

Newburgh Enlarged School District Second Grade Teacher Named 2016 New York State Teacher of The Year

The New York State Board of Regents today announced that Dana McDonough has been named the 2016 New York State Teacher of the Year. McDonough, a second grade teacher at Newburgh Enlarged City School District in Newburgh was presented with a certificate of recognition by Regents Chancellor Merryl H. Tisch and Education Commissioner MaryEllen Elia. McDonough was also presented with the Thomas Sobol Award and the David Johnson award, both created as annual gifts for recipients of the Teacher of the Year award.

McDonough, the 46th New York State Teacher of the Year has been teaching first or second grade in the Newburgh Enlarged City School District for her entire career of 22 years. She currently teaches second graders at Fostertown ETC Magnet School.

“Dana McDonough encourages children to recognize and take ownership of their own path of learning in and out of the classroom,” said Chancellor Tisch. “She works with the whole community around a child, realizing that learning doesn’t begin and end in the classroom. She gives her students the tools they need to be lifelong learners.”

“As a teacher myself, I know how valuable educators like Dana McDonough are,” said Commissioner Elia. “She dedicates herself to her students and their families and works with her fellow teachers to share her successful practices. She will be an excellent ambassador as Teacher of the Year.”

“Dana McDonough has been described as a ‘teacher’s teacher;’ a child-centered professional who values teaching and learning above all, and an educator who readily shares her knowledge and experience with her colleagues. She has deep family roots in Newburgh and is dedicated to ‘giving back’ to in her community through charitable work,” said NYSUT President Karen E. Magee. “New York has more than 200,000 fantastic classroom teachers and tens of thousands of other education professionals, and we are overjoyed that Dana will be representing them as the 2016 New York State Teacher of the Year.”

“Dana is the gold standard in my building in terms of a respected educator,” said Fostertown ETC Magnet School Principal, Maritza Ramos. “In my 29 years in Education, I would confidently place her in the top one percent of teachers with whom I have worked.”

A native of Newburgh, McDonough was educated in the city's public schools. She is a graduate of Mount Saint Mary College, also in Newburgh, where she earned a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Education (N-6), and a Master's of Science in Education with a Reading Specialization. She holds a permanent New York State Certification in Elementary (N-6) Education. She is a recipient of the Dean's Award for Excellence for Teacher of the Hudson Valley, has twice received the Teaching the Hudson Valley Explore Award and has been published in National Education Association, *NEA Today* magazine.

Her commitment to family involvement is evident in almost all that she does as an educator. In addition to meeting with the families of each of her incoming students, often at their homes, McDonough has created programs to provide tools for parents to enable them to better support their children through the curriculum. She also emails parents weekly with updates about lessons and activities to nurture that essential partnership.

In the coming year, McDonough will serve as an ambassador for teachers throughout the state and will be the New York State nominee for the National Teacher of the Year.

Finalists for the New York State Teacher of the Year include: Michael Comet, a high school Science teacher at South Lewis High School in the South Lewis Central School District; Deborah Minchin, a high school Social Studies teacher at New Rochelle High School in the City School District of New Rochelle; Jason Steinagle, a middle school Social Studies teacher at Hamburg Middle School in the Hamburg Central School District; Sandra Taylor, a French teacher at Skaneateles High School in the Skaneateles Central School District.

The New York State Teacher of the Year Program is administered by the New York State Education Department and sponsored by New York State United Teachers (NYSUT); United Federation of Teachers (UFT); New York State Parents and Teachers Association (NYSPTA); New York State Association for School Curriculum Development (NYSASCD); New York State School Boards Association (NYSSBA); School Administrators Association of New York State (SAANYS); New York State Association of Teacher Educators (NYSATE); New York Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (NYACTE); Voya Financial; the SMARTer Kids Foundation; SMART Technologies and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO). The program is run in conjunction with the National Teacher of the Year Program, sponsored by CCSSO.

Additional information about the New York State Teacher of the Year Program is available in the Office of Curriculum and Instruction at the New York State Education Department at (518) 474-5922 or on the Teacher of the Year website.