

# Winners 2016

## Teacher of the Year Awards

### **Kent Benson**

#### **2016 Winner- Public School/ Lower Grades**

#### **Robert E Lee Elementary School**

- Mr. Benson began teaching in Dallas ISD in 1980 and has been at Lee for 24 years. He now teaches 2<sup>nd</sup> grad in Lee's two-way dual language program
- Students love how Mr. Benson fosters cooperative learning by pairing up Spanish and English speaking students to help each other learn. 4-person tables work together to earn points for end-of-the-week prizes (such as Martian erasers and 4-colored pens- all purchased with his own money)
- Last year students organized a petition to have Mr. Benson named "Cool Cougar"-an honor that is normally reserved for a student.
- Mr. Benson is a member of the Campus Instructional Leadership Team. He has chaired the campus Language Proficiency Assessment Committee as well as chairing one of the very early SBDMs at Lee (site based decision making committee).
- To continue to improve his Spanish skills he spent two summers studying at the University of Salamanca Spain, a program for bilingual teachers.
- He has such strong connections to his students that now Mr. Benson's former students return to his classroom as the parents of his current students. He has even received a family video this year for his birthday.

#### **From nomination:**

The principal of Robert E Lee, Mr. Hart, says of Mr. Benson "I believe that one of Mr. Benson's best qualities, and he has many, is the quiet intensity with which he teaches. He is a very kind person and treats everyone-children and adults alike-with great sincerity".

Please help me congratulate Teacher of the Year, Kent Benson

### **Shelly Thibodaux**

#### **2016 Winner- Public School/ Middle Grades**

#### **Robert T Hill Middle School**

- Ms. Thibodaux began her career in the Dallas ISD in 1987 and is currently the Physical Education, Partner PE, coach and Athletic Director at Hill- since 2005
- She was the first person to serve at the districts newly created Female Athletic Coordinator for Bryan Adams HS in the mid 2000's.
- She uses creative and innovative methods to teach her students- currently incorporating graphing with the use of data gained by the student's use of pedometers. Through the uses of iPads her student's entries in the district wide TechFest are award winning.
- The Hill PE Dept. has received local recognition as a Healthy Zone School
- Through participation in Girl Scouting in the School Day she has lead STEM based projects through Cookie Box Creations

- Through her leadership Hill has had the most participants in the Dallas Mayors Race of all DISD MS.
- Ms. Thibodaux has been the KayCee Club Pool Manager since 1999- hiring students from areas schools to work as lifeguards- also using this position for opportunities for fund raising events- raising tens of thousands of dollars to help fund field trips, overnight science camps and STEM activities.
- The number of awards, recognitions, and accolades are amazing- when you have a moment please take a look at Ms. Thibodaux's nomination on the Greater East Dallas Chamber website.

**From nomination:**

Ms. Thibodaux demonstrates creativity and innovation in nearly everything she does.

Please help me congratulate Teacher of the Year, Shelly Thibodaux

**John David DuMars**

**2016 Winner- Public School/ Upper Grades**

**Emmett J. Conrad High School**

- Mr. DuMars teaches ESL students from dozens of cultural backgrounds requiring an exception amount of teaching expertise, sensitivity, and innovation
- He is the Conrad ESL Department Chair and his classes are regularly visited and observed by other teachers from across Dallas ISD- new teachers particularly have found practical ideas to implement in their classrooms
- Mr. DuMars co-led a regional TESOL workshop at the Fall 2015 conference in Arlington-exhibiting leadership and motivation.
- He frequently works with the DISD Refugee Coordinator to reach out to the local refugee community- striving to work with families to keep ESL students in school.
- Mr. DuMars ESL 1 class consistently performs well above district average on tests. His students average between 65-90% passing rates on end of semester tests- which is 20%-40% **over** the district average.
- He is the soccer coach at Conrad- sometimes picking up students for practice and taking that time to get to know and understand their families.

**From nomination:**

Mr. DuMars states that "all students know that their cultures are respected and honored in my classroom. In addition to English, my students learn about mutual respect and tolerance, which is perhaps the most valuable lesson of all"

Please help me congratulate Teacher of the Year, David DuMars

**Casey Pike**

**2016 Winner- Private School/Lower Grades**

**Lakehill Preparatory**

- Casey is known to stay on the cutting edge of the subjects she teaches, her collaboration with her fellow teachers, and her endless generosity with her time and skills
- She was an early adopter of coding instruction in the lower school- reminding everyone that "coding is not a fad". Her students has been creating and using QR codes for research for years.

- Ms. Pike is also the lower school librarian- she reads the Bluebonnet nominees every year so that she can recommend the perfect book to each reader-students go to her for recommendations and often find their “new favorite book” with her help.
- She offers a computer and technology club for kids, a Birthday Book Club, Word Warriors Book Club.
- She has also been the faculty sponsor for “Sisteens” an all-girls community service group for the upper schoolers
- Lastly Ms. Pike wears the title of Lakehill’s “Lunch Lady”- she volunteered to take on the daily duty and has become one of her favorite ways to interact with students.

**From nomination:**

I believe that Casey Pike is precisely the kind of teacher that we want to recognize as teacher of the year. She makes Lakehill Preparatory School a better place for students and faculty alike- each day that she walks through the front door.

Please help me congratulate Teacher of the Year, Casey Pike

**Amy Delaney**

**2016 Winner- Private School/Middle Grades**

**Dallas Academy**

- Ms. Delaney is a hands on teacher who has created a learning environment that is rigorous, thoughtful, challenging and innovative.
- She brings science lessons to life with real world applications- such as her involvement in the National Engineers Future City Competition- 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> grade students create a future city from recycled materials. The projects involves building a scale model, writing an essay, creating a city plan, participate in computer simulations all culminating in a team presentation to a panel of judges. Dallas Academy has won over \$3000 in cash and prizes from this event- having won 3<sup>rd</sup> place in the Top Five Finals in 2014. Her students also participate in a Rube Goldberg Project- which involves building a 15 step machine with convoluted chain reactions to accomplish a simple task.
- In addition to being a Life Science, Earth Science and Physics Teacher- Ms. Delaney is the Science Department head, middle school lead teacher, assistant varsity volleyball coach, chess club sponsor, and chaperone and sponsor of the Spanish and Science International Trip.
- Ms. Delaney feels that she was called to the teaching profession- inspired by her family to work at a learning difference school. With a sister who has autism, ODD, ADD, ADHD- she saw the struggles to get the services required. “I wanted to become a teacher to help families avoid the pain and heartbreak of feeling like their student couldn’t succeed or fit in”.

**From nomination:**

When I think of what makes a great teacher, many things comes to mind- but without a doubt- the teacher that stands out is Amy Delaney.

Please help me congratulate Teacher of the Year, Amy Delaney

## **Amy Duke**

### **2016 Winner- Private School/Upper Grades**

#### **Bishop Lynch**

- At Bishop Lynch Ms. Duke is a leader in educational technology. She was 1 of 2 teachers to flip their classrooms.
- What is a “flipped classroom”- it is a model in which the typical lecture and homework assignments of a class are reversed. Students will watch short video lectures at home before the class- while the in-class time is dedicated to exercises, projects, or discussions.
- Ms. Duke and her flipping partner have shared their experience at the University of Dallas Ministry Conference, the Region 10 Private School Showcase in 2015 and this year Ms. Duke will present her teacher research “How to Flip Your Classroom and Stick the Landing” at the National Catholic Educators of America Conference in St Louis.
- She has developed a semester long math class for students who were deficient in their math credits their senior year as well as help develop and redesign an program for incoming freshman who have low entrance exam scores
- She coordinates, plans, and organizes the Annual Senior retreat since 2007.
- And if that were not enough- Ms. Duke is beginning her PHD in Higher Education in January.

#### **From nomination:**

Ms. Duke’s objective is to inspire and engage students to think logically and critically, communicate effectively and become responsible citizens.

Please help me congratulate Teacher of the Year, Amy Duke