

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MARCH 16, 2016

SHARALYN HEINLY NAMED 2016 HARFORD COUNTY TEACHER OF THE YEAR

North Harford Middle School mathematics teacher to vie for state title



Sharalyn Heinly, mathematics teacher at North Harford Middle School and 22-year veteran of Harford County Public Schools (HCPS), was named the 2016 HCPS Teacher of the Year during a surprise announcement at the 22nd Annual Harford County Teacher of the Year Banquet. The dinner banquet for 170 guests, provided by Lou Ward, owner of the Bayou Restaurant in Havre de Grace, and HAR-CO Credit Union, was held on Wednesday, March 16, 2016, at the Bayou Restaurant.

Board of Education of Harford County President Nancy Reynolds, along with Superintendent of Schools Barbara Canavan, made the announcement Wednesday evening to guests that included Harford County Executive Barry Glassman, County Council President Richard Slutsky, members of the Maryland senate, delegation and the county council, as well as school administrators, educators, students, family and friends.

“The Teacher of the Year program is an opportunity for us to highlight teachers that have been recognized in their community as outstanding educators. Each of the finalists gives of themselves in a way that makes each and every day special for their students,” said Superintendent Canavan. “Mrs. Heinly has been a teacher for over 22 years and has touched an amazing number of lives in our community. Her dedication to improving the lives of her students and the lives of students around the world are what make her our teacher of the year! I am sure that she will represent Harford County Public Schools at the state level with grace and dignity and am very proud to say that she is a Harford County Public Schools teacher!”

Mrs. Heinly demonstrates how using mathematics, as well as the other disciplines, is an important part of molding students into responsible citizens of our future. When asked by students why they have to learn mathematics, she tells them they need to become good problem solvers and make wise decisions, and learning algebra helps that to happen. For instance, Mrs. Heinly utilizes algebra formulas and mathematics problems to determine breaking distance needed in a vehicle and then creates discussion about why the consequences of driving while distracted or drugged can affect that distance and cause tragedy.

Mrs. Heinly credits her success to the open lines of communication with the parents of the students she teaches.

“I try to let parents know, through a phone call, email or note in a planner, that I have noticed the good qualities they have instilled in their children,” she remarked. “When the parents know that I am looking for the good in each and every child, they will trust that I have their best interest in mind.”

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In addition to attending professional conferences and presenting to colleagues at the school and county levels, Mrs. Heinly also participates in the parent session for incoming 6th graders to North Harford Middle. This gives her the opportunity to ease the minds of anxious parents about higher-level mathematics, the expectations of new routines, and meeting teachers and staff at a new school.

“I believe that it really does take a village to raise a child,” said Mrs. Heinly. “The teaching profession is enhanced when parents and teachers feel that they are on the same team for the good of the child. Both parenting and teaching are two of the hardest jobs that anyone will have, if the job is done right. As a teacher of adolescent teens and pre-teens, and raising three children of my own, I know what it’s like to be in both roles. It’s very important to me to demonstrate this partnership in every interaction I have with my school community.”

Weaved into all her mathematics lessons is the importance of treating others kindly, playing fair and being there for each other. And she is the first one to lead by example.

In addition to her role in the classroom, Mrs. Heinly offers an afterschool running club every fall. Students of all abilities participate to improve walking or running times and improve their overall health. For many students who may not have found their niche on the soccer or lacrosse fields, this club turns them on to running and opens their eyes to new opportunities. She coaches them from getting off the couch to possibly running their first public 5k at the One World Run, an annual community race she directs that raises money for Project AIDS Orphan, a nonprofit organization that helps children in Kenya have access to clean water, medical supplies, food and other necessities. Over the past six years, Mrs. Heinly has also led efforts to raise more than \$18,900 for the children at the House of Hope, an orphanage in Kenya, earning the HCPS Service Learning Star in 2015 for her efforts.

Other volunteer efforts including serving as North Harford Middle School’s St. Jude Math-a-Thon coordinator for the past eight years, a role in which she has helped to raise more than \$30,000 for the kids at St. Jude’s Children Hospital.

Mrs. Heinly was nominated for Harford’s Teacher of the Year by North Harford Middle School Principal Karl Wickman.

“Imagine a teacher who doesn’t simply talk about college and career readiness, but who truly prepares children by using cutting-edge technology...imagine a teacher who understands how to create real-life problems for students to solve that helps them develop an understanding of why mathematics is important...imagine a teacher who travels to a national conference after the school year has ended so she can bring back new skills and resources for the start of the new school year,” said Mr. Wickman. “Such a teacher exists. Her name is Sharalyn Heinly and she teaches mathematics at North Harford Middle School.”

“There was never a dull moment in Mrs. Heinly’s classroom; she had an outward passion for teaching and an energy for helping students learn,” said Cristina Fiorentino, former student of Mrs. Heinly who endorsed her Teacher of the Year nomination. “Now, more than a decade later, I stand at the front of my own classroom, teaching my own Algebra I class at North Harford High School, which brings tears to my eyes because I credit my journey to becoming a math teacher to Mrs. Heinly. As far as I’m concerned, Mrs. Heinly has been the Teacher of the Year every year since I first had her.”

Mrs. Heinly received a Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education in 1984 from Lipscomb University and a Master of Education in Deaf Education from McDaniel College in 1985. She received 30 credits beyond her master’s focusing on science, mathematics and behavioral studies. In addition to teaching for HCPS, Mrs. Heinly is in her 26th year of teaching American Sign Language classes at Harford Community College.

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As the Harford County Teacher of the Year, Mrs. Heinly received a free lease of a brand new Nissan Rogue for one year courtesy of Jones Junction, a Dell laptop, a watch from Saxon's Diamond Centers and a custom ring from Jostens. In addition, she was awarded multiple dinner and bank gift certificates, local merchant gift cards and \$1,200 from HAR-CO Credit Union, which was provided to all five finalists.

Mrs. Heinly will now compete for the title of Maryland Teacher of the Year to represent teachers across the state as an education spokesperson. The state winner will be announced at the Maryland Teacher of the Year Gala in October.

Visit www.hcps.org for more information on 2016 HCPS Teacher of the Year Sharalyn Heinly, as well as the other four Harford County Teacher of the Year finalists.

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