (NSFHSA), la Fédération des parents acadiens de la Nouvelle-Écosse (FPANE), the Public School Administrators Association of Nova Scotia (PSAANS), the Nova Scotia Teachers Union (NSTU), the Council on African Canadian Education, and the Council on Mi'kmaq Education.

## Special Thanks

The Provincial Education Week Committee would like to thank the following individuals and organizations that have assisted us in producing the Education Week Award ceremony.

- The recipients of the Education Week Awards for their commitment and dedication to inclusive education and student support.
- The regional centres for education and Conseil scolaire acadien provincial (CSAP), NSTU, Locals, and other partners who nominated the recipients.
- The seven sponsor partners for their continued interest and involvement in Education Week
- The Teachers *Plus* Credit Union for its continued sponsorship of Education Week.
- Dartmouth South Academy principal Adrienne Blumenthal, for going above and beyond in providing assistance and hosting this event.
- Toni Goree, Karen Hudson, Terry Drysdale, and Tish Sock-Sachetti for your assistance in arranging student speakers for today.
- Guest speakers: Kyeona Kane, Brady White, Maryse Losier, Sara Higgins, and Katlyn Fancy
- Paul Hamer, NSTU graphic designer
- Dartmouth South Academy Learning Centre students and Debby MacDonald, Learning Centre coordinator for the delicious refreshments

Each recipient of an Education Week Award will receive a pewter pin, combining two dominant symbols of education—the apple and pencil—which will provide a lasting memento of the occasion. In lieu of flowers for this year's recipients, donations will be made to the Dartmouth South Academy Learning Centre to continue this year's theme of inclusive education.



# *Award Recipients*

ANNAPOLIS VALLEY REGIONAL CENTRE FOR EDUCATION

## **Educator Award**

### **Erin Arnold (Annapolis NSTU Local)**

Math Intervention Teacher: Annapolis West Education Centre

Erin is a fierce advocate for our most vulnerable students. She excels at identifying and targeting areas of development while making learning hands-on, dynamic, and fun.

Erin makes students feel empowered and she encourages them to excel and reach their potential. Her room is warm, welcoming, and student-centred. She pioneered a “house” system to promote multi-age student groupings for school spirit and STEM activities to encourage collaboration and positive community building. She works collaboratively with her colleagues to foster positive learning and working environments for all.

### **Stephanie Fraser (Hants West NSTU Local)**

Career Access Teacher: Avon View High School

Stephanie advocates for her students and creates life-changing opportunities. She supports students with a diverse range of academic, social, emotional, and physical challenges. She is responsible for helping students integrate into the workforce and working with them to find ways to be productive, contributing community members.

For a student with significant medical and physical challenges, Stephanie’s huge heart and caring nature have had an incredible impact on this student’s quality of life and their enjoyment of school and community.

### **Katrina Salmon (Kings NSTU Local)**

Teacher: Northeast Kings Education Centre

Katrina Salmon provides all of her students with quality programming and learning goals that meet their needs. She also provides a classroom environment where students feel safe and supported.

The interest she takes in each student is evident in her enthusiasm and knowledge of the strengths and challenges of each learner. By including learning centre students in her classes, Katrina makes a positive difference in the programming offered at Northeast Kings Education Centre.

### **Whitney Van Blarcom (Kings NSTU Local)**

Math and Literacy Support Teacher: Central Kings Rural High,  
Cambridge and District Elementary School

Whitney builds the kind of relationships that make children want to come to school. Her knowledge of her students allows her to create programs that make students the stars of their educational galaxies.

While her toolbox of strategies and interventions is extensive, it is her ability to promote students' agency and help them see themselves in their learning that makes her unique. By carefully fostering their intrinsic motivation she helps her students navigate towards success. If you are looking for Whitney, avoid desks and offices; instead, try the places where students gather. She will be there listening, smiling, supporting, and caring.

### **Public School Administrator Award**

#### **Victoria Laurence**

Principal: Kings County Academy

Victoria models inclusion in her leadership every day. She is a strong voice in support of students throughout the school and community.

Examples of her commitment to providing a safe and inclusive environment include creating a safe drop-off loop, a safe space in our Learning Centre, and a Growth Mindset Initiative, as well as supporting our newcomer families.

### **Early Childhood Educator Award**

#### **Theresa MacLeod**

Lead Early Childhood Educator: Lawrencetown Consolidated School

Theresa understands that small children can have big challenges but this shouldn't prevent their full participation in the program. Her philosophy is that we should tailor programs to meet children's needs. She sees the positive in every child and helps them rise to meet expectations.

She is always expanding her knowledge to better support children with diverse needs or early traumatic experiences. When supporting children with behaviour or communication challenges, Theresa collaborates with partner agencies and is always willing to develop plans and adaptations to ensure children feel a sense of belonging in pre-primary.

## **Student Support Award**

### **Gaye Coolen**

Educational Assistant: Gaspereau Valley Elementary School

Gaye goes above and beyond expectations to provide students with support and items they need, like boots or shoes, so they can fully participate in life at school. When supervising students on the playground, she will coordinate games to ensure all students feel included, involved, active, and welcomed.

Gaye's commitment to her students extends outside the classroom: one weekend she drove a student to a hockey game so that they could watch their Acadia University SMILE (Sensory Motor Instructional Leadership Experience) buddy play.

### **Kelly Holleman**

Native Student Advisor: Hantsport School, Horton High School, Wolfville School, L.E. Shaw Elementary School

As a native student advisor to four schools, Kelly works tirelessly to support and encourage her students. She provides individualized support to help them identify and pursue the goals that are right for them. She helps students feel engaged with school and develop confidence in themselves and their culture.

Kelly doesn't wait for students to come to her; she stays connected with them, follows up with their teachers, and shows that she cares. She encourages their participation in cultural activities and helps students navigate the path to post-secondary education.

# *Award Recipients*

CAPE BRETON-VICTORIA CENTRE FOR EDUCATION

## **Educator Award**

### **Kim Corbett (Northside-Victoria NSTU Local)**

Resource Teacher: Memorial High School

Kim has been providing support for students her entire career. She provides for students across the various trades which is no easy task considering she knows all our vocational trades.

She also co-teaches in several classes to support these students who need help and encouragement to foster a comfortable learning environment. Kim has great compassion for students and their need to feel like someone cares. Kim leaves no doubt in her students' minds that she only wants what is best for them.

### **Alice Francis (Cape Breton District NSTU Local)**

Teacher: White Sherwood Park Education Centre

Alice cares greatly for her students and brings Mi'kmaw culture to all students and staff at Sherwood Park. She leads the school in our smudging ceremonies, teaches the Mi'kmaw language to all, and brings Mi'kmaw culture to life through her teachings and stories.

She encourages all her students to embrace their Mi'kmaw heritage and has helped many students to become future leaders in both our school community and their Mi'kmaw communities, leaders who will continue to preserve and grow Mi'kmaw culture and language.

### **Lynzee MacNeil (Cape Breton District NSTU Local)**

Teacher: John Bernard Croak Victoria Cross Memorial School (JBCVC)

"All of the students, all of the time." Not only does Lynzee embody this for all her students, but she goes above and beyond to ensure the entire school community feels included.

She is one of the first educators to introduce a diversity club at the elementary level for LGBTQ youth. She has also developed a special relationship with our veterans from writing the biography of John Bernard Croak, tending to the graves of forgotten veterans, and taking the lead in coordinating the JBCVC Remembrance Day service and the Valentines for Vets project.

## **Public School Administrator Award**

### **Lisa MacLean**

Principal: Sydney Mines Middle School

Lisa works tirelessly to ensure that all her students succeed, working closely with each student to meet their individual needs to get them on track.

The most important thing Lisa does is make the time each day to speak with students who are having difficulties in academics and their personal lives. She then reaches out to her staff and beyond the school for the support they need.

## **Early Childhood Educator Award**

### **Michelle Dawson**

Early Childhood Educator: Jubilee Elementary School

Michelle is a mentor and role model to anyone who has the pleasure to be in her program. She is a strong advocate for the program and works hard for its success.

Michelle brings a wealth of knowledge and experience with her, along with a Level 2 Early Childhood Educator (ECE) classification. She has a very approachable personality with families, community agencies, and school staff.

## **Student Support Award**

### **Marilyn Jones-McNeil**

African Nova Scotian Consultant:

Cape Breton-Victoria Regional Centre for Education Central Office

Marilyn supports African Nova Scotian learners in an exemplary fashion in building relationships with students and learning about their strengths and challenges to help them reach their potential.

Marilyn has taken the lead in disaggregating data to share with staff regarding her students to help build success plans and change practices at our schools. She stays focused on students and is successful in her position because of the importance she places on building positive relationships with colleagues and students while promoting cultural responsiveness.

### **Susan McGean White**

Teaching Assistant: Bras d'Or Elementary School

The most important thing Susan does each day is building on student strengths and independence to ensure their success and well-being.

Classroom teachers often comment that Susan quietly and discreetly makes them aware of issues with their students. Susan's awareness helps teachers and administrators to be proactive when supporting students.

# *Award Recipients*

CHIGNECTO-CENTRAL REGIONAL CENTRE FOR EDUCATION

## **Educator Award**

### **Nick Davison (Pictou NSTU Local)**

Learning Centre Teacher: North Nova Education Centre

Nick works closely with families to identify interests and needs of his students and implements these into meaningful and creative learning experiences. These experiences include incorporating technology (such as green screens and animation), as well as accessible and engaging curriculum-based activities and assessments.

Nick understands that some of his students have challenges that have their families concerned about life after graduation. He provides reassurance and guidance by helping students build relationships with folks at local programs and organizations that will allow his students to continue to succeed.

### **Misty Martell-Ferdinand (Cumberland NSTU Local)**

Learning Centre Teacher: Oxford Regional Education Centre

Misty has worked hard personally and professionally with both staff and students to create an inclusive environment for her students, making them feel welcomed no matter their age or grade level.

She ensures all students have an opportunity to participate in any school activities and organizes trips for learning centre students to meet with learning centre students from other schools.

### **Susan Smith (Colchester-East Hants NSTU Local)**

Special Education Teacher: Central Colchester Junior High School

Susan goes above and beyond to advocate and plan for her students, delivering a tailored program for each student on her caseload while working tirelessly for them and ensuring her learning centre is a place many students want to be.

Susan has had great success in removing the stigma often assigned to a learning centre or resource space. Her learning centre is a safe zone, the hub of activity for all students at lunch and the home base for our nutrition program.



## **Public School Administrator Award**

### **Jeff Lynds**

Principal: Truro Elementary School

Jeff is a passionate educator who will advocate for his students, staff, and community. He has his ability to bring out the best in people. He spends the necessary time and energy to develop relationships with people—both at school and within the community.

He is supportive, understanding, and he creates places where people want to work. Jeff brings light-heartedness to work and couples that with high expectations. Because of this combination, people strive to be better.

## **Early Childhood Educator Award**

### **Sarah Kinnear**

Early Childhood Educator: Junction Road Elementary Pre-Primary Program

Sarah embodies the essence of what it means to be an ECE. She values and honours children for who they are and supports them at their own level, based on their individual needs and learning stage.

She has a strong ability to communicate with families and build partnerships within the community. These relationships allow everyone to come together for the best interest of the child. Her commitment to the children in her environment has never wavered, no matter how hard days have been.

## **Student Support Award**

### **Tamika Borden**

African Nova Scotian Student Support Worker: North Nova Education Centre

Tamika is an advocate for our students' education and ensures students' and families' voices are heard and that her students reach their full potential.

She has spearheaded North Nova Education Centre's successful grant applications for the past two years. These grants have provided African Nova Scotian and First Nations students in the school with access to cultural activities and to tutors in student's home communities, as well as with opportunities to venture on cultural overnight trips.

**Cecil Dunlap**

Educational Assistant: Bible Hill Junior High School

Cecil is an exceptional example of a dedicated educational assistant; he supports his students to be successful through kindness, individual attention, and his time.

He senses when students need space to focus on school work or just on themselves and will make it happen so that student will succeed.

**Tammy Maloney**

Mi'kmaq Student Support Worker: Shubenacadie District School

As this is a new role, Tammy has developed much of her program. While doing this, she looks at many ways to engage our students in various aspects of their school day. She takes the time to know each child and build individual relationships.

Tammy instinctively knows when to challenge a student or pull a student aside to give encouragement or support. She has become an integral part of our school staff. She not only helps support students but helps teachers by providing information or resources they may need to support students further.

# Award Recipients

CONSEIL SCOLAIRE ACADIEN PROVINCIAL

## **Educator Award**

### **Eric Morneau (CSANE Local)**

Teacher: Centre scolaire étoile de l'Acadie

Eric greatly contributes to students' sense of belonging making them feel included and challenged at school. He goes out of his way to collaborate with his colleagues, assisting them in developing projects that contribute to student success.

Eric's revision of the technology curriculum to ensure students are engaged and able to think for themselves. To carry out the new activities, students created their own tools and during the unit on gears used those tools to build their own bicycles.

### **Jennifer Surette (CSANE Local)**

Resource and Reading Recovery Teacher: École Wedgeport

Jennifer works hard to ensure the well-being of her students. She gives up most of her breaks to have lunch with students, put on motivational activities with them, and provide support to them. She often organizes activities over the noon hour to help provide students with social challenges and opportunities to socialize in a safe environment so that they can achieve success in this area.

Jennifer builds high-quality, positive relationships with her students and they have the utmost trust in her. She has a very good understanding of her students' needs and is always available to provide help and advice to teachers at the school. She makes a point of providing feedback to teachers when activities are being planned in order to identify things that could be problematic for students, in addition to providing possible solutions. Jennifer puts a lot of effort into helping the students reach their full potential.

### **Janie Vautour (CSANE Local)**

Resource Teacher: École du Carrefour

As a resource teacher, Janie is so dedicated to the students she works with. She is not afraid to put more effort, time, and energy in to meet all of her students' specific needs to the greatest extent possible. She is very involved in the school and does everything in her power to make students with special needs feel welcome. She never hesitates to accompany students who would like to be involved in the various activities offered at the school and never misses an opportunity to improve herself through professional development.

## **Public School Administrator Award**

### **Sophie Pednault**

Vice-principal: École Beaubassin

Sophie always has the inclusion of newcomer students at heart. It is thanks to her that École des Beaux Marrais hosted some great initiatives last year, such as the DiscriminAction Day (action against discrimination) and Multicultural Day. She is the Intercultural Relations, Diversity, and Human Rights Officer and she works specifically on creating an inclusive school environment for all students where their cultures and diversity are respected and welcomed. She also participates on the leadership team for the culturally and linguistically responsive pedagogy approach.

## **Early Childhood Educator Award**

### **Kelly Porter**

Lead Early Childhood Educator: École des Beaux-Marais

Kelly is an example of a great ECE, as she goes above and beyond every day to create an inclusive environment for the children in her pre-primary program.

Each child's strengths, needs, and interests are close to Kelly's heart as she provides supports, approaches, and an environment that ensures they achieve their full potential. She is aware that every child is unique, with specific needs related to what they are going through in their life at the time. She gives of her time and heart to ensure that children who require more intensive support and their parents are looked after. We are delighted to have Kelly as part of our big CSAP family!

## **Student Support Award**

### **Gina Delorey**

SchoolsPlus Facilitator: École acadienne de Pomquet

Gina is, without a doubt, an indispensable asset to our school community. She is always smiling and welcoming and the support she provides to her students, all other students, and the teaching staff goes above and beyond what is required. Gina manages several programs, such as homework help, the breakfast program, and the Cool Kids program in collaboration with the school's mental health clinician. Cool Kids seeks to help students develop strategies to cope with anxiety. It also trains a teacher to act as an adult mentor who can help students use the strategies they learn.

### **Issam Wade**

School and Community Development Officer: École secondaire de Par-en-Bas

Issam works to provide a variety of opportunities that allow all students to be involved in their school and their community. When it comes to leadership, arts and culture, citizen engagement, entrepreneurship, diversity, and student life, Issam is able to recognize each student's strengths and provide them with opportunities based on their interests. He cares about the inclusion of all students and shares his great sensibility with everyone in the school community.

# Award Recipients

## HALIFAX REGIONAL CENTRE FOR EDUCATION

### **Educator Award**

#### **Patricia (Trish) Cuvelier (Halifax County NSTU Local)**

Educational Program Assistant: East St. Margaret's Consolidated School

Patricia sees the ability in every student and in doing so, encourages and challenges them to see their own potential.

She has embraced a service learning philosophy in her daily lessons which allow every student to have a voice and opportunity to share their strengths, ideas, talents, and abilities within our school community and beyond.

Her students have engaged in several service learning initiatives that have had a positive local impact on our school's peer mediator team, breakfast program, and the St. Margaret's Bay Food Bank. On a national and international level, students are raising awareness and funds around the Truth and Reconciliation of Indigenous Peoples, particularly focusing on the right to an education regardless of gender, income level, or geography and the right to have access to clean water.

#### **Lindsay Smith (Halifax City NSTU Local)**

Learning Centre Teacher: Inglis Street Elementary School

Lindsay is a dedicated and kind-hearted teacher who consistently goes above and beyond her expected duties. She truly wants the best for her students and will do whatever it takes to see them succeed.

One example of Lindsay's kind heart is the extra hours she puts in every second Friday when she arrives at the school by 7 a.m. to make popcorn to be sold as a fundraiser. This money goes directly to music therapy sessions in our learning centre twice a month.

Through her leadership, Lindsay has fostered an incredibly supportive team of educational program assistants with everyone working together to support every student. Her ultimate goal is to see each student grow and succeed because she sees potential in each of them.

#### **Becca Wall (Dartmouth NSTU Local)**

Teacher: Shannon Park Elementary School

Becca Wall is the epitome of an inclusive teacher. She gives her all each day she steps into Shannon Park Elementary School. She truly cares for her students and their well-being. This is evident in not only the way she teaches them but also in the way she speaks about them.

She works tirelessly to accommodate all the needs in her classroom and she never feels it is enough. She has had some very challenging circumstances in her short career and she continues to come to work each day with a smile. Becca gives 1,000 per cent to her students because she knows they are counting on her.

## **Public School Administrator Award**

### **Eartha Monard**

Principal: Dartmouth High School

Eartha is a pillar of the bridge that stabilizes, blends, and maintains a school culture that is conducive to learning, being mindful that she has students from diverse lived cultural experiences. She drives her students towards excellence in academics while also supporting them in positive extra-curricular activities.

She has shown exemplary administrative leadership creating a culturally responsive school community. She focuses on professional development for staff and also provides individualized feedback and support to help build upon the priority of cultural responsiveness in interactions and pedagogy.

## **Early Childhood Educator Award**

### **Angie Aucoin**

Early Childhood Educator: Brookhouse Elementary School

Angie tirelessly advocates for the needs of each student in our classroom and makes adaptations to the program and learning environment regularly to accommodate for their needs.

When she goes home at the end of the day, she reflects on how the day looked to the children and how we can make each day better for students.

## **Student Support Award**

### **Carolyn Ashley**

Educational Program Assistant: Dutch Settlement Elementary School

Carolyn Ashley is a keen, diligent, passionate, and resilient individual who cares deeply about the well-being and success of all students, but in particular, those with special needs. She believes in inclusivity, equity, and opportunity for all students, while at the same time celebrating the diversity and individuality of all children.

Whether it's an evening or a weekend, Carolyn continuously volunteers her time to help students, especially those with challenges. She participates in extra-curricular activities, such as jogging beside a student during running club to offer motivation and encouragement, singing beside a student during the Christmas concert, or even attending an overnight camping trip with students to ensure that they all have an opportunity to experience the great outdoors.

**Eddie Colley**

African Nova Scotian Student Support Worker:  
Joseph Howe Elementary School

Eddie helps many students with their social and emotional needs and also provides academic encouragement. He volunteers his free time to connect and foster relationships with students at recess and lunch and he reaches out to families and staff when needed.

He has also formed a boys group with our guidance counsellor comprised of grade 4, 5, and 6 students. They meet weekly and have guest speakers who are African Nova Scotian men who have done well in the community. These men provide insight into the hard work and positive attitude needed to succeed in life and are role models for our students.

**Tish Sock-Sachetti**

Mi'kmaq/Aboriginal Student Support Worker: J.L. Ilsley High School,  
Elizabeth Sutherland School, Rockingstone Heights School,  
East St. Margaret's Consolidated School

Tish is a fantastic role model and passionate leader for Indigenous youth. She goes above and beyond the title that she holds, treating each one of her students as if they were her own family.

She provides a strong insight into the Indigenous culture and keeps traditional knowledge, protocols, and teachings alive for students, teachers, and administrators alike. She demonstrates the epitome of dedication and teaches her students what drive and determination genuinely mean.

# *Award Recipients*

SOUTH SHORE REGIONAL CENTRE FOR EDUCATION

## **Educator Award**

### **Bernadette McIntosh (Lunenburg County NSTU Local)**

Teacher: Bridgewater Elementary School

Bernadette is currently in the 35<sup>th</sup> year of her teaching career but seeing her passion and love for the students daily, you would never know it. She knows almost every student in the school by name and continues to follow and support many, long after they leave grade primary.

Bernadette treats every student as an individual and adjusts her teaching to provide what each of them needs. When students reach their primary goals she doesn't stop there. She continues to teach, inspire, and open opportunities for her students to continue to grow the entire time they are in her classroom.

### **Lydia Skoreyko (Queens NSTU Local)**

Resource/Learning Centre Teacher: North Queens Community School

Lydia is a teacher who goes above and beyond each day. She is an asset, not only to this school but also to the entire South Shore Regional Centre for Education.

She is a fierce advocate for students with special needs and unique learner profiles. Her acceptance of each individual and her calm and quiet ways allow both her students and colleagues to feel part of a valued learning team every day.

## **Public School Administrator Award**

### **Allan Turner**

Principal: Newcombville Elementary School

Allan is a beloved principal whose passion for his school and students is seen each day through the energy he brings to school. Allan has a solid work ethic and commitment to the region and is always available and eager to provide support to his staff and students.



## **Early Childhood Educator Award**

### **Cindy MacLean**

Early Childhood Educator: Aspotogan Consolidated Elementary School

Cindy is empathetic and kind and goes above and beyond for the children in her classroom. She has brought forth a program intensely built on learning through collaboration, the interests shown by the children, and play-based pedagogy.

Her invitations put out for the children are thoughtful and engaging. They spark curiosity and wonder allowing children to actively engage and explore the environment around them. She is always striving to make her room the best it can be!

## **Student Support Award**

### **Holly Grant**

Teaching Assistant: South Queens Middle School

Holly has 36 years of experience providing excellent assistance to students with diverse and sometimes complex needs, such as those that face developmental and behavioural challenges. During class, she goes the extra mile to make sure all her students are meeting their outcomes and goals. She also lends a hand to other students in the class, who are not on her caseload. She never sits still and is always supporting the learning environment.

### **Sheila Porter**

Student Support Worker: Chester Area Middle School, Chester District School, Forest Heights Community School

Sheila is the voice for students who may get lost between the cracks, the ones who are unable to express how they are feeling, or how their home lives may be affecting their school lives. She helps to make those who don't feel safe, safe. She bakes, drives, calls, and comforts.

Sheila imparts what she knows through the Mi'kmaw language, story, and art while relating to the many students she meets. She touches people with her knowledge, especially First Nations students who may connect for the first time in their educational journey. She created and helps run an after-school program where Indigenous students in grades 6 to 8 learn about their heritage with the help of an RCMP liaison.

### **Shelly Whynot**

Student Support Worker: Dr. J.C. Wickwire Academy, Liverpool Regional High School, South Queens Middle School

Shelly has always had the best interest of students and families at the forefront in everything she does. She goes above and beyond daily and she advocates for students by empowering them to have a voice, building their confidence. She helps them set and achieve personal goals. Many of our students would have been unable to complete their high school education if it wasn't for Shelly. Every year, she makes sure five to seven students go on a Disney trip: those students who would not otherwise get the opportunity to go.

# *Award Recipients*

STRAIT REGIONAL CENTRE FOR EDUCATION

## **Educator Award**

### **Julie Jean (Antigonish NSTU Local)**

Teacher: Antigonish Education Centre

Julie works hard to ensure that her students, especially those with learning challenges, have the supports they need and to create an inclusive learning environment for all her students.

She makes incredible strides with her students by utilizing her creativity and positivity. Her students respond, in turn, by demonstrating their joy to be at school.

### **Chelsea MacCuspic (Richmond NSTU Local)**

Teacher: Felix Marchand Education Centre

Chelsea is a highly respected teacher who treats all students with respect and dignity. While her students have a diverse set of abilities and needs, she consistently acknowledges that all students are capable of growth in their own unique ways. She truly gets to know her students and has an excellent and trusting rapport with them.

Chelsea nourishes her students intellectually, socially, and emotionally, and is always reflecting upon her teaching practice. She incorporates a variety of pedagogical tools to achieve her inclusive classroom, including the physical design and layout, integrating technology, making her room sensory friendly, and creating social opportunities.

### **Christie MacDonald (Guysborough County NSTU Local)**

Teacher: Fanning Education Centre, Canso Academy

Christie always considers the needs of her students, whether it's developing individual programming or implementing culturally responsive practices. She is committed to ensuring all of her students are heard and feel included, whether it's by re-establishing a gay-straight alliance (GSA) committee at the school or revamping the student council to allow for more student voices to be heard.

Christie is always willing to go above and beyond for students who are at risk. Regardless of the situation, when asked to help, her response is always, "I will do whatever needs to be done to help a student succeed."

## **Annamarie Talbot (Inverness NSTU Local)**

Student Services Consultant: Strait Regional Centre for Education

Annamarie is an instrumental member of the regional Student Services team. She has led teachers on a quest to improve how students with special needs and challenges are taught and supported in public schools. She has also facilitated professional development, helped schools establish programming, and advocated for services and programming in the community when students transition out of public school.

Her work with transitioning students into and out of school has put parents at ease, making the path smoother for teachers and administrators to continue their support to students.

## **Public School Administrator Award**

### **Ann Whalley**

Principal: Dalbrae Academy

Ann is a principal committed to ensuring all students thrive and enter a school that is inclusive and welcoming to all learners, as she models both inclusive and culturally responsive practices. Her compassion makes all students feel welcomed, nurtured, and challenged to succeed.

Ann's dedication is unsurpassed and her leadership in promoting inclusive educational practices in all classrooms and learning environments she supports is outstanding. She cares so deeply about the success of all her students!

## **Early Childhood Educator Award**

### **Jillian Carter**

Early Childhood Educator: H.M. MacDonald Elementary School

Jillian is very committed to creating an inclusive and stimulating environment where all children can engage in play-based activities at their level of development and interest.

She works collaboratively with her co-educator, the children, and their families to reflect upon children's ideas and consider their meaning in the context of the development of the whole child.

Jillian has created a high-quality pre-primary program that benefits all the children and their families. She works to ensure children's interests are demonstrated in such a way that she can tap into what is most important to them.

## **Student Support Award**

### **Janice DeGruchy**

Teaching Assistant: East Antigonish Education Centre/Academy

Janice's kind and caring nature make her a perfect fit in her career choice. Her hard work and determination help ensure all of her students have opportunities to learn, grow, and succeed.

Aside from her role as a teaching assistant, she has taken on many additional roles to support students outside the classroom, such as coaching multiple sports teams, leading an after-school program four days a week for our elementary First Nations students, and coordinating the school breakfast program where she greets all students each morning, ensuring they have a healthy meal to start the day.

### **Donna Lameman**

Mi'kmaw Language Teacher: East Richmond Education Centre,  
Richmond Education Centre/Academy

Throughout her career, Donna has always gone above and beyond for all her students and colleagues. Students describe Donna as a very trustworthy person and they always feel comfortable talking with her because they know she will listen.

More than just a Mi'kmaw language teacher, Donna works hard to ensure that her classroom is welcoming, inclusive, culturally responsive, and respectful for all students who enter it.

### **Lorraine Reddick**

African Nova Scotian Student Support Worker:  
Dr. John Hugh Gillis Regional High School

Lorraine has demonstrated outstanding leadership in supporting African Nova Scotian students within the Strait Regional Centre for Education.

Over the years, Lorraine has supported and helped countless students recognize their talents and strengths. She is calm, level headed, and works with her students in an empathetic and compassionate way. Her students are receptive to her approach which enables them to strive towards their potential both academically and socially.

Through her efforts, Lorraine has helped Dr. John Hugh Gillis Regional High School become more culturally proficient and has provided constructive suggestions to improve our diverse learning environment and help move the school along the path to becoming more inclusive and welcoming to all staff and students.

# *Award Recipients*

TRI-COUNTY REGIONAL CENTRE FOR EDUCATION

## **Educator Award**

### **Margaret Selig (Yarmouth NSTU Local)**

Resource Teacher: Yarmouth Central School, Meadowfields Community School, Port Maitland Consolidated Elementary School

Margaret has been providing the gold standard of inclusive education through the support she provides students with the highest needs. She offers a level of support that is trauma-informed, nurturing, and compassionate all while delivering clear and consistent expectations.

She sets a high bar for her students' achievement but meets them where they're at to walk with them on their educational journeys. The gains each student makes may be viewed by some as small but without Margaret's exceptional balance of both consistent expectations and compassionate support, these gains are life-changing for her students.

### **Terri Spinney (Shelburne County NSTU Local)**

Resource Teacher: Barrington Municipal High School

Terri works with students with special needs challenging them and allowing them to increase their school and life skills. Every year we see students go past their expected level of achievement and inevitably it leads back to Terri. There are little things that often go unnoticed, like Terri's fridge and cupboard in her room with food for students in need, because we all know our students learn best when they are healthy and fed.

Terri is the backbone of our breakfast program. Every week she takes the special needs students grocery shopping to help build their mathematical and social skills and give them a sense of pride in helping others.

## **Heidi Tudor (Digby NSTU Local)**

Lead Resource Teacher: Islands Consolidated School (ICS)

Heidi has the ability to connect with students who are struggling in school. She understands that sometimes their “I don’t care” attitude can be hard for classroom teachers to manage alone and she often supports the process of reconnecting students to their schooling and then the classroom through individual support.

Not only does she work closely with students but she is also a leader in managing the school’s Program Planning Team and the most complex caseloads at ICS, directly and through guidance to her colleagues with the same inclusive pedagogy.

## **Public School Administrator Award**

### **Don Berry**

Principal: Yarmouth Consolidated Memorial High School

Don is the principal of the largest school within the Tri-County Regional Centre for Education (TCRCE) and always spends a tremendous amount of time and energy on his school-community.

He is a champion for marginalized students and consistently exhibits a dedicated and empathetic attitude toward students, staff, and the entire community.

Being from the local area of Yarmouth, Don has nourished positive relationships with students, parents and guardians, school advisory council (SAC) members, and the wider school community.

## **Early Childhood Educator Award**

### **Deanna Theriault**

Early Childhood Educator: Yarmouth Central School

Deanna began her career as an ECE with a desire to provide inclusive education to young children. She has consistently provided care and support to all children in the Yarmouth Central School pre-primary program for the past 4.5 years.

Deanna demonstrates a desire to get to know children and their families and puts their needs at the forefront when setting up the learning environment and making programming choices. She recognizes the value of equitable education and does her best to ensure all children get the most they can from their pre-primary experience.

Deanna also provides mentorship to other ECEs in the region when needed and provides suggestions and techniques to increase success in all pre-primary programs.

## **Student Support Award**

### **Lisa Comeau**

Teaching Assistant: Maple Grove Education Centre

Lisa demonstrates on a daily basis her outstanding skill set that supports many of our students.

In her role as a teaching assistant, Lisa has very high expectations for the students she supports. By focusing on students' strengths and always making them feel safe and secure at all times, she is able to support the independence of her students.

### **Marlene Joudrey**

Mi'kmaw Student Support Worker: Digby Elementary School,  
Digby Regional High School

Marlene has consistently demonstrated a high level of passion, commitment, and engagement in her work with her students. She is an exemplary model of how student support workers connects students with school and cultural communities.

Marlene has been a staunch proponent for the academic success and well-being of Mi'kmaw learners', challenging the system and questioning it without being critical. Marlene's community development work with Mi'kmaw communities goes beyond her role in education, showing her passion and desire to give back to the communities and people who have played important roles in her own journey.

### **Todd Simms Sr.**

African Nova Scotian Student Support Worker: Digby Elementary School

Todd Simms Sr., who currently works at Digby Elementary School, has been an African Nova Scotian student support worker for 20 years with TCRCE. Todd's dedication and passion for working with youth are evident not only within the public school system but also in his volunteer commitments to his community.

His dedication and passion for working with youth are evident not only within the school system but also in his volunteer commitment to his community. He takes great pride instilling in the lives of African Nova Scotian youth an understanding of their community history, struggle, and achievements.

## **Partner Award**

### **Sharon Southern**

Fédération des parents acadiens de la Nouvelle-Écosse

Sharon Southern has worked to ensure that all students feel at home in their learning environment and that they all have the resources needed to reach their full potential.

Sharon has always believed in the potential of students with special needs. She has worked hard to ensure that services, programs, and resources are available and are used in schools. She was also a member of several of the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development's working committees to advance policies on inclusive education.

The Fédération des parents acadiens de la Nouvelle-Écosse (Acadian Parents' Federation of Nova Scotia) recognizes Sharon Southern's great work and exceptional dedication throughout her career to ensuring that all children are included in our public school system.

### **James Troy Turple**

Nova Scotia Federation of Home and School Associations (NSFHSA)

Troy is the organizer of the Michelin Challenge Education (MCE) volunteer program at Michelin. MCE volunteers support students in developing and solidifying concepts taught in their classrooms. They also provide additional support in a variety of areas from academics to self-esteem to relationship building. Over the past two years, Troy's leadership has led to the number of volunteers quadrupling from seven to 28.

Troy works closely with the Cambridge and District Elementary School (CDES) Core Planning Team in order to ensure that MCE volunteers are positive adult role models and provide the best possible experiences for the students of CDES.



# Partner Messages

**Honourable Zach Churchill  
Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development,  
Province of Nova Scotia**

There are many individuals within our education system that play an important role in the success and well-being of students in schools across the province.

This year's Education Week theme of Inclusive Education focuses on the important role educators, administrators, early childhood educators, and school and student support staff play in supporting safe and inclusive learning environments for children and students in our schools.

Providing inclusive supports to students is one of our top priorities. During the 2018–2019 school year we have hired 191 new inclusive education staff to assist teachers and provide more support to our students to meet their needs. We will continue to invest in inclusive education, supports, and professional development opportunities for educators. These changes will ensure that we raise the bar and close the achievement gap for our students.

I would like to thank all our educators, administrators, and school staff for their commitment and dedication to student success and well-being. I would also like to thank our provincial Education Week partners for their work in organizing this year's awards.

# Partner Messages

**Paul Wozney**  
**President of the Nova Scotia Teachers Union**

On behalf of the Nova Scotia Teachers Union and our public school and APSEA members, I congratulate the teachers, educators, administrators, support staff and education partners who are making a difference in the lives of students, schools, and communities through their commitment to this year's Education Week theme Inclusive Education—Helping our students and children succeed / Inclusion scolaire—pour aider nos élèves et nos enfants à connaître la réussite.

Classroom teachers, specialist teachers, school guidance counsellors, school psychologists and speech-language pathologists work together with their teaching, administrative, and support colleagues to provide positive inclusive, and respectful learning environments where diversity is valued and students can thrive.

This year's theme recognizes those who foster inclusive classrooms, schools and communities, going above and beyond in ensuring that regardless of differences, culture and abilities, every student is given the opportunity to succeed and develop a positive understanding of themselves and others.

I also acknowledge the longtime support of the Teachers *Plus* Credit Union, the corporate sponsor of Nova Scotia's Education Week since 2003. Teachers *Plus* Credit Union continues to demonstrate its commitment to teachers and public education in Nova Scotia.

Please join me in celebrating the achievements and commitment of this year's Education Week award recipients.

Congratulations! Felicitations! ag Welluguti'og!

# Partner Messages

**Diane Power**

**President of the Nova Scotia Federation of Home and School Associations**

The Nova Scotia Federation of Home and School Associations (NSFHSA) would like to recognize and congratulate the recipients of the 2019 Education Week Awards. Education Week is a time to celebrate the successes and accomplishments of those involved in educating children and students in Nova Scotia, especially those related to this year's theme, inclusive education.

NSFHSA's founding principles are that every child needs and deserves support during their school years. It is important to keep in mind that each child is unique. Individuality is what makes each of us special. That said, as educators and parents we ought to support them with whatever resources and tools we have.

To the recipients: be proud of the opportunities, supports, and services that you provide on a daily basis for the benefit of students and children. You have demonstrated this through accepting, understanding, and attending to students' individuality and diversity. You are an inspiration to your students, as well as your peers and community. We would like to express our gratitude and hope that you understand that your dedication will live on and be shared by the students and children that you have impacted.

When students experience an inclusive education, they develop awareness and are more accepting and tolerant. This experience provides them with the skills to live healthier lives, learning and developing to their fullest potential, and establishing positive relationships.

Please accept our thanks for the positive influence you have on the lives you touch. You are making a difference.

# Partner Messages

**Caroline Arsenault**

**La Fédération des parents acadiens de la Nouvelle-Écosse, Présidente**

La Fédération des parents acadiens de la Nouvelle-Écosse tient à remercier tous ceux et celles qui travaillent chaque jour à assurer un environnement d'apprentissage inclusif pour tous nos jeunes dans notre réseau scolaire en Nouvelle-Écosse.

« Inclusion scolaire – Pour aider nos élèves et nos enfants à connaître la réussite » est une thématique particulièrement importante en 2019. Tous nos enfants doivent avoir les programmes, services et ressources à leur disponibilité pour que chacun puisse réaliser son plein potentiel. Les parents acadiens et francophones reconnaissent la grande contribution de tous les intervenants dévoués en milieu scolaire : les enseignants, les spécialistes, les aides-enseignants, les agents scolaires-communautaires. Ils contribuent grandement au développement académique, social et culturel des tous nos enfants.

« Nous sommes tous des étoiles, il nous suffit juste d'apprendre à briller »

# Partner Messages

**Tim Simony**

**Chair, Public School Administrators Association of Nova Scotia**

I would like to extend congratulations, on behalf of the Public School Administrators Association of Nova Scotia, to all of this year's Education Week 2019 award recipients.

This year's theme *Inclusive Education: Helping children and students succeed* is timely as our education system reaffirms core values and beliefs with a commitment to better serve the youth of Nova Scotia. The individuals receiving these awards are exemplary leaders in their work and practice. They are seen by their peers as the visionaries, while also being the ones who ensure that students are at the centre of their day to day work and decisions.

We would like to thank all of the early childhood educators, support staff, teachers, school-based leaders and system leaders who partner with their colleagues to make schools inclusive for all of the children they serve. Congratulations again to the award recipients. You show us all how to be better through the work that you do.

# Partner Messages

## **April Hiltz Member of the Council on Mi'kmaq Education**

On behalf of the Council on Mi'kmaq Education (CME), I extend sincere congratulations to the Education Week 2019 award recipients.

The 2019 Education Week theme of Inclusive Education—Helping our students and children succeed, is truly student and children focused. As the education system moves forward and positive changes happen throughout the land of Mi'kma'ki, let's take time to reflect on the past: to learn, influence, and change the future by what we decide to do today. As barriers are identified and removed, true success will happen for students and children. Equitable education for all is true inclusion.

A respected Mi'kmaq Elder and Knowledge Keeper once shared these valuable words:  
*"As we understand each other, we learn from each other, and respect each other."*  
Let's take time to reflect on those words of wisdom.

Wela'liq (thank-you) to all the recipients of the 2019 Education Week Awards. I thank you for your efforts in going above and beyond for the success of all students and children. Congrats, once again!

# Partner Messages

## **Andrea Noylander-Marsman Interim Chair of the Council on African Canadian Education**

On behalf of the Council on African Canadian Education, and our provincial partners the Black Educators Association, the Delmore Buddy Daye Learning Institute, and the African Nova Scotian community, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate those teachers and support staff that play a critical role in educating and shaping the future of our children and students.

The theme for Education Week 2019 is Inclusive Education—Helping our students and children succeed. Diversity and inclusion is a belief that ALL students, regardless of labels, are valued members of our learning community. It means meeting each student where they are with an uncompromising vision for high achievement, ensuring all learners have equitable access to learning opportunities that foster agency and prepare them for life in the world.

The challenge for teachers and support staff is to identify where individual students are on the trajectory and address their social and emotional needs, passions, and interests all while being culturally relevant in real time is a tall order and no small feat. Educators who consider the core values “...of diversity, equity and inclusivity in their decisions about curriculum, instruction, assessment, student engagement, and classroom management...” are, according to the Nova Scotia teaching standards, exemplars of educational teaching and learning excellence.

All of the teachers, administrators, and support staff recognized with an Education Week Award have demonstrated that this represents their everyday lived experience. Thank you for your continued commitment to providing safe and inclusive environments and allowing your students to thrive and grow in celebration of who they are.

# About our Corporate Sponsor

For more than 50 years, Teachers *Plus* Credit Union has been serving the teachers of Nova Scotia. Throughout its history, it has focused on the needs of teachers and their families. Today it serves members throughout the province through the largest network of financial institutions in the country. Credit Unions have more branches and more ABMs than any major bank in Nova Scotia. For day-to-day banking, mortgages, loans, and investments, Teachers *Plus* Credit Union is here for you. Visit us at [www.teachersplus.ca](http://www.teachersplus.ca).

The Provincial Education Week Committee wishes to thank Teachers *Plus* Credit Union, which has generously contributed to the success of Education Week since 2003.







