

Marian Greenblatt Education Fund



2017 Greenblatt Education Award Recipients

Ms. Nancy Shay (Master Teacher) is a National Board Certified English Teacher and Resource Teacher at Richard Montgomery High School. As the English Department head, she has elevated the work of other teachers through data analysis, sharing best practices, and peer visits. She fostered a teacher-driven movement to teach literacy across the curriculum. Under her leadership, notably her own decision to teach 9th grade English rather than focusing solely on International Baccalaureate students, the minority student achievement gap has narrowed measurably at her school. Ms. Shay co-leads the after-school Homework Club for students in need of academic intervention, and facilitates monthly school-wide conversations about race and culture.

Ms. Cherin Hershkowitz (Master Teacher) is a Mathematics Content Specialist at Roberto Clemente Middle School. Her students and peers admire her ability to explain the concepts behind mathematical algorithms, and to provide real world experiences that bring the curriculum to life. Her efforts to build the capacity of her fellow mathematics teachers led to a 27% increase in the number of students earning a C or higher in Algebra. She designed school-wide data monitoring tools to improve instructional decisions and placements. Beyond the classroom, she planned and facilitated Math Nights to help parents better understand Common Core. She co-facilitated multidisciplinary efforts including "Passport Through China" and "Journey Through Africa," as well as other community events.

Ms. Melissa Segal (Master Teacher) is the fourth grade team leader at Luxmanor Elementary School. She is an innovative instructor, willing to embrace new techniques and strategies. In one of her assignments, fourth graders interview local business owners, then come up with their own business plans which they present in a "Shark Tank" scenario. Under her instruction, students displayed impressive improvements in their MAP-M assessments between fall and spring. She serves as a mentor and role model for her colleagues. Active in PTA and school-sponsored events, Ms. Segal can be found waiting tables at Run the Diner Nights, scooping ice cream at Baskin Robbins fundraisers, or planting flowers around the school. She also has a reputation for intricate and hysterical Halloween costumes.

Ms. Yecenia Morales (Rising Star Teacher) is a Spanish teacher at Wheaton High School. A product of Montgomery County Public Schools and a first-generation Latina, Ms. Morales presents topics by using real-life situations, and engages students in project-based learning. For example, students in her Spanish for Spanish Speakers class wrote, illustrated, and published children's books about environmental topics, which they are sharing with the community. Students in her Spanish 1 class created recipes with descriptive directions sufficient for other classmates to make their dishes. Ms. Morales supports other educators by sharing best practices with her team and countywide. She brings the energy from her classroom to the school's Latin Dance Team, which she co-sponsors.

Ms. Amra Nansimbi (Rising Star Teacher) is a fourth grade teacher at Glenallan Elementary School. Having begun her own schooling as non-English speaking kindergartener at the same school, Ms. Nansimbi uses her story to inspire and connect with students. Her high expectations and researched-based strategies have enabled over 90 percent of her students to demonstrate well over a year's worth of academic growth on MAP-M and MAP-R. Among her innovative exercises are a hand-on project to understand pollution in the Potomac River, a partnership with Lego Robotics to teach engineering concepts, and a partnership with Code.org to teach computer coding to children. Ms. Nansimbi is also praised for her leadership in organizing her school's annual International Night.

Ms. Catherine Hodge (Jones Family/Plasma Fellows/Greenblatt Fund foreign language scholarship awardee) is a junior at Watkins Mill High School.