

News Release

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Nine Friend of Education awards to be presented

MADISON — State Superintendent Tony Evers will present 2011 Friend of Education awards Thursday as part of his third annual State of Education address at the Capitol in Madison. The five organizations and six individuals receiving awards are being recognized for the significant contributions they have made to students in their local communities and across the state.

“I am humbled by the dedication these groups and citizens show toward Wisconsin’s children,” Evers said. “Each day, formally and informally, they demonstrate what it means to be a Friend of Education. Evers will present nine Friend of Education awards to the following:

Children’s Health Education Center has provided health education for children in the Milwaukee area for more than a decade. From bullying prevention to healthy eating, physical activity and substance abuse prevention, the center develops and delivers programs addressing critical health issues to help Wisconsin students succeed in school and life. More than 40,000 students participated in free center programs in 2010-11. More than 30,000 took part in the on-line bullying prevention program, Act Now! In addition, the center’s website provides valuable resources for educators, parents, and caregivers. The Children’s Health Education Center is under the leadership of **Bridget Clementi**.

The Honorable Pedro Colón was born in Puerto Rico, grew up on the South Side of Milwaukee, and was the first Latino to be elected to the Wisconsin Legislature. He won re-election five times and during his legislative career he championed disadvantaged students and fought to increase bilingual-bicultural funding and supports for English language learners. In September 2010, Governor Jim Doyle appointed him as a circuit court judge for Milwaukee County. Judge Colón was subsequently elected to the seat in April 2011. Through his prominence as a legislator and judge, he serves as a role model to Latino children in the Milwaukee area and throughout the state.

Danae Davis brings a lifetime of commitment to helping young women achieve their potential. She serves as the chief executive officer of PEARLS for Teen Girls Inc., a leadership development organization serving at-risk African American and Latina girls, ages 10 to 19 in Milwaukee. With a focus on helping girls achieve in school, avoid teen pregnancy, and use their personal power to achieve their goals and dreams, the program serves hundreds each year. Being a University of Wisconsin Law School graduate, Davis brought her knowledge, experience and commitment to the Board of Regents, serving there for the past eight years.

For over 90 years, **Junior Achievement (JA)** has been helping young people connect with their dreams by educating students about workforce readiness, entrepreneurship, and financial literacy through experiential, hands-on programs. JA of Wisconsin provides real-life learning experiences to over 164,000 students in 8,000 Wisconsin classrooms by bringing together businesses, community organizations, and volunteers. JA programs enhance the relevance of classroom learning and increase student understanding of the value of staying in school. By focusing

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on education and economic and youth development, JA programs contribute to community vitality and a well-educated workforce. JA of Wisconsin is under the leadership of Tim Greinert.

The **Marshfield Area Coalition for Youth (MACY)** was formed in 1990 to reduce and prevent the use of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs by Marshfield youth. Supported by the Marshfield Clinic Center for Community Outreach, MACY is guided by a steering committee that includes members representing community and county organizations, parents, youth, churches, area hospitals and clinics, the school district, law enforcement, and libraries. **Rick Gramza** is the MACY chairperson.

Tom and Sharon Metz of Omro, have worked tirelessly to teach others about American Indian cultures and rights. Sharon was one of the founders of Honor Our Neighbors Origins and Rights (HONOR), which brought together faith communities and secular organizations to support treaty rights. HONOR was instrumental in creating instructional requirements in American Indian Studies. Tom is a Korean War Veteran, retired teacher, and active leader. He continues the work of the HONOR Resource Center, providing a source for accurate and authentic materials by and about native people.

John and Tashia Morgridge are both University of Wisconsin-Madison graduates and have made many donations to the university over the years. Those include support for renovation of the School of Education and establishment of the Morgridge Center for Public Service, which promotes volunteerism among college students. Recently, the Morgridge Institute for Research, a twin of the Wisconsin Institutes for Discovery, opened on the Madison campus. This public-private endeavor promotes interdisciplinary research to advance health and well-being with a goal of moving new learning from the laboratory to public use, or “Discovery to Delivery.” This year’s summer science camp and the release of the digital learning game, “Virulent,” demonstrate how students across Wisconsin benefit from the Morgridge’s continued generosity and vision for Wisconsin to be a leader in biomedical research and education.

The **Northwest Chapter of the Great Lakes Timber Professionals Association** sponsors the two-day “Log a Load for Kids” annually in fall. Approximately 700 fourth- and fifth-grade students from the Cooperative Educational Service Agency 12 region tour a logging operation and attend various forest demonstrations. Students and their teachers gain first-hand knowledge of the forest products industry and forest resources, an understanding of environmental science, and an appreciation for the individuals who work in this business. Sales from the timber harvested at the event are donated to the Children’s Miracle Network, a non-profit organization that helps kids at 170 children’s hospitals, including St. Joseph’s Hospital in Marshfield. **Terry Peters** of Mellen will accept the award on behalf of the Northwest Chapter of the Great Lakes Timber Professionals Association.

Project 16:49 strives to provide a continuum of services for teens who are homeless. It is run by the Homeless Education Action Team (HEAT), a subcommittee of the Rock County Homeless Intervention Task Force. Project 16:49 works with Lutheran Social Services to recruit families to serve as “safe homes” and provide emergency shelter for teens. HEAT, along with the YWCA of Rock County, is raising funds to open a transitional living program to serve individuals aged 16 to 21 years who cannot safely return home, allowing them to finish high school and learn adult responsibilities in a supportive environment with caring adults. The project’s name comes from the sixteen hours and forty-nine minutes between school ending one day and starting the next, which “for some kids, are the longest hours of their entire lives.” **Ann Forbeck**, homeless liaison for the Janesville School District, and **Robin Stuht**, homeless coordinator for the Beloit School District, will accept the award.

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NOTES: This news release is available electronically at http://dpi.wi.gov/eis/pdf/dpinr2011_98.pdf. Following the program, photos of those accepting awards will be available at <http://dpi.wi.gov/sprntdnt/photos.html>. The awards program is expected to be viewable via the WisconsinEye website at <http://www.wiseye.org/>.