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## **THE CATHOLIC FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES NEW WORK OF HEART AWARD RECIPIENTS**

***Award includes \$500 for outstanding individuals serving in Catholic schools***

DALLAS – The Catholic Foundation recently announced the latest round of Work of Heart Award recipients. Nine teachers and staff members of Dallas-area Catholic schools were distinguished for their hard work and devotion to the Catholic community. Each recipient received a \$500 grant for personal use, funded in part by a generous, anonymous family through The Catholic Foundation.

“The Catholic Foundation would like to commend these faculty and staff for their invaluable service and the Christian example they set for the students in our Catholic schools,” said Edwin M. Schaffler, president of The Catholic Foundation. “We are grateful for these dedicated individuals who maintain our schools’ high standards, as each one plays an integral role in the lives of our children through administration, teaching, coaching or nursing.”

The Work of Heart Award program was established in 2005 and funded solely by an anonymous Dallas family through the Catholic Foundation. To this day, the program has given 562 grants totaling \$489,000 to educators and staff of Catholic lower, middle and high schools located in the Dallas area. This year, The Catholic Foundation has matched the family’s contribution to the program. Individual contributions can be made to the Work of Heart Award Fund at The Catholic Foundation.

Recipients of the Work of Heart Awards were selected from nominations written by students, teachers, parents, administrators and community members. The Foundation has formed a committee, with members of its Advisory Council, to read the nomination letters received each month and decide which teachers and staff members will receive a Work of Heart Award. The criteria is based on traditional merit including tenure and leadership, acts of kindness or charity, Christian example, mentoring and simply going the extra mile for an individual student, family or the community.

The following recipients each received a \$500 Work of Heart Award in recognition of their outstanding service. Each is listed with a comment from the nomination letter submitted on his or her behalf.

### **Bishop Dunne Catholic School**

- Molly O'Sullivan, Art Teacher

*"Ms. O'Sullivan works hard to keep Bishop Dunne on top of new and innovative ideas. She developed and implemented the new teacher orientation and year long support program. Ms. O'Sullivan also works closely with the childcare program to create and enter artwork into the annual art auction and Christmas sale. The proceeds from the auction help defray art supply costs. Ms. O'Sullivan deserves recognition for her work and inspiration to all who are around her."*

### **Bishop Lynch Catholic High School**

- Patty Barton, School Nurse

*"Ms. Barton is an excellent nurse and patiently helps students with their woes and illnesses. She also goes above and beyond by serving the school in many other ways. Ms. Barton is one of the sponsors for Bishop Lynch Ambassadors and Invisible Children. She helps with our wellness program, which has been a huge success, and is also often seen attending extracurricular activities at the school. Bishop Lynch is fortunate to have Ms. Barton."*

### **Jesuit College Preparatory School**

- Charles DeLong, Physical Education Teacher and Head Soccer Coach

*"Mr. DeLong is the chair of the physical education department as well as head soccer coach at Jesuit. As a coach, Mr. DeLong has established great relationships with all his players and also built the soccer program into one of the best in the state. He is friend to all and one of the leaders of the school. He serves on numerous committees and is a great role model to students. Mr. DeLong truly exemplifies what Jesuit preaches: being a 'man for others'."*

### **Mary Immaculate Catholic School**

- Cyndie Nicodemus, 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade Teacher

*"Ms. Nicodemus consistently goes above and beyond the call of duty. She instituted a summer school program at Mary Immaculate to address the need to build fluency, comprehension and phonics at the primary level, in order to prevent academic regression over the summer break. Ms. Nicodemus's willingness to initiate such a program and prepare herself to better address the needs of the students makes her one of Mary Immaculate's most valuable assets."*

### **Mount St. Michael Catholic School**

- Kathryn Vega, 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Math Teacher and Literacy Coach

*"As a teacher and literary coach, Ms. Vega has made a dramatic difference in the lives of the students who struggle with reading and comprehension issues. The students look forward to her tutoring sessions. She loves the children and they know it. Consistently calling on different students and moving about the classroom, Ms. Vega keeps everyone involved and engaged. She is truly a great gift for the students at Mount St. Michael."*

### **Santa Clara Catholic Academy**

- Marisel Peters, 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Teacher

*"Ms. Peters' incredible dedication to increasing her students' aptitude and academic skills is unparalleled. She ensures that every student masters the necessary skills and goes the extra mile by tutoring those who need help. Ms. Peters believes that her students are capable to perform their best. Perseverance, dedication, faithfulness to God, tenacity and resiliency are a few of the many virtues she teaches her students to have."*

### **St. Mary of Carmel Catholic School**

- Norma Nelson, Assistant Principal

*“Ms. Nelson is one of the hardest working and most deserving people at St. Mary of Carmel. Where most assistant principals do not have to be in the classroom, Ms. Nelson teaches middle school and has special reading classes for students who need extra help. Her passion and dedication to the school are unsurpassed. Ms. Nelson personifies ‘Work of Heart’ and you will not find a more deserving person.”*

### **St. Pius X Catholic School**

- Kelly Cline, 1<sup>st</sup> Grade Teacher

*“Ms. Cline is an excellent teacher, always kind, patient and encouraging to her students. Her love for the kids and the strong Christian values she instills in them are evident. Ms. Cline is very deserving of the ‘Work of Heart’ award.”*

### **St. Rita Catholic School**

- Kim Robbs, Enrichment Coordinator

*“Ms. Robbs has done an outstanding job enriching the school’s programs and her work is invaluable to the community. She works hand in hand with the classroom teachers in grades K-4 and is a rich resource of materials, information and ideas. Ms. Robbs is truly dedicated to enriching the academic lives of the students and to making them shine in whatever they do. It is for these reasons that Ms. Robbs deserves this award.”*

To nominate a candidate for the Work of Heart Award, please visit the Foundation’s Web site at [www.catholicfoundation.com](http://www.catholicfoundation.com) for instructions on the nomination process. Anyone serving as a full- or part-time employee in a Catholic school located in the Diocese of Dallas may be nominated. In addition to the \$500 awards, The Catholic Foundation will present Grand Awards of \$5,000 throughout the school year.

Chartered in 1955 by a group of dedicated Catholic laymen, The Catholic Foundation is a donor-focused community foundation that guides benefactors in compassionate charitable giving endeavors, utilizing extensive expertise to carry out the various philanthropic goals of its donors. The Foundation’s planned giving programs connects donors directly with organizations they wish to support within the Diocese of Dallas and elsewhere, whether that is a home parish, Catholic school or a community-based charity. Thanks to the generosity of donors both past and present, The Foundation has provided approximately \$22 million to local organizations through hundreds of grants over the past 53 years, and donor-advised funds maintained at the Foundation have accounted for even more grants amounting to millions of dollars. For additional information about The Catholic Foundation, call 972.661.9792.

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