

Press Release: Stafford Public Schools' 2017 Teacher of the Year

May 24, 2016

At the Board of Education's regularly scheduled meeting on Monday, May 23rd, Dr. Patricia Collin, Superintendent of Schools, announced Stafford's Teacher of the Year. The 2017 Stafford Teacher of the Year is **Ms. Colleen Martin**, a special education teacher at Stafford High School. She will now compete for the honor of Connecticut's 2017 Teacher of the Year this fall. Ms. Martin is the twenty first recipient of the Teacher of the Year award in Stafford.

Ms. Martin was nominated by colleagues and selected by a special committee of teacher representatives from each school building. The selection process includes nomination statements from colleagues, a written application outlining opinions about educational issues, and an interview with the Teacher of the Year (TOY) Committee. Michael J. Bednarz, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, serves as the facilitator of the TOY Committee.

Ms. Martin earned a bachelor's degree in Special Education and a master's degree in Education from the University of Hartford. In May, 2006, Ms. Martin completed a 6th Year Program in Assistive Technology at Southern Connecticut State University. Ms. Martin is in her 19th year of teaching, the last 8 of which have been in Stafford.

Stafford's 2017 Teacher of the Year has made contributions to the district in numerous ways. She has served as a

- TEAM mentor for beginning teachers
- The faculty chair of the Partners in Education at Stafford High School (SHS)
- the Special Education Department Chair at SHS
- chaperone on numerous regional and foreign field trips

Colleagues hold Ms. Martin in very high regard and have noted the myriad of examples of reaching out to and advocating for her students, the number of significant contributions to making Stafford High School a fulfilling experience for staff and students, and the variety of ways she has reached out to parents and the community.

In her personal statement to the Teacher of the Year Committee she wrote, "When my students have rough days, they know that they can come to me and I won't judge them. They know I will do what I can to help them succeed; but they need to help themselves just as much. My students know that I am their biggest ally and will always advocate for them. However, my main goal is to teach them to advocate for themselves I also give credit to the wonderful staff that I am fortunate to work with . . . so many teachers go above and beyond to help my students to be successful I am so grateful to work with such a wonderful team."

Ms. Martin serves as a wonderful role model for teachers throughout the district.

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