

36th Annual  
**Ohio ESC  
Association  
Awards**



Monday, November 14, 2022

Hilton Columbus Downtown  
Columbus, Ohio



# Program

## Welcome

Dave Larson, OESCA President  
*Superintendent, Miami County ESC*

## Pledge of Allegiance

Marie Ward, OESCA Secretary  
*Superintendent, Fairfield County ESC*

## Invocation

Sandy Mers, OESCA Past President  
*Superintendent, South Central Ohio ESC*

## 2022 Award Presentation

Craig Burford  
*Executive Director, OESCA*

Jennifer Felker, OESCA President-Elect  
*Superintendent, ESC of the Western Reserve*

## Closing Remarks

Craig Burford  
*Executive Director, OESCA*

## Adjournment

# 2022 Award Winners

## **Outstanding Leadership Award - Community**

*Current community leader who has personally rendered a specific leadership service which has significantly benefited all of the local school districts in the county school system, or educational service center office, or both.*

### **Brown County Agricultural Society (represented by Dave Frye and Theresa Siemer)**

#### **Nominated by the Brown County ESC**

The Brown County Agricultural Society (aka Senior Fairboard) has been an active partner in promoting the work of the Brown County Educational Service Center and its mission to provide additional educational opportunities for students in local school districts. The Brown County Fairboard has allocated time in their daily schedule to promote career and workforce activities sponsored by the ESC and collaborating partners. For the last two years they have enabled the ESC to host a Human Library which focuses on careers for youth. The Agricultural Society provides daily passes, advertising and volunteers for events. They have allowed various school entities to use the grounds at no cost and have hosted students for community service and other judging activities.

### **Howard Rohleder**

#### **Nominated by the Columbiana County ESC**

Howard Rohleder has more than thirty years of experience in health administration and was one of founding members of the Columbiana County Educational Service Center Business Advisory Council, serving as its first Chairperson. His interest in student success led him to research outcomes and present at the first vision-casting event held by the Business Advisory Council. This event provided an opportunity for educators, the workforce, and community agencies to develop a shared vision for student career development. Now Mr. Rohleder is enjoying retired life as a contributor to The Humble Dollar, posting articles and blog posts about making rational financial decisions.

## **John Dilling**

### **Nominated by the Columbiana County ESC**

After retiring as Crestview Local School District superintendent, John Dilling joined the Columbiana County ESC team, lending his expertise and passion for student-centered learning at the county level. As an active member of the Columbiana County ESC Business Advisory Council, Mr. Dilling has increased school and business partnerships and project-based learning opportunities for both students and educators. Through Project Inspire, he expanded the original Straight A Grant to include many additional components beyond the original 3D printing system such as robotics, drone building and flying, and career-based pathways for student exploration - membership in this project doubled and business sponsorships have grown as well. John has served as Director of After-School Programs, receiving four 21st Century Grants and initiating business partnerships that provide real world project-based learning that is meaningful for students and their communities. After almost fifty years in education, John continues to encourage innovative and relevant educational practices that engage students in their own learning.

## **Pritchard Laughlin Civic Center**

**(represented by Jodi Schott, Kayla Miley & Karen Boyer)**

### **Nominated by the East Central Ohio ESC**

As a neighbor and partner, the Pritchard Laughlin Civic Center has supported the East Central Ohio ESC. In the past two years, the Center has hosted numerous events for the ESC, notably, the first annual Guernsey County Reading Festival. Not only did the Pritchard Laughlin Civic Center host this event, but staff also helped to recruit local organizations and coordinate events throughout the day - they were an integral part of making the day a success. As neighbors, they have graciously shared their parking lot and given support during the myriad events the ESC has hosted with them, including the annual Administrative Kick-Off, Ohio Strengths Collaborative meetings, the Guernsey County Workforce Collaborative, and Guernsey County Career Connections. The staff is always friendly, helpful, and hospitable, ensuring an excellent experience every time.

## **Kathy Mock**

### **Nominated by the ESC of Eastern Ohio**

Kathy Mock worked for more than thirty years as an early childhood teacher and nine years at Youngstown State University before she became the Director of Education and Initiatives for the Youngstown Mahoning Valley United Way. Ms. Mock coordinated several education initiatives including Success By 6, Success After 6, Young Women's Mentorship Program, and VELLO (a virtual volunteer reading program). She has been credited with bringing the Dolly Parton Imagination Library to Mahoning County in 2014 - today it supports approximately 6,500 children and their families, and more than 7,000 Mahoning County children have graduated from the program.

## **Gary Hartman**

### **Nominated by the ESC of Eastern Ohio**

Gary Hartman is a member of the Educational Service Center of Eastern Ohio (ESCEO) Business Advisory Council and works for the Builders Association of Eastern Ohio and Western Pennsylvania. He has partnered with the ESC to promote opportunities available in the building trades including the annual Mahoning Valley Skilled Trades Expo which has attracted 50 school districts and more than 5000 students in the last three years. Mr. Hartman partnered with ESCEO Career Counselors, the Building Trades Association, and the Ohio Carpenters' Joint Apprenticeship to implement Building Trades Pre-Apprenticeship programs in fourteen of twenty-one school districts, brought back wood shop classes in school districts, and coordinated an opportunity for students to earn up to twenty-four industry-recognized credential points along with direct access to an apprenticeship program. Last year, 324 students in ten school districts enrolled in the Building Trades Pre-Apprenticeship program, and 54 seniors declared entry into the Building Trades Apprenticeship after high school graduation.

## **Christina Collins**

### **Nominated by the ESC of Medina County**

Dr. Christina Collins served as an educator, literacy specialist, secondary curriculum specialist and curriculum director, and currently is an adjunct professor at Kent State University and a State Board of Education representative. She was a driving force behind Medina County's Pre-Apprenticeship program. When the need was identified, Dr. Collins was immediately on board with our partner, the Medina Economic Development Corporation, and wasted no time in charting a path, engaging partners, and creating curriculum and content where none had previously existed. The expediency and thoroughness with which the program was created is a testament to Dr. Collins' professional skill and knowledge-base. Last year nearly 100 students in Medina County took advantage of this opportunity and were able to successfully move forward without barriers to future success. This year the program is no less successful, having already served fifty students in the first session.

## **Kathy Breitenbucher**

### **Nominated by the ESC of Medina County**

Kathy Breitenbucher has brought to fruition two amazing programs for county schools through the Business Advisory Committee which she helps the ESC facilitate. When she saw a need for a liaison between schools, students, and businesses - beyond what a guidance counselor could do - Ms. Breitenbucher found donors to privately fund a full-time career coach for Medina County that meets with and learns about local businesses, finds opportunities for students, and coordinates with all Medina County districts to facilitate a connection. Already in its first year, businesses are seeing increased (and qualified) workforce candidates, and students and parents are learning that successful careers can be had in their own backyard. When county guidance counselors identified 150 students who would not meet the new graduation requirements, she pulled out every stop to create a pre-apprenticeship program that was successfully delivered to 100 students last year.

## **Adam Negley**

### **Nominated by the Pickaway County ESC**

Adam Negley became the Pickaway County Health Commissioner at the height of the pandemic in August 2020. He was the driving force in crafting a plan to get students back to in-person learning. He visited schools to assess space limitations and made suggestions to ensure schools were safe for staff members and students. Despite continual changes from the CDC, Mr. Negley kept up to date and adapted district and county plans as needed. He coordinated a vaccination schedule for staff members and students, arranging the schedules of his employees to meet districts' needs. Though Mr. Negley lives in Franklin County, an hour commute did not stop him from working long days — and nights — for Pickaway County.

## **Clinton County Workforce Collaborative Steering Committee Members**

### **Ruth Brindle, Tammy Keller & Dessie Rogers**

#### **Nominated by the Southern Ohio ESC and the Clinton County Business Advisory Council**

With selfless dedication and a drive for improving their community, Ruth Brindle, Tammy Keller, and Dessie Rogers lead the steering committee of the newly developed Clinton County Workforce Collaborative that tackles the critical and multifaceted issues surrounding workforce development, retention, and recruitment in Clinton County and the surrounding region.

Ruth Brindle (Clinton County Port Authority) serves as co-lead for the Barriers to Work team, identifying the common hurdles that are preventing members of the community from realizing gainful employment. Tammy

Keller (OhioMeansJobs of Clinton County) serves as co-lead of the Education & Training team, building an online resource guide and an internship program for area students with an emphasis on soft skill development. Dessie Rogers (Wilmington-Clinton County Chamber of Commerce) serves as co-lead of the School & Community Connections team which seeks to better connect employers, local schools, and the greater community in order to attract and retain local students for the future workforce, and bridge workforce development gaps.



## Walt Davis and Jenny Kilgore

### Nominated by the Warren County ESC

Walt Davis is a member of the State Board of Education appointed by the Governor, and Jenny Kilgore is an elected member of the State Board of Education. Mr. Davis and Ms. Kilgore have attended almost every meeting for Warren County Superintendents weekly and sometimes more often, during the last two years. Both of them are committed to using the information from local school superintendents to inform their work on the State Board of Education. When Warren County superintendents proposed the "Test and Stay" model to reduce student and staff quarantines, Mr. Davis was instrumental in sharing the idea with Lt. Governor John Husted. "Test and Stay" became the model for the entire State and effectively prevented the quarantine of healthy students. Mr. Davis and Ms. Kilgore deserve commendation due to their time commitment and desire for their votes on the State Board of Education to be informed by the views of local school district leaders.

## Outstanding Leadership Award: ESC Governing Board Member

*Current members of educational service center governing boards who have personally rendered a specific leadership service that has provided a significant benefit to one or more local school districts in the county school system.*

## Sandy Harrod

### Nominated by the Hamilton County ESC

Sandy Harrod has served as a Hamilton County ESC Governing Board Member since 2016 and is a member of the Great Oaks Career Center Board. Ms. Harrod's leadership skills have helped the ESC and Governing Board navigate many changes. She has guided a new executive team and helped transition two new governing board members which required organization and planning to keep everything moving. Ms. Harrod creates a positive, caring culture. Most importantly, she helps maintain focus on the mission, "Leading the transformation of education so each child can learn more...do more...be more."

## **Outstanding Leadership Award: Local, City, Exempted Village Board Member**

*Current member of a local, city, or exempted village board of education who has personally rendered a specific leadership service which has significantly benefited one or more local school districts in the county school system.*

### **Karen Dattilo**

#### **Nominated by the ESC of Eastern Ohio and Springfield Local Schools**

Karen Dattilo is in her second term as a board member and has held the office of president twice. She is a community leader and keeps herself actively engaged while volunteering locally. The leadership provided as Board President during extremely difficult times like the pandemic was significant. Springfield Local Schools reopened in full swing following the closure in March 2020 and the community support was exceptional stemming from the board's leadership and direction. Mrs. Dattilo is a selfless individual who puts the needs of others first. She demonstrates a clear understanding of her role as a board member and works to help create the best possible environment for all students.

### **Tiffany Patterson**

#### **Nominated by the ESC of Eastern Ohio**

Tiffany Patterson serves on the Youngstown City Board of Education and is a champion for children and increased educational opportunities for all. Professionally, she was employed as a News Producer and Web Producer in Cleveland, OH, Portsmouth, VA, and Youngstown, OH. As a public servant, she has served as a member-at-large and is the current Youngstown City Schools Board President. She has provided insight, direction and support as the district continues to evolve - she seeks ways to improve outcomes operationally, fiscally and academically for the district and the students it serves. Through it all, Ms. Patterson has led with dignity and grace.

## **Legislative Leadership Award**

*Legislators and legislative support staff who have provided outstanding public service and legislative support for Educational Service Centers and public education in the state of Ohio.*

### **State Representative Don Jones**

#### **Nominated by the Muskingum Valley ESC**

State Representative Don Jones has been instrumental in assisting the ESC with its newest program initiative. His efforts to decrease barriers and enhance the working relationship between state agencies and ESCs have been a huge asset. Representative Jones truly has an outstanding work ethic and as a former teacher, has a compassionate understanding of our work to help every child succeed.

## **Special Distinguished Service Award**

*Current members of educational service center governing boards who have served their county school system as a member of the county and local boards for 30 years or more.*

### **Jiles Farley**

#### **Nominated by the Warren County ESC**

Jiles Farley has served on the Wayne Local School Board for thirty years and the Warren County ESC Governing Board since 2014 for a total of thirty eight years. He is currently the board Vice President. He has loved the transition from a local school board to the ESC Governing Board because the ESC can focus on student achievement and wellness without the controversies of school levies and athletics. Mr. Farley enjoys his fellow Board members' positive attitudes and teamwork and often reminds them of the challenges faced by his local school district.

## **Distinguished Service Award**

*Current members of educational service center governing boards who have served their county school system as a member of the county and local boards for 20 years or more.*

### **Linda Jordan**

#### **Nominated by the Clark County ESC Board**

Linda Jordan has served as a school board member for twenty seven years, and championed students and staff members in various ways. Ms. Jordan has been involved with the Clark County Business Advisory Committee, the Clark County ESC, and the OSBA Southwest Regional Committee. She is active in Clark County educational activities where she can be found at school board, Superintendent, Treasurer, and community meetings, and on local levy committees. Mrs. Jordan constantly advocates for children and public education and has made it her life's mission to ensure that all students succeed and overcome obstacles. Helping students with special needs is one of her greatest passions.

### **Richard Peck**

#### **Nominated by the Southern Ohio ESC**

Richard Peck has been a Southern Ohio Educational Service Center Board member for twenty-two years, serving as vice president, president and legislative liaison. He is a retired teacher with more than forty years in the profession and he still substitute teaches, so he is very familiar with the needs of educators, administrators and Ohio students. He has an extraordinary dedication to our public schools. As a member of the ESC Governing Board, Mr. Peck is tasked with providing direction and oversight and he never turns down an opportunity to grow and learn.

## **Mary Olson**

### **Nominated by the Stark County ESC**

Mary Olson served as an elementary school teacher for thirty five years, a continuing education presenter for teachers, and a Lake Local Schools (Stark County) Board of Education member prior to her election to the Stark County ESC Board in 2011 - a position she still holds. As a member of the Governing Board, Ms. Olson has served as president on two occasions and is most proud of the Stark County Schools Council of Governments (COG) health insurance program.

## **Nona Cress**

### **Nominated by the Warren County ESC**

Nona Cress, a retired teacher, served eight years on the Board of Education at Little Miami Local, and as an ESC Governing Board member for fourteen years. Ms. Cress's experience gives her powerful insights into the needs of teachers and local school districts and empowers her to make wise decisions at Warren County ESC that focus on the needs of students. Her home district has experienced dramatic student growth and challenges with funding and she enjoys seeing the ways the ESC can help the district manage these challenges.

## **Sally Williams**

### **Nominated by the Warren County ESC**

Sally Williams has served on the WCESC Governing Board for twenty seven years. Through many years of Governing Board service she has advocated for educational service centers as strategic partners to school districts. Sally is visible in many community events to support the mission of Warren County ESC and she has provided steady, positive leadership during the ESC's rapid growth.

# **Torch Award**

*Individuals or organizations who have rendered outstanding service or made significant contributions to OESCA and ESCs as a whole.*

## **Pamela K. Mustovich**

### **Nominated by the Clark County ESC**

Pamela Mustovich served as Treasurer for the Clark County Educational Service Center for more than five years and still serves as a consultant. As Treasurer, Ms. Mustovich played a huge role in opening the Clark County ESC's first school that serves students with special needs. She collaborated with the ESC Superintendent to ensure that the school was successful, and now there are two successful campuses. Ms. Mustovich strengthened the ESC by providing exceptional leadership to the staff. She coordinated leadership searches for local school districts and helped create a financial structure to meet the needs of students and staff.

## **Fairfield County Commissioners**

**(represented by Steve Davis, David Levacy & Jeff Fix)**

### **Nominated by the Fairfield County ESC**

Since 2005, the Fairfield County Commissioners have been unwavering in their commitment to provide facilities at \$1 a year, inclusive of custodian services, lawn/landscaping, snow removal and facility repairs and updates, despite changes in the Ohio Revised Code relieving them of this responsibility. In the spring of 2022, a new five year lease agreement was approved followed by a commitment to provide the labor, materials and resources to completely renovate the ESC central office. This commitment has enabled the ESC to contain costs to districts and redirect resources toward continuous improvement.

# Teamwork Award

*ESC staff member or organization who has worked to promote organizational unity within OESCA and among ESCs and serves as an example that encourages others to think of ESCs as a network and community first.*

## Jeff Weir

### **Nominated by the Hamilton County ESC**

During the past three years, Jeff Weir has helped his colleagues throughout Southwest Ohio navigate challenges faced during and after the pandemic.

He is actively engaged in several organizations that support ESCs and schools - Mr. Weir serves as executive council president of the Center for

Collaborative Solutions and is a member of the Hamilton Clermont Cooperative executive council. His focus is always on how to work together to provide the best solutions for the schools we serve. Mr. Weir recognizes the importance of teamwork to support the work of ESCs and his efforts to develop collaborative networks are greatly appreciated.

## Candice Sears

### **Nominated by the Montgomery County ESC**

Candice Sears has successfully built the ESC's Gifted department and now serves as Director of Instructional Services. She is always ready to pitch in and help support her fellow Cabinet members, and has an innate ability to

know when an extra pair of hands or encouragement are needed. Her attention to detail and level of professional expertise makes her one of the most sought after opinions. Ms. Sears has volunteered to help support the Reframing Education efforts, the Ohio Professional Learning Directory, and many other state initiatives. She also serves six other ESCs and their districts as the Director of the Western Ohio Service Collaborative. Her name is synonymous with quality and she is trusted by all at local and state levels. Her ability to handle multiple high-stakes projects with ease and accuracy, while helping others be the best they can be, merits this

Teamwork Award.

## **Marion Stout**

### **Nominated by the Montgomery County ESC**

Marion Stout exemplifies professionalism. Her calm demeanor allows her to handle the most difficult staff situations with human-centered care. She can often be heard stating to her HR team that their job is to make sure the rest of the staff can do their jobs. Mrs. Stout never hesitates to jump into situations where help is needed, is actively involved in state associations, and can be found on the presenter list at many state conferences offered by associations, including OESCA. She is also held in high regard within the Dayton Area School Employment Consortium by her peers. Additionally, she assists various legal counsel partners when a neutral third party is needed. During the height of COVID, Mrs. Stout leaned in to help gather needed information very quickly for a variety of other departments. She is a trusted professional known for exemplary service by her MCESC team, as well as her regional and state colleagues.



## **Lifetime Achievement Award**

*ESC superintendents, ESC treasurers, board members, state/national legislators, local/state educators, and professional staff with a minimum of twelve years of demonstrated service to educational service centers and public education.*

### **Jim Mahoney**

#### **Nominated by the Muskingum Valley ESC**

Dr. Jim Mahoney's contributions to public education in Ohio are too numerous to count. As a former teacher, principal, school district superintendent and Muskingum Valley ESC Superintendent, he has inspired many educators and students throughout his life to follow their dreams and truly make a difference in the world. Dr. Mahoney continues to motivate, encourage and inspire today through his book and his speaking engagements. This amazing, passionate and committed educator advocates for all children in Ohio to have outstanding opportunities for success.

### **Rogina Conroy**

#### **Nominated by the Southern Ohio ESC**

Rogina Conroy has served the Southern Ohio ESC for twenty three years as Director of Technology and Director of Human Resources. During her tenure, she has been the epitome of a servant leader by putting others first, listening, and focusing on building relationships. She takes every opportunity to better herself professionally and works diligently to ensure that board policies and outside directives are carried out as intended. She distinguishes herself with her exceptional insight into handling core human resource functions and is compassionate, yet professional, when dealing with employees. Ms. Conroy is credited with streamlining the ESC's human resources functions by effectively implementing automated processes. She is an example for others and has built an inclusive workplace culture.

## **Debbie Queen**

### **Nominated by the South Central Ohio ESC**

Debbie Queen has worked in Southern Ohio as an educator, counselor, administrator, mentor, and a friend of education. She has served the Educational Service Center since the 1980's and has been instrumental in starting, continuing and promoting wonderful programs for our member districts including work study programs, school improvement initiatives, special education, and grant programs. Her vast knowledge and organization have helped many districts achieve goals and gain funding. Ms. Queen's work has exemplified the ESC's "Where Service is Central" motto. She can handle anything and even though she is retired, a "we need your help" phone call has never gone unanswered.

## **Carol E. Austin Lifetime Achievement Award**

*OESCA's highest honor - ESC superintendents with a minimum of 15 years of demonstrated service to educational service centers and public education.*

## **James V. Frazier**

### **Nominated by the Brown County ESC**

James Frazier became the Assistant Superintendent of the Brown County ESC in 2003, and one year later, Superintendent. During his tenure, he instituted several innovative services and practices that are offered today, such as partnering with ex-law enforcement officers to provide professional conduct investigations for districts, and partnering with the Brown County Common Pleas Court on the Asset Program which developed positive relationships and strengths in students to reduce risky behavior. Mr. Frazier supported the growth and development of the professional staff by encouraging local, state, and national collaborations through participation in learning and presentation opportunities. Anticipating the continual funding needed for student-centered projects, he hired a team focused on finding and procuring grants - this resulted in more than \$1.2 million to support Brown County students. Mr. Frazier stayed true to the mission of the Brown County ESC to anticipate, meet and exceed the needs of our customers.



## **About OESCA**

The Ohio Educational Service Center Association (OESCA) supports, educates and advocates for Ohio's ESCs in their work of providing school districts with professional development, technology, support, planning, and administrative services that help improve student learning, enhance the quality of instruction, expand access to resources, and maximize operating/fiscal efficiencies.

## **Vision Statement**

OESCA will be recognized at state and national levels for educational leadership and superior member services.

## **Mission Statement**

OESCA and its members provide leadership and services that enable school districts to increase student achievement and improve Ohio's educational system.

## **Special Thanks to Our Sponsor**

Liberty Mutual Insurance

## **Thank You**

Gil Balden, Associated Photographers



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