

**BOARD OF EDUCATION OF HARFORD COUNTY
RECOGNITION**

**MARYLAND COUNCIL FOR SOCIAL STUDIES'
INSTRUCTIONAL LEADER OF THE YEAR**

KATE JOHNSON

November 17, 2014

Background Information:

Each year, the Maryland Council for Social Studies honors individuals who have made extraordinary contributions to social studies education in the State of Maryland. The Council has traditionally honored an elementary teacher and a secondary teacher each year. In order to recognize the broad spectrum of professionals who advance social studies education, two additional awards are now also included: one recognizing the contributions of an outstanding instructional leader, and another recognizing the contributions of a professional in a social studies-related organization. To be named Social Studies Instructional Leader of the Year, the nominee must be a social studies supervisor, resource teacher, or other instructional leader in a Maryland school system who has made outstanding contributions to curriculum and/or resource development, teacher professional development, or systemwide organization.

Discussion:

The Maryland Council for Social Studies presented the 2014 Award for Instructional Leader of the Year to Kate Johnson, Harford County Public Schools curriculum specialist. Ms. Johnson was nominated by HCPS Supervisor of Social Studies George Toepfer. She has provided professional development for Harford County Public Schools' middle and high school department chairs in the process of observation in the social studies classroom, the implementation of the Common Core State Standards and the C3 Standards, as well as the use of primary sources in the classroom, and historical thinking skills. She has also planned and implemented professional development on a countywide basis for elementary, middle, and high school teachers on a wide variety of topics including disciplinary literacy, questioning, and thinking like a social scientist. In addition, Ms. Johnson has served as the Project Manager overseeing the revision and editing of the Harford County Public Schools' United States History program. This work includes the co-authoring, field-testing, and revision of a curriculum unit that focuses on the use of the book, *Triangle: The Fire that Changed America* by David Von Drehle.

Ms. Johnson is highly respected by teachers and administrators in our school system because of her ability to provide thoughtful and effective professional learning. Her organizational skills are outstanding; allowing her to handle multiple projects with focus and efficiency. Her communication skills have allowed her to work effectively with a variety of stakeholders in Harford County Public Schools. Ms. Johnson is the consummate professional and can be counted upon to lead by example and be front and center in the delivery and

discussion of effective Social Studies education. She consistently elevates the work of people around her; probably the most complimentary statement that can be provided to a leader.

Superintendent's Recommendation:

The Superintendent recommends the Board of Education of Harford County express its sincerest congratulations to Ms. Kate Johnson for having been awarded the 2014 Award for Instructional Leader of the Year by the Maryland Council for Social Studies.