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HCPS ANNOUNCES TOP FIVE CONTENDERS FOR COUNTY TEACHER OF THE YEAR

Expert educators vie for prestigious title

The top five finalists for the 2013 Harford County Teacher of the Year award have been released and are listed in alphabetical order below. The judging panel had a difficult and unenviable task again this year with many outstanding teachers nominated for the award. Just to have been deemed worthy by a student, parent, administrator or community member to be Harford County's Teacher of the Year from among the more than 3,200 teachers in the system is remarkable.



Tara N. Buecker, *Jarrettsville Elementary School Physical Education/Health Teacher*

Harford County native Tara Buecker is an eighth-year teacher at Jarrettsville Elementary School. Ms. Buecker received her bachelor's degree in physical education from Hofstra University in 2005 and her master's degree in health science from Towson University in 2012. She is a member of the Jarrettsville Elementary School Improvement Team and organizes many community events, including family wellness activities. Serving on the district's programming committee, Ms. Buecker contributes to the alignment of physical education standards, curriculum and assessment. Ms. Buecker won a first place Harford County Curriculum Award (2010), the Jerry Scarborough Award (2010), the Maryland Association for Physical Education's Emerging Leader Award (2011) and the Harford County Green Teacher of the Year (2012).



J. Laura Childs, *Edgewood High School English Teacher*

Laura Childs received her Bachelor of Science in English and Secondary Education from Towson University in 2006 and a Master of Arts in Humanities in 2010. Ms. Childs has been with Edgewood High School since she began her teaching career. She facilitates the Faculty Committee and, as the Junior Class Advisor, organizes the Prom. Ms. Childs also works with the Literacy Magazine and coaches both Poetry Slams and Speech and Debate. In 2011, Ms. Childs and her students were awarded a United Way Youth Champion Grant for their work with the Khaled Hosseini Foundation building shelters in Afghanistan.

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Kimberly A. Harner, *Southampton Middle School Special Educator*

Teaching in Harford County for 16 years, Kimberly Harner has put her heart and soul into educating students in developing critical life skills in reading, writing and mathematics. Ms. Harner has participated in Alt-MSA curriculum writing workshops and modified elementary science curriculum. She has served on the School Improvement Team and has facilitated school professional development and mentored student teachers. She was a pioneer for Inclusion at Fallston High School and coached swimming. She earned her bachelor's degree in special education in 1997 from University of Maryland College Park and obtained her master's degree in reading from Loyola University in 2002.



Kristine E. M. Jurgs, *Southampton Middle School Special Educator*

Kristine Jurgs graduated cum laude with a Bachelor of Arts in Special Education and a minor in Elementary Education from West Chester University of Pennsylvania in 1999. She earned her master's degree in administration and supervision from the College of Notre Dame in Maryland in 2009. Ms. Jurgs is an active member of the School Improvement Team at Southampton Middle School. She has organized and led the Kids Inclusion Club, assisted in coordinating community-based instruction trips and organized service learning projects. At the county level, Ms. Jurgs has facilitated professional development for teachers. Additionally, she has served as teacher mentor.



Kristin M. Schaub, *Havre de Grace Elementary School Fifth Grade Teacher*

Over the last nine years, Kristin Schaub has made numerous contributions to the school and community of Havre de Grace Elementary. She began her journey by attending Towson University where she earned her Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education and graduated Summa Cum Laude in 2004. Ms. Schaub later received her master's degree in instructional technology from Towson University in 2012. She consistently implements cutting-edge approaches to education in order to meet the needs of her Title I students. Ms. Schaub also shares her passion for education by serving as a classroom model, a School Improvement Team facilitator and a team leader.

After this year's Teacher of the Year Judging Committee reviewed and scored all nomination packets, the points were tallied resulting in a group of ten candidates that participated in an interview with a panel of eight judges. The judges narrowed the pool to the top five finalists, one of which will be crowned the 2013 Harford County Teacher of the Year.

A surprise announcement of the winner will take place at the annual Harford County Teacher of the Year banquet to be held on Wednesday, March 27, at the Bayou Restaurant in Havre de Grace. Again this year, the banquet is being provided by HARCO Federal Credit Union.