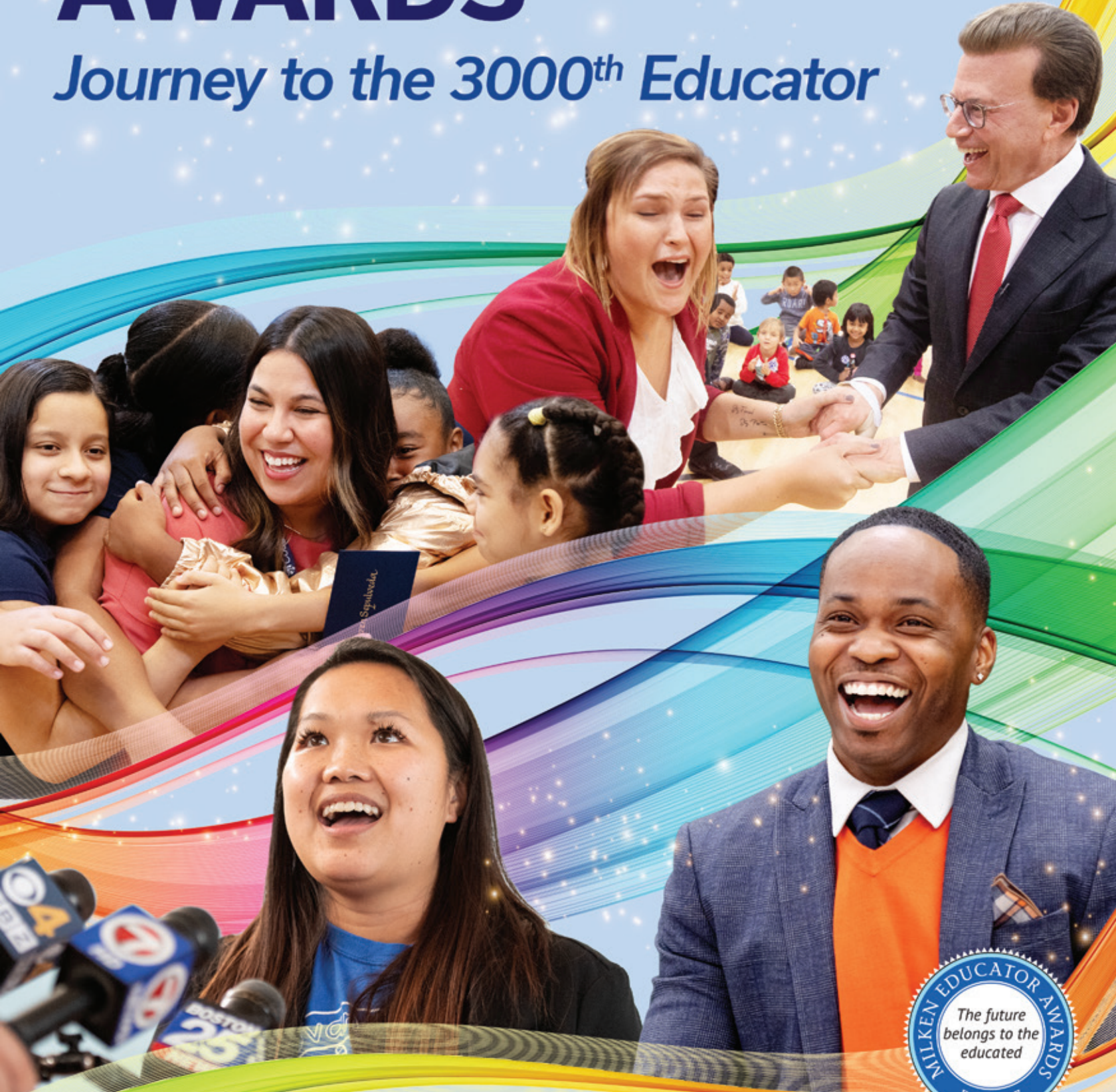


#MEA3K #MilkenAward

# MILKEN EDUCATOR AWARDS

*Journey to the 3000<sup>th</sup> Educator*







With each new class of Milken Educators, we are reminded that the *power and promise of education* must be replenished from generation to generation if we are to sustain our course as a democracy with opportunities for all.”

**LOWELL MILKEN**

Founder, Milken Educator Awards  
Chairman and Co-Founder, Milken Family Foundation



# A MESSAGE FROM LOWELL MILKEN

Education is at the heart of nearly everything we value as individuals, as citizens and as productive human beings. This philosophy and its implementation has been the driving force in my work in K-12 education since 1982 at the Milken Family Foundation. Essential to this pursuit are the development and support of an effective and respected teaching profession.

As a nation, we depend on our teachers and principals to produce students and graduates who are not only literate, numerate and conversant in the humanities and sciences, but who are also creative, motivated and confident. As a society, we seek to nurture young people who are able and willing to think independently and act with integrity, confidence and compassion.

Education's role as the most important of all professions is a message that the public should hear and understand. It is also a message that our educators need to hear as they strive to maintain high expectations, provide quality instruction and offer emotional support regardless of the challenges.

For whether a school is urban, suburban or rural—whether it represents the most affluent or those most in need—within the course of a school day, research confirms that nothing has more impact on student learning than the effectiveness of the teacher in the classroom.

In creating the Milken Educator Awards, my goal was to bring to the fore talented educators who not only epitomize achievement in their career to date, but who also have the potential to make even more profound contributions moving forward. Since presenting our first Awards to one dozen exemplary California educators in 1987, we have seen how focusing the spotlight of recognition and celebration for such excellence inspires not only educators, but also students and entire communities to new heights of commitment and expectation.

With each new class of Milken Educators—leading up to the 3,000th recipient this 2023-24 season—we are reminded that the power and promise of education must be replenished from generation to generation. Only in so doing will we sustain our course as a democracy with opportunities for all. In a complex and changing world, the watchwords of the Milken Educator Awards set in place four decades ago still ring true:

The future belongs to the educated!



Lowell Milken

*Founder, Milken Educator Awards*

*Chairman and Co-Founder, Milken Family Foundation*

*Chairman and Founder, National Institute for Excellence in Teaching*





Teaching is about recognizing the infinite potential each student brings and inspiring them to use their talents to make a positive difference in the world. The quality of educational experiences our young children have today will directly impact the brightness of our future."

**ESTHER KWON**

2022 Hawaii Milken Educator



# THE MILKEN EDUCATOR AWARDS

## TOUCHING MINDS AND HEARTS

Since 1987, more than two million students have experienced that special day when an educator is surprised with a \$25,000 Award, hailed as a celebrity, and showered with attention from students, colleagues, VIPs, media and the community.

The Milken Educator Awards have no formal nomination or application process. Candidates are sourced through a confidential selection process and then reviewed by blue ribbon panels appointed by state departments of education. Those most exceptional are recommended for the Award, with final approval by the Milken Family Foundation.

The surprise announcements are made before cheering students, respected colleagues, distinguished officials, the media—and a stunned new Milken Educator. In a moment's time, these unsung heroes gain a significant, unrestricted financial prize of \$25,000 and experience the unfamiliar but well-deserved acclaim and acknowledgment they rightly merit.

Media multiplies the message of the pivotal role that talented educators play in student achievement. News stories across all forms of media herald the inspiration and contributions of these newly discovered role models in education. These stories catch the attention of communities young and old, voters and policymakers alike.



**We know how fundamentally important our educators are when it comes to changing the trajectory of a child's life, and we take every opportunity to honor our outstanding educators for the amazing and lifelong impact they have on thousands of students, teachers and families throughout their careers. The Milken Award helps shine a light on exemplary educators who go above and beyond to help each individual student succeed, mentor new teachers and serve as leaders in their school communities."**

**DR. CHRISTINA GRANT**

D.C. State Superintendent of Education

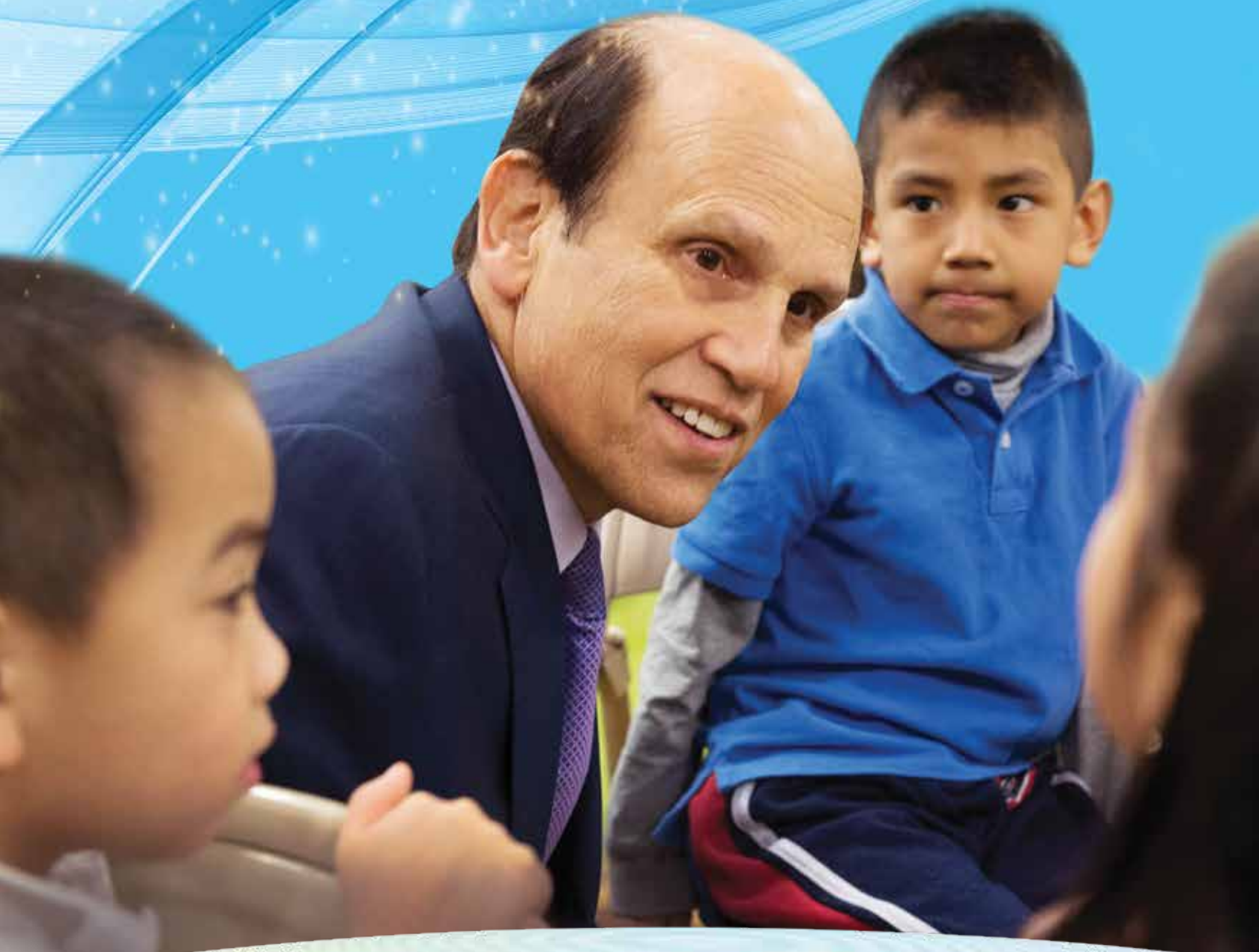




Nothing assures the success of a nation more than education. And nothing assures the quality of education more than dedicated classroom teachers instilling a love of learning and a sense of wonder in their students."

**MICHAEL MILKEN**

President and Co-Founder, Milken Family Foundation



# HELPING TEACHERS AND STUDENTS REACH THEIR POTENTIAL



Milken Educators point to their Award as a pivotal professional milestone. They understand that encompassed in this recognition is the responsibility to grow as a leader at and beyond the school level. Encouraged and supported, these outstanding educators discover a renewed passion and purpose as they stretch their professional practices and policy influence to ever-higher levels.

As a 1994 recipient from Indiana, I know firsthand the value I placed on colleagues I met first in my Indiana network and then across the country. To this day, these interactions continue to recharge my batteries and remind me of the importance of our work and why we chose to be educators: to be the catalyst and guide that helps all students reach their potential.”

## **DR. JANE FOLEY**

1994 Indiana Milken Educator

Senior Vice President, Milken Educator Awards





# GOALS

Outstanding educators who continue to learn are essential to the fostering of student growth, the improvement of schools and the enhancement of the education profession. Hence, the goals of the Milken Educator Awards are to:

- ★ Honor and reward outstanding K-12 educators who represent the top 1% of the teaching profession for the quality of their teaching, their professional leadership, their engagement with families and the community and their potential for even greater contributions to the healthy development of children. Thus, the Award provides a lifetime incentive for the individuals to stay in the profession.
- ★ Focus public attention on the good news and results in education.
- ★ By spotlighting the importance of exceptional educators, encourage talented people to enter the teaching profession.



**As educators, we shape the world. In order to do so, we must continuously be lifelong learners ourselves. Those who are educated will have the unique ability to continue to break down barriers, find cures, achieve great success in their profession and ultimately impact the lives of those around them. Education is truly power."**

## **DESI NESMITH**

2014 Connecticut Milken Educator

Assistant Superintendent of Accountability and Performance  
Bloomfield Public Schools, Connecticut





# CRITERIA

The criteria for the selection of outstanding elementary and secondary teachers, principals and specialists as Milken Educators include all of the following:

- ★ Exceptional educational talent as evidenced by effective and innovative instructional practices and student learning results in the classroom and school.
- ★ Exemplary educational accomplishments and leadership beyond the classroom that provide models of excellence for the profession.
- ★ Individuals whose contributions to education are largely unheralded yet worthy of the spotlight.
- ★ Early- to mid-career educators who offer strong long-range potential for professional and policy leadership.
- ★ Engaging and inspiring presence that motivates and impacts students, colleagues and the community.



**I just started my seventh year of teaching when I received this awesome, unexpected and life-changing Award. My first response was, 'They must think I'm doing something really great, so I'd better get started.'**

**I used the Award money to earn my master's degree, which launched my career into administration. Many doors opened because of my association with the Milken Family Foundation, and I have had an amazing journey."**

**DR. ANGIE BESENDORFER**

1996 Missouri Milken Educator  
Chief Impact Officer, AstrumU



# NATIONAL MILKEN EDUCATOR FORUM

A professional highlight of receiving the Milken Educator Award is joining forces to bring the mission of “Celebrate, Elevate, Activate” into action. The newest class meets and becomes inspired by fellow Award recipients, as well as “veteran” Milken Educators whose accomplishments continue to impress. Recipients share experiences, techniques and accomplishments while developing bonds that last a lifetime.

During sessions with leaders in education, Milken Educators learn how to cultivate their impact beyond the classroom and to advance educational excellence at state and national levels. Most importantly, the Forum helps Milken Educators articulate their passions and develop their “voice” into roles that lead to real change.

## MILKEN EDUCATOR NETWORK

### CULTIVATING EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP AND EDUCATION REFORM

The Milken Educator Award’s visibility and reputation result in unlimited opportunities for educators to improve education from local to international levels. New recipients join the Milken Educator Network, a group of more than 2,900 distinguished professionals whose expertise serves as a valuable resource to fellow educators, legislators, school boards and others shaping the future of education.

The Milken Educator Network fosters effective leadership and education reform through its state and national engagement. Network meetings, discussion forums, national gatherings, webinars and other experiences promote collegiality and enhance communication among education stakeholders. This Network serves as an invaluable link as Milken Educators across America come together for professional development and moral support with dozens of Zoominars as well as one-on-one mentoring. The robust MEA Connections online magazine features stories, strategies and discussions both professional and personal that reinforce Solutions and Hope for Milken Educators as implement opportunities for the future.



**No one goes into teaching for recognition. You go into teaching because you love children and have hope for our future generation. Getting the Milken Award has pushed me to accept new opportunities and challenges that I would never have attempted before. My students and my teaching are better for it.”**

#### **EMILY CALDARELLI**

2016 Rhode Island Milken Educator

5<sup>th</sup> Grade Teacher

2018 Lowell Milken Center Fellow





To receive the Award in the presence of my students and staff was doubly rewarding because they are an integral part of my development as an educator. I hope to inspire some of those students to become educators in the future."

**OMAR DURON**

2019 Arizona Milken Educator



# STATE NETWORKS

ACROSS THE COUNTRY, MILKEN EDUCATORS ...

## CELEBRATE

### Hawaii Milken Educators

Aloha State Award recipients from years past travel from the neighboring islands to take part in the surprise notifications. Their collective support sheds light on the professional possibilities awaiting the newest members of the Milken Educator family. A special highlight is an annual event to honor the new recipient and present mini-grants to early-career teachers. In 2021, the Hawaii Milken Educators formed their own 501(c)(3) to expand their activities and influence, under the banner of the Hawaii Foundation for Educational Excellence.





# ELEVATE

## Teachers of Promise Institute, Virginia

Inspired by the Milken Educator Awards, the Teachers of Promise Institute was launched in 2004 by a team of Milken Educators from across Virginia. The Institute ([www.teachersofpromise.com](http://www.teachersofpromise.com)) honors future teachers from dozens of college and university schools of education through a two-day experience that celebrates the decision to teach, elevates the teaching profession and activates a network of excellence in classrooms and schools. Wade Whitehead (VA '00) serves as executive director, with Stephanie Bishop (VA '01) and Laura Marshall (VA '08) serving as co-directors.

To date, over 3,800 future teachers have been recognized as Teachers of Promise. These alumni now include State Teachers of the Year, National Board Certified Teachers and Milken Educator Ryan Sykes (VA '19). More than 100 master educators from across the nation, including over 50 Milken Educators, have served as mentors and presenters. The Institute is funded by the Teachers of Promise Foundation, a 501(c)(3) established by Wade in 2010. The Foundation has raised more than \$1,000,000 to support the Institute.



**We are identifying and honoring the next generation of great teachers and are aspiring to challenge—and advance—their understanding of what it takes to reach every learner, every day. Amazing classroom teachers are our last, best hope for navigating the true potential waiting in our schools."**

### **WADE WHITEHEAD**

2000 Virginia Milken Educator  
5<sup>th</sup> Grade Teacher  
President, Teachers of Promise Foundation



**Instead of the typical mentor-mentee model that assumes the mentor is the sage, Milken Friends Forever recognizes the rewards the veteran Milken Educator receives from being paired with a new Milken Educator. It is such a gift to have relationships with other incredible educators across the country ... especially when we have opportunities to reimagine education together."**

**DR. DILHANI USWATTE**

2009 Alabama Milken Educator  
National Distinguished Principal

## **ACTIVATE**

### **Milken Friends Forever (MFF)**

Milken Educators know instantly that the Award is an honor. It is also a responsibility with opportunities and expectations to grow as a leader in the profession. Recipients are challenged to be teacher leaders—role models who use their example, voice and influence in schools and diverse settings far beyond their campus. But they are not left on their own to meet these expectations.

Both new and veteran Milken Educators are invited to participate in a one-of-a-kind partnership between the two called Milken Friends Forever (MFF). Through focused communication, along with personalized support and coaching, veteran Milken Educators assist their MFFs in determining how, when and where they will “Elevate” to improve their own instructional and/or professional practices and “Activate” to explore, prepare and serve in leadership roles that influence practice and policy of others.

MFFs become thought partners with common qualities of passion, excellence and drive. They connect through monthly calls, webinars and Zoom meetings to determine priorities, set goals, outline strategies and set timelines. Deep professional relationships provide an atmosphere of trust to discuss professional activities, offer feedback, share areas of expertise, and build bridges among their nationally recognized colleagues within the vast Milken Educator Network.

What has transpired is that Milken Educators are growing and leading at an exponential rate. By impacting teachers and students across our nation, they strengthen the legacy of our motto: “The future belongs to the educated.”



## Expanding MFF Resource and Explorer Program

Whether early or seasoned in their careers, Milken Educators are lifelong learners. The Expanding MFF Resource and Explorer Program hones in on a specific topic to “Elevate” their practices or assume leadership roles to “Activate” policy and practice more broadly.

Open to Milken Educators in their second year and beyond, the program connects an “Explorer MFF” who is looking for guidance in an area of interest to a “Resource MFF” who has deep expertise in that area. Currently 115 Milken Educators of diverse backgrounds, geographical areas, school settings and disciplines volunteer their time as Resource MFFs. Some connections enhance technical skills, such as in STEM/STEAM, English Language Learner instruction, education technology and grant application. Others offer practical advice on advancing in the profession, including becoming an administrator, instructional coach or district leader; serving in professional organizations; or obtaining an advanced degree.

The program is flexible and customized to educators’ needs, which evolve over time. Some matches are short-term while others may extend longer to allow for deeper discussions and action plans. All share a common purpose of strengthening the impact of Milken Educators on students, colleagues and communities.

## Activating Milken Educators (AME)

Individually, Milken Educators are exemplary. Activating Milken Educators (AME) capitalizes on the force of what Milken Educators can accomplish collectively.

AME promotes collaboration among Milken Educators to target topics intended to attract, retain, motivate and develop teacher effectiveness in their states by designing programs and solutions aligned to “Celebrate, Elevate, Activate.”

Five Milken Educator Networks—Alabama, Missouri, North Carolina, South Carolina and West Virginia—have created and sustained initiatives to tackle the teacher shortage and promote teacher leadership. Network planning meetings focus on developing a strong purpose for projects shaped to the needs of states. Projects have relevance to Milken Educators and the Milken Educator Network as a whole. Fourteen additional state Networks are in the planning and implementation phase—Arizona, California, Colorado, Delaware, Idaho, Louisiana, Maine, Michigan, New Jersey, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, South Dakota and Wyoming. The goal is to take AME to Milken Educators across America.



# MILKEN EDUCATORS AS LEADERS

The Milken Educator Award is an ongoing relationship that provides recipients with additional resources and opens up a world of opportunities



I vividly remember Lowell Milken at my notification telling me that he expected great things from me. I recall him saying that this Award was being given for what I was going to do to make a positive difference in education. I took that to heart! I will remember that day forever because I suddenly had an entire ‘family’ who believed that I had the ability to make a difference. That is extremely powerful.”

## **SHANNON GARRISON**

2008 California Milken Educator

4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Teacher

National Assessment Governing Board, 2010–2018

While continuing in her role as a classroom teacher, Shannon was one of three educators on the National Assessment Governing Board, which sets policy for the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), also known as “the Nation’s Report Card.” She was reappointed for a second term in 2014 and chaired the Assessment Development Committee for six of her eight years on the Board.



Throughout the years, Milken Educators have assumed the challenges and responsibilities of leadership, frequently earning new accolades along the way. The recent achievements listed below are but a sampling of the thousands of leadership roles undertaken to strengthen education in its many forms.

### STATE CHIEF SCHOOL OFFICERS

**Pender Makin**, 2001 Maine Milken Educator; Commissioner, Maine Department of Education

### STATE LEGISLATORS

**Dr. Carrie Buck**, 2008 Nevada Milken Educator; Nevada State Senator

### NATIONAL ASSESSMENT GOVERNING BOARD

**Nardi Routten**, 2014 Florida Milken Educator; Board Member

**Dr. Dilhani Uswatte**, 2009 Alabama Milken Educator; Board Member

### STATE DEPARTMENTS OF EDUCATION: MILKEN EDUCATORS IN KEY ROLES

**Bruce DuPlanty**, 1999 Arizona Milken Educator; Director of Certification and Outreach, Arizona Department of Education

**Amy Denty**, 1999 Georgia Milken Educator; Instructional Specialist, Office of Rural Education and Innovation, Georgia Department of Education

**Dewey Gottlieb**, 2003 Hawaii Milken Educator; Mathematics Resource Teacher, Hawaii Department of Education

**Aaron McKinnon**, 2009 Idaho Milken Educator; Science Coordinator, Idaho State Department of Education

**Rich Meserve**, 2009 Maine Milken Educator; Director, School and Student Supports, Maine Department of Education

**Deborah Grinnage-Pulley**, 2003 Maryland Milken Educator; Executive Director, Maryland Department of Education

**Michelle Ryan**, 2015 Massachusetts Milken Educator; Associate Commissioner at the Kaleidoscope Collective for Learning, Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

**Angela Mansfield**, 2002 Minnesota Milken Educator; Assistant Commissioner, Office of Educational Opportunity, Minnesota Department of Education

**Dr. Jacquelyn Sampsell**, 1999 Mississippi Milken Educator; Science Content Specialist, Mississippi Department of Education

**Dixie Grupe**, 1996 Missouri Milken Educator; Director of Social Studies, Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

**Mark Wagner**, 1992 North Dakota Milken Educator; Assistant State Director, North Dakota Career and Technical Education

**Erika Klose**, 2017 West Virginia Milken Educator; K-12 Technology Integration Coordinator for STEM and Computer Science, West Virginia Department of Education

**Dr. Vaughn G. Rhudy**, 2003 West Virginia Milken Educator; Executive Director, West Virginia Department of Education

### STATE BOARDS OF EDUCATION

**Dr. Steven T. Isoye**, 1997 Illinois Milken Educator; Chair, Illinois State Board of Education

# STATES HONOR NEW MILKEN EDUCATORS

An important and unique feature of the Milken Educator Award is state-level recognition during which the Chief State School Officer presents the signature Award obelisk. These special ceremonies take place at state board meetings, governor's mansions, legislative sessions, conferences and awards banquets.



*Dr. Bryan Cutter (AL '22) with Gov. Kay Ivey, State Superintendent Dr. Eric G. Mackey, and state board and district officials.*



*Megan Brown (AZ '22) with State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Horne.*



*Kristi Becker Yulich (KS '22) with State Senator Brenda Dietrich, Education Commissioner Dr. Randy Watson and Deputy Commissioner Dr. Ben Proctor.*



*Michelle Iwasaki (HI '21) with State Superintendent Keith Hayashi, school officials and veteran Milken Educators.*



*Veteran Milken Educators surround Andrea Trio (WV '22).*



*Leigh Beson (MA '22) with Secretary of Education Pat Tutwiler and Commissioner of Education Jeffrey C. Riley.*





Emily Howard (AR '22) with Education Secretary Jacob Oliva, State Board Chair Ouida Newton and veteran Milken Educators.



Ali Jun (NV '21) with Superintendent of Public Instruction Jhone Ebert.



Mark Garascia (MO '21) with State Board of Education President Charlie Shields and Commissioner of Education Dr. Margie Vandeven.



Jenelle Bryant (DC '21) with State Superintendent Dr. Christina Grant and Assistant Superintendent Elizabeth Ross.



Ryan Towner (IN '21) with Secretary of Education Dr. Katie Jenner and Director of Innovation and Leadership Rebecca Estes.



Anna Norviel (ID '22) with State Superintendent of Public Instruction Debbie Critchfield.





ELAINE  
HILL  
CT '22

The Best!

Best Teacher Ever!



STEPHANIE E.  
BISHOP  
VA '01



DR. JANE  
FOLEY  
IN '94



NADER  
IMAD TWAL  
CA '03



**DION T. JONES**  
MD '22

**DR. ANGIE BESENDORFER**  
MO '96

**LIZ BARNUM**  
NV '22

**DR. DILHANI USWATTE**  
AL '09

**CHRISTOPHER NUNEZ**  
NM '22



# AFFILIATED INITIATIVES IN EDUCATION

DEPARTMENT OF  
THE TREASURY

EXECUTIVE OFFICE  
BUILDING

THE WHITE HOUSE



MILKEN CENTER  
for ADVANCING the  
AMERICAN DREAM

FREEDMAN'S BANK





The Milken Center for Advancing the American Dream (MCAAD) opened virtually in spring 2020 with a mission to expand access to education, health and economic freedom, and to empower an entrepreneurial mindset that takes full advantage of opportunity.

The highly anticipated 2025 grand opening of the American Dream Visitor Center on Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington, D.C., will feature immersive exhibits, moving stories, contests and productive dialogue aimed at solutions and actions.

[www.mcaad.org](http://www.mcaad.org)



“ The American Dream, and the free-enterprise system upon which it is based, reflect enduring values of individual liberty, economic freedom, entrepreneurial creativity, and the pursuit of happiness. Our mission at MCAAD is to educate, inspire, and illuminate pathways for those seeking their own American Dream.”

**MIKE MILKEN**

Founder, Milken Center for Advancing the American Dream

“ The American Dream is complex and ever evolving. It is so exciting to have the opportunity to create a space that uplifts, inspires, educates and challenges around this important and driving set of ideals.”

**RACHEL GOSLINS**

Executive Director, Milken Center for Advancing the American Dream



## AFFILIATED INITIATIVES IN EDUCATION

# MCAAD HIGHLIGHTS MILKEN EDUCATORS FOR THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS TO REALIZING HUMAN POTENTIAL

### Education and the Educator

MCAAD is built on four pillars—Education and the Educator, Health and Medical Research, Access to Finance and Financial Empowerment, and Entrepreneurship and Innovation—the strength of which propels realization of the American Dream for individuals, communities, and nations. The pillar Education and the Educator is epitomized by Milken Educators, indeed every educator who inspires and instills the knowledge, skills, talents and perseverance to overcome challenges and become productive citizens. Universal access to high-quality, relevant education may be the most fundamental element of keeping the American Dream alive for millions across the world.

MCAAD's K-12 programming focuses on keys to securing the American Dream: financial literacy and access to capital, health, and building an entrepreneurial spirit. MCAAD's K-12 programming will include an "American Dream toolkit" of resources, teaching materials, and guidelines designed to instill curiosity and nurture purpose for learners everywhere.



MCAAD's 'Hall of Generations' is the first space visitors will walk into a soaring welcome, featuring stories of how the American Dream is shaped by generations past, present and future. *Rendering by Rockwell Group.*



In MCAAD's 'Hall of Dreams,' definitions of the American Dream come to life. Visitors will explore how notable figures define the dream and be invited to offer their own definitions through an interactive Word Cloud sculpture. *Rendering by Rockwell Group.*





Real heroes tower and guide. They are the North Star that today's youth can look up to. But their stories need to be discovered and heard. And when we do, we have the opportunity to motivate new generations to aspire to values that are essential during the challenging times we face individually, as a nation and as a world community. That is the purpose of the Center for Unsung Heroes."

**LOWELL MILKEN**

Founder



## Lowell Milken Center FOR *Unsung Heroes*



### **Unsung Hero (n):**

An individual, largely unrecognized by society, who took extraordinary actions to improve the lives of others, and made a profound and positive impact on the course of history."

The Lowell Milken Center for Unsung Heroes (LMC) transforms classrooms and communities through student-driven projects that discover Unsung Heroes from history—individuals who changed the world through their courage and compassion, yet are not found in history books. Established in 2007 as a partnership between Lowell Milken and 1992 Kansas Milken Educator and history teacher Norm Conard, LMC's unique project-based learning approach integrates research, critical thinking and creativity for students and educators across diverse cultures and academic disciplines.

LMC has reached over three million students worldwide via its online projects, educator resources and student competitions. The Fort Scott, Kansas, headquarters has welcomed visitors from all 50 states and from countries around the world. The Hall of Unsung Heroes museum was added in 2016, featuring an inspirational, high-tech space with interactive exhibits and expanded research opportunities. In 2022, LMC celebrated the grand opening of its Unsung Heroes Park, a vibrant community gathering space for programs and activities. LMC is an initiative of the Lowell Milken Family Foundation.

[www.LowellMilkenCenter.org](http://www.LowellMilkenCenter.org)







Unsung Hero Harry Hue and his family study his exhibit in the Hall of Unsung Heroes.



## LOWELL MILKEN CENTER FELLOWS

The LMC Fellowship attracts top educators from the U.S. and around the world to the headquarters in historic Fort Scott. This prestigious, merit-based professional development program focuses on a distinctive discovery process rooted in project-based learning.



“ The stories of Unsung Heroes discovered, researched and presented by students are engaging, empowering and eye-opening. This fellowship made me want to use my classroom to teach about past heroes and encourage my students to be the heroes we need today!”

### JOHN LARY

2015 Louisiana Milken Educator  
2016 Lowell Milken Center Fellow

“ As students collaborate on Unsung Hero projects, they see our history from multiple perspectives and glean insight from a diverse range of primary sources. Students are inspired and empowered when they see parts of themselves reflected in the heroes they discover!”

### SILVIA MIRANDA

2018 New Mexico Milken Educator  
2019 Lowell Milken Center Fellow





# STUDENT COMPETITIONS

Illustrating its motto to “Discover–Create–Change,” LMC holds two annual competitions offering students thousands in cash prizes.

## Discovery Award

Uncovering and then sharing the impact of an Unsung Hero takes resourcefulness, determination and passion on the part of students. In the process, young people learn invaluable research, communication and life skills. LMC’s Discovery Award offers thousands in financial prizes to students in grades 4-12 who produce compelling Unsung Hero Projects. Entries can take the form of a documentary film, performance or website, and must include a process paper.



**History is the connective tissue between generations. It provides the moral fiber. By uncovering these stories, we hope to instill these values in our own generation and our children’s generation.”**

**CALEB JOHNSON**

2013 Discovery Award Grand Prize Team Member  
12<sup>th</sup> Grade, Prince George, Virginia

[www.LowellMilkenCenter.org](http://www.LowellMilkenCenter.org)



**DISCOVER** the power to **CREATE** positive **CHANGE** through art.

The ARTEFFECT Competition offers thousands in cash prizes. Students in grades 6-12 from around the world create and submit original artworks celebrating the lives and lessons of history's Unsung Heroes. Students are encouraged to showcase completed projects beyond the classroom walls in order to stimulate positive community impact and inspire social action. Winning artwork is considered for display in the LMC Hall of Unsung Heroes gallery.



**ARTEFFECT Competition**

2023 GRAND PRIZE

"A Beacon of Hope"

Celine Fong

11<sup>th</sup> Grade

Rye, New York

## ARTEFFECT Ambassadors Program

As an exciting new online fellowship program to engage arts educators in project-based learning, LMC launched the ARTEFFECT Ambassadors Program in 2023. The program provides a framework for educators to learn from and alongside other high-level practitioners, as well as be inspired and to inspire others through art-focused education. Ambassadors participate in professional development exploring the stories of LMC Unsung Heroes, as well as complete a capstone project of their choosing.



# CHILDREN'S BOOK SERIES

Inspiring children and adults alike with uplifting stories of Unsung Heroes

It's never too early for elementary school students to gain an appreciation of history and character. The LMC Unsung Heroes Children's Book Series by award-winning educator Cathy Werling does just that with stories like these:

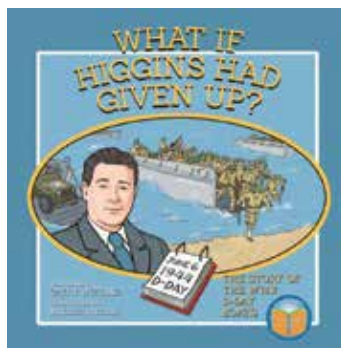
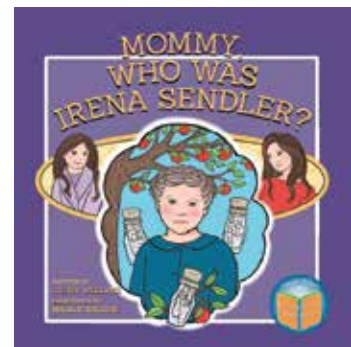
- ★ A teenage Ken Reinhardt stood up against racism during the 1957 integration of Little Rock Central High School.
- ★ Sergeant Stubby, a stray dog, captured the heart of a soldier and went on to save countless lives during World War I.
- ★ Andrew Jackson Higgins never gave up on developing the boats that delivered troops to France on D-Day and helped to end World War II.
- ★ Irena Sendler, a Catholic social worker who rescued hundreds of Jewish children from the Warsaw Ghetto during World War II and was the catalyst for LMC's creation.

Their actions provide important examples for children as young students discover their own power and responsibility to effect positive change in the world. Each compelling story is complemented by colorful illustrations.

Books are available on the LMC website and major online booksellers.

“ I love the story and the colorful illustrations in this beautiful book about Irena Sendler! Every young girl should read this story of a woman who risked her life to save 2,500 children during the Holocaust. It may inspire young girls everywhere to believe in 'the power of one' to change the world.”

## AMAZON REVIEW



“ Truly, boys and girls need to know that to succeed in life, all you need is an idea and an 'I can do this' attitude. Thank you for wanting to bring this positive message to today's next generation.”

## READER

[www.LowellMilkenCenter.org](http://www.LowellMilkenCenter.org)



The Milken Scholars Program was founded in 1989 by Lori and Michael Milken to honor exceptional young individuals based on scholarship, leadership, service, character and triumphs over obstacles. Scholars are graduating high school seniors from New York, Washington, D.C., and Los Angeles County who go through a rigorous nomination and interview process.

Each receives a \$10,000 scholarship, but what makes the program unique is the access to a lifetime of resources, including mentorship throughout their college careers and beyond. The three-day Summit with presentations by outstanding leaders from diverse fields allows Scholars to form and renew friendships as they exchange ideas and aspirations. Milken Scholars is a joint initiative of the Milken Family Foundation and the Milken Institute.

“**The Milken Scholars Program has supported me not just during my most formative years as an undergraduate student, but also every year since. It has provided a community that I can consistently and perpetually turn to for support during the worst of failures, celebrate with during the pinnacles of success, and bond with during every occasion and milestone in between. The Scholars Program has been an integral part of my life as I continue to make meaningful connections across a group of more than 560 (and counting) driven individuals who have overcome profound challenges with the goal of achieving our ambitions and individual callings in life, all the while helping and supporting each other and those around us.”**

**DANIEL LEE**

2014 Milken Scholar



[www.MilkenScholars.org](http://www.MilkenScholars.org)





Whether they become doctors, research scientists, educators, entrepreneurs or diplomats, the common denominator of Milken Scholars is a genuine sense of service."

**MICHAEL MILKEN**

Founder, Milken Scholars



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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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We would like to thank the Milken Family Foundation's Milken Educator Awards, Communications and Creative Services Departments for their service and support.





Before receiving the Milken Educator Award, I had not understood the importance of stretching my fingertips beyond the halls of my third grade wing. The Milken Educator Awards Forum allowed me to reflect on the impact I could make if I push beyond that hall. But I will not be alone. I have an entire family to support me as I venture into new territory."

**LIZ BARNUM**

2022 Nevada Milken Educator







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Ver. 09/23