

District/charter Educational Support Professionals of the Year honored; one to be named state winner

The Delaware Department of Education is honoring 19 educational support professionals for their outstanding work supporting their students and school communities.

“Whether they are providing individual instructional support, preparing nutritious meals, keeping our buildings safe and clean, safely transporting our students to and from school, providing the technical support our educators and students need or supporting our educators and families through their administrative office support, these individuals are vital to the daily operations of our schools and our students’ academic success,” Secretary of Education Susan Bunting said. “I laud each of these nominees for his or her outstanding work and thank them and all the colleagues whom they represent.”

Now in its second year, the Delaware State Educational Support Professional of the Year (ESPY) program recognizes outstanding service by school employees who provide direct or indirect services to students and their families. The Delaware Charter School Network also is invited to participate. Employees considered for the award include:

- Paraprofessionals
- Custodial staff
- Secretaries
- Nutritional staff

- School- and district-employed bus drivers
- School- and district-employed bus aides

From those nominated at a building level, one educational support professional of the year moves forward to represent each district or the charter school community in the state program. Each district/charter network winner receives a \$1,000 personal award from the winner's district or charter school. The state program then chooses one person annually to serve as Delaware's Educational Support Professional of the Year. State winners receive an additional \$1,500 personal award from DDOE as well as \$2,500 to be used for the educational benefit of his or her students.

The 2022 state winner will take over the title from 2021 Delaware Educational Support Professional of the Year Alice Williams, senior administrative secretary at Christina School District's Jennie E. Smith Elementary.

A selection committee made up of DOE and non-DOE judges is reviewing the local winners' state applications, and Bunting will announce the state winner later this month.

DDOE is excited to recognize these outstanding professionals whose work is vital to students' success.

The 19 2022 nominees are:

- Appoquinimink: Wendy Schweiker, paraprofessional,

Appoquinimink High School

- Brandywine: Angela Hamilton, paraprofessional, Concord High School
- Caesar Rodney: Alma Bartolomeo, paraprofessional, W.B. Simpson Elementary
- Cape Henlopen: Bryant Hazzard, paraprofessional, Mariner Middle School
- Capital: Darien "Stretch" Robinson, paraprofessional, William Henry Middle School
- Charter Network: Rachael Dallas, systems administrator, MOT Charter School
- Christina: Clara Doyle, ESL paraprofessional, Leisure Elementary School
- Colonial: Jennifer Dunford, child nutrition worker, Colwyck Center
- Delmar: Danielle Youngblood, administrative assistant/eSchool coordinator, Delmar Middle and Senior High School
- Indian River: Gwendolyn Gillespie, paraprofessional, Georgetown Elementary School
- Lake Forest: David Thomas, computer lab/technology paraprofessional, Lake Forest East Elementary School
- Milford: Patrick Seibel, technology specialist, secondary campus
- New Castle County Vo-Tech: Lindsay Gliniak, senior secretary, St. Georges Technical High School
- POLYTECH: Sandra S. Henning, information technology help desk technician, POLYTECH High School
- Red Clay Consolidated: Christopher ChuJoy, autism instructional support paraprofessional, Anna P. Mote Elementary School
- Seaford: Mark Murphy, custodian, Seaford Middle School
- Smyrna: Donella Berryman, financial administrative assistant, North Smyrna Elementary School
- Sussex Tech: Jacques O. Bowe, Jr., paraprofessional, Sussex Technical High School
- Woodbridge: Virginia Martinez, ESL paraprofessional,

Phillis Wheatley Elementary School

Find photos of the nominees and learn more about the program [here](#).

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