

Statesman

Key players in excellence earn Eanes Education Foundation recognition



The generosity of Beau and Kathryn Ross allowed for the creation of the Excellence in Education Fund. Beau Ross, a longtime Eanes school board member, died March 10 after an extended battle with cancer.
HOLLY JACKSON FOR WESTLAKE PICAYUNE Photo: Holly Jackson

Updated June 11, 2018

By Jennifer Salas, Contributing writer

In the fall of 2016, the Eanes Independent School District Board of Trustees accepted a generous donation from Beau and Kathryn Ross for the creation of the Beau and Kathryn Ross Excellence in Education

Fund. The creation of the Excellence in Education Fund allows for annual monetary awards to be given to teachers and campuses for uses such as program development, professional development for staff and stipends for staff.

The intention of the awards was to recognize those programs that are unique and innovative as well as those individuals who go above and beyond to bring them to fruition or in some other way enhance the lives of their students.

Beau and Kathryn have been active in Eanes for the entirety of their children's academic lives. Beau was a former school board trustee and a founder of the Westlake High School Business Incubator. Kathryn has volunteered for many years with The Eanes Education Foundation serving many roles, including president of their board.

The Rosses have always had a clear understanding of the funding issues that face public schools in the State of Texas, which led them to be longtime supporters of The Eanes Education Foundation. The funds raised by EEF through the generosity of our community allow the district to hire additional teaching staff and continue to offer high quality programs. The Rosses have advocated tirelessly for the students of Eanes ISD and indeed all of Texas.

While the Rosses are happy that EEF helps to address the budget issues in EISD, they wanted to do more to express the gratitude they felt for the amazing teachers of Eanes ISD. The Rosses believed that recognizing the unique accomplishments of EISD teachers was one way to encourage and support their efforts. In fact, research agrees with this assessment. A recent climate survey of teachers by Eanes ISD showed that working in a supportive environment with program support and stability was the second most important factor to our teachers' job satisfaction.

In sharing her thoughts about the Excellence in Education Fund Kathryn Ross says "Beau and I always felt so blessed to have benefited from Eanes ISD and we wanted the teachers to know how we felt. We wanted them to feel appreciated and valued."

This year's recipients of the Excellence in Education Awards are from campuses across the district and were chosen by a committee that included district administrators, EEF's Executive Director Kathi Haralson and Kathryn Ross. The focus was on educators who have created innovative and creative programs as well as those who have shown educational leadership.

Eanes ISD is blessed to have such high quality teachers who regularly go the extra mile for their students. At a time when teachers across the nation are not feeling valued or respected it is refreshing to see examples of gratitude to those who not only have one of the most

difficult jobs in our society, but also one of the most significant roles in shaping the future. As this school year comes to a close my hope is that Beau and Kathryn Ross inspire you to reflect upon the teachers who impacted your children this year and share your gratitude as well.

2018 winners

Excellence in Education Award recipients are: Ashley Pampe, Barton Creek Elementary School, created BCES Social Media Team; Alex Merritt, Barton Creek Elementary School, Student Council sponsor; Karen Wager, Barton Creek Elementary School, created Student Ambassador's club for No Place for Hate designation; Jennifer Flood, Forest Trail Elementary School, created Social Media Team; Julie Burgess, Eanes Elementary School, outstanding teaching strategies and leadership; **fifth-grade ELA Team – Kate Ricter, Tracie Mojica, Rachel Steinberg, Kim McLaughlin, Marianna Ricketson, Bridge Point Elementary School, brought Typewriter Rodeo to BPE fourth and fifth-grade students;** Eanes Elementary School Spanish Immersion Program; **Bridge Point Elementary School Spanish Immersion Program;** Cedar Creek Elementary School Spanish Immersion Program; Sharon Burns, Hill Country Middle School Reading Intervention; Kendall Hiott, Hill Country Middle School, Scholarship for Master's Program; Fred Benitez, West Ridge Middle School, Parrot Mambo Drone kits; James Moore, Westlake High School, AP English 3 – created a culture where the art of writing is

engrained daily; and Erin Root, Westlake High School, Special Ed/Life Skills/Reading teacher – leadership, engaging students in creative ways.

Jennifer Salas is an Eanes school board member.

Article posted online here