



Mohammed Choudhury  
State Superintendent of Schools

**TO:** Members of the State Board of Education  
**FROM:** Mohammed Choudhury, State Superintendent of Schools  
**DATE:** May 24, 2022  
**SUBJECT:** Recognition of Maryland’s 2022-2023 Teachers of the Year

**PURPOSE:**

To recognize Maryland’s newly named 2022-2023 local Teachers of the Year.

**BACKGROUND OF THE PROGRAM, SPONSORS, AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

Maryland has fully participated in the National Teacher of the Year Program for twenty-eight years. The National Program is sponsored by the Council of Chief State School Officers. The objective of the state program is to draw public attention to the teaching profession and the contributions of our outstanding teachers. The Maryland Teachers of the Year represent thousands of teachers in the public schools of our State and when selected for the State Award, he or she enters the National Teacher of the Year competition.

Maryland’s Teacher of the Year has a partner teacher assigned by the local school system. The Maryland Teacher of the Year participates in numerous speaking engagements and professional development programs at state conferences, college graduations, ceremonies, and other events. Award recipients are also invited to be part of prestigious panels and education committees. We are proud that in the last decade Maryland has had three National Teachers of the Year and two were national finalists.

COUNTY	TEACHER NAME
Allegany	Amy Rice
Anne Arundel	Charles Whittaker
Baltimore City	Berol Dewdney
Baltimore County	Alicia Amaral Freeman
Calvert	Rachael Ulmer
Caroline	Mirta Valdes-Bradner
Carroll	Erica McAndrew
Cecil	Nadeline Fleischer-Pile
Charles	Morghan E. Hungerford
Dorchester	Philip Sham Albert
Frederick	Johnathan Kurtz

Garrett	Amy Beeman
Harford	Ashley Gereli
Howard	Jorden Lim
Kent	Karen Carty
Montgomery	Jonathan Dunn
Prince George's	Evelyn Policarpio
Queen Anne's	Cassandra Hosler
St. Mary's County	Melissa Kiernan
Somerset	Jennifer Carey
Talbot	Katherine Spies
Washington	Elizabeth McDonald
Wicomico	Rebecca Mathews
Worcester	Kristin Cashman

**ACTION:**

The State Superintendent and State Board will recognize each local Teacher of the Year with a State Board of Education Citation. An inscribed portfolio will also be presented and commemorative pictures will be taken.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

Teacher of the Year Bios

# Maryland's 2022-2023 Teachers of the Year

## **Allegany County – Amy Rice, Cash Valley Elementary School General, Grade 2**

Amy Rice is a graduate of Frostburg State University, where she received her Master's Degree in Curriculum and Instruction (2002), and her Bachelor's Degree in Early Childhood/Elementary Education (1996). She is currently a second grade teacher at Cash Valley Elementary School, where she has taught for 25 years. Mrs. Rice serves as chairperson of the school's Leadership Team, and is a member of the STEM/Technology Action Team to encourage family engagement and community partnerships. She also serves as a mentor for student interns from Frostburg State University. Mrs. Rice has served her community as a coach for youth soccer and the school's LEGO League, and she has been nominated for the Sallie Mae First Class Teacher Award.

## **Anne Arundel County – Charles Whittaker, Center of Applied Technology North HVAC Instructor, Grades 9-12**

After retiring from a thirty-year career, Charles Whittaker joined the faculty of the Center of Applied Technology North as an HVAC instructor. He prepares his students by training them in industry standards as well as personal and workplace skills. As a member of the School Improvement Team, Charles champions school-wide initiatives such as industry certifications. Charles received his Bachelor of Science in Accounting from the University of Baltimore (2004) and his Master's in Business Administration from Strayer University (2006). He is currently pursuing his National Board Certification in the area of CTE and a Master of Divinity from Wesley Seminary in DC.

## **Baltimore City – Berol Dewdney, The Commodore John Rodgers School Pre-Kindergarten**

Berol Dewdney, Baltimore City Schools 2022 Teacher of the Year, believes education is fundamental to the practice of freedom and democracy itself. Dewdney earned her BA from Colby College (2013) and her MA from Johns Hopkins (2015). A designated model teacher, she will enter her 10th year teaching Prekindergarten at Commodore John Rodgers, and serves as team lead, Tools of the Mind endorsed curriculum lead, and instructional coach across the district. Affirming that education should be rooted in love and the neuroscience of "brain fitness", Berol's work centers on executive function development and elevates the revolutionary power of young learners-leaders.

# Maryland's 2022-2023 Teachers of the Year

## **Baltimore County – Alicia Amaral Freeman, Franklin Elementary School** **ESOL, Grades K-5**

Alicia Amaral Freeman realized her life's passion of teaching English learning children when as a child she saw her Portuguese grandmother struggle to help her with schoolwork. Seeking to understand educational inequities led her to Barnard College at Columbia University and to Notre Dame University of Maryland, earning degrees in Women's Studies (2001) and English for Speakers of Other Languages (2008). After teaching ESOL and Spanish in city schools and serving as principal of a dual-language parochial school, Freeman returned to the classroom to teach ESOL at three Baltimore County schools. She is vice president of the Latino Providers Network and was 2018 Educator of the Year for the Maryland Hispanic Chamber of Commerce.

## **Calvert County – Rachael Ulmer, Huntingtown High School** **Secondary English, Grade 9-12**

Rachael Ulmer, a life-long learner and reflective educator, empowers students to become highly effective communicators. She earned a Master of Art in Education in Reading PreK-12 from the University of Nebraska-Kearney (2016) and a Bachelor's in English from LSU. Rachael is a Teacher-Consultant for the UMD Writing Project and a collaborative member of Calvert County's secondary ELA leadership team. As her school's Writing Coach, Rachael established a student-led writing center that promotes positive peer relationships and fosters the importance of reading and writing for every student. Her devotion to cultivating critical literacy skills helps students see the connection between education and their future success.

## **Caroline County – Mirta Valdes-Bradner, North Caroline High School** **1 – 4 & AP Spanish, Grades 9-12**

Mirta Valdes-Bradner is an Advanced Placement Spanish language teacher who is passionate about inspiring students to learn a new language. She earned a Bachelor's degree from American University, a Master's degree from La Salle University, and National Board Certification in 2009. She is a dedicated supporter of AP Programs and one of only 23 State Advocate Leads in the country. In that role, she worked to pass legislation supportive of the AP Program. She was awarded the Medal of Excellence by Governor Hogan in 2021 and recorded an advocacy blog and podcast for the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards.

# Maryland's 2022-2023 Teachers of the Year

## **Carroll County – Erica McAndrew, Spring Garden Elementary School**

### **General, Grade 1**

As a first-grade teacher, Erica has dedicated her 27 years in education to the Spring Garden Elementary School. She earned a Bachelor of Arts in 1993 and a Master's of Science in 2013, both from McDaniel College. Erica is a certified Elementary Math and STEM Leader. She is active in curriculum writing, leads STEM inservices and workshops, and trains new teachers. Erica is leading the school's Green Team efforts to become recertified as a Maryland Green School. She has been recognized multiple times as a Carroll County Outstanding Teacher, has won numerous awards for her contributions in 4-H, and is president of the non-profit organization Peace Love Dolls.

## **Cecil County – Nadeline Fleischer-Pile, Perryville Elementary School**

### **English Language Arts, Grade 4**

Nadeline Fleischer-Pile is an English language arts teacher from Perryville Elementary School who passionately advocates for students and inspires future teachers. Nadeline received her Bachelor's Degree in Human Development from Washington College (2011) and is pursuing a Master's of Education Degree in School Improvement Leadership from Goucher College. As a public school educator of eight years and former MSDE Teacher of Promise, Nadeline enjoys mentor teaching, leading professional learning communities, and engaging with the community of Cecil County. Nadeline believes collaboration and innovation are keys to positive change and encourages all educators to rekindle the light that is their spirit of teaching.

## **Charles County – Morghan E. Hungerford, Arthur Middleton Elementary School**

### **General, Grade 2**

Morghan Hungerford received her Master's Degrees in Curriculum and Instruction (2020) and Educational Leadership (2021) from American College of Education and a Bachelor's Degree in Elementary Education (2016) from Salisbury University. Morghan completed part of her student teaching experience in New Zealand. Morghan is currently a second-grade teacher as well as a team leader, club sponsor and the PTO President and committee chairperson. Morghan has also led the Positive Behavior Interventions and Support Team. Morghan's classroom is currently used as a model classroom for non-tenured teachers. She volunteers with the Sherriff's Offices Teen Court Program.

# Maryland's 2022-2023 Teachers of the Year

## **Dorchester County – Philip Sham Albert, North Dorchester High School**

### **Project Lead the Way Engineering and Math, Grades 9-12**

Philip Albert received his Master of Arts in Teaching from Salisbury University (2001) and a Bachelor's of Science in Political Science from the United States Naval Academy (1985). Currently a mathematics and engineering teacher, he is also a Senior Class Co-Advisor, Assistant chairperson of his school's Faculty Council, Co-Advisor of the Mathematics Honor Society Mu Alpha Theta, and a member of the Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) committee and the Discipline committee.

## **Frederick County – Johnathan Kurtz, Governor Thomas Johnson High School**

### **Music, Grades 9-12**

Johnathan Kurtz earned a Bachelor of Music degree from Taylor University (2003). He completed a Master of Arts in Music Education at the University of Maryland College Park (2009) and holds a Certificate of Educational Leadership from Hood College (2015). Jonathan has taught music in grades K-12 over the last 19 years including concert band, jazz band, orchestra, music theory, music technology, and music history. He regularly participates in curriculum writing, department chair meetings, and served on a school Hybrid Reopening Committee. He is currently the Coordinator of the Academy for the Fine Arts at Governor Thomas Johnson High School.

## **Garrett County – Amy Beeman, Southern Middle School**

### **Science, Grade 6**

Amy Beeman holds two degrees from Frostburg State University, a Master's of Special Education Degree (2005) and a Bachelor's Degree in Early Childhood/Elementary Education (1996). Currently a science teacher at Southern Middle School in Garrett County, she is an active member of the School Improvement and PBIS teams, a mentor teacher and serves as a valuable resource to her colleagues who seek her out for her pedagogical and content knowledge of the Next Generation Science Standards, use of instructional technology and STEAM education. She believes the three most important school supplies are patience, flexibility, and grace. She is committed to sparking curiosity and establishing connections with her students.

# Maryland's 2022-2023 Teachers of the Year

## **Harford County – Ashley Gereli, Churchville Elementary School** **Special Education, Grades K-5**

Ms. Ashley Gereli is a 6th-year Special Education teacher at Churchville Elementary School. A proud product of HCPS, she completed the Teaching Academy of Maryland Program at C. Milton Wright High in 2012. She attended Harford Community College to study Elementary Education, Special Education, and Psychology, earning her Associate of Arts in 2014. Ms. Gereli completed her Bachelor of Arts in Elementary and Special Education at Towson University in 2016. Currently, she is pursuing her graduate studies in Transformational Educational Leadership (M.A) at Towson University. At Churchville Elementary School, Ms. Gereli is a member of many leadership teams, serves as a ClubHOUSE Leader, and was nominated by her colleagues for the 2021-22 Harford County Education Foundation Everyday Hero award!

## **Howard County – Jordan Lim, Long Reach High School** **Math, Grade 9**

Jordan Lim received her Master's Degree in Curriculum and Instruction with a Leadership Focus from McDaniel College (2017) and a Bachelor's Degree in Middle School Math/Science Education from Stevenson University (2012). A math teacher, she co-leads the Reach Academy, a Restorative Justice initiative that centralizes relationships as the key to learning. Jordan received the MCTM Outstanding Beginning Teacher Award, and often speaks publicly. The Algebra 1 team and instructional team leader, Jordan transforms her school into a place where students thrive on engaging lessons, having positive relationships with one another and their teachers, ensuring student well-being, development, and learning.

## **Kent County – Karen Carty, Kent County Middle School** **Science, Grade 7**

Karen Carty is a 7th grade science teacher at Kent County Middle School. A 2016 graduate of Salisbury University, Karen majored in Elementary Education with a minor in Middle School Science. She is also pursuing her master's degree in STEM Education with the University of Maryland, Baltimore County with the anticipated completion in 2024. Karen, active in the environmental education community, played an integral part in writing the Environmental Literacy Curriculum used in the county and was a presenter in the 2020 MAEOE Conference. Additionally, Karen serves as team leader and is organizing the first 5k event to benefit the middle school.

# Maryland's 2022-2023 Teachers of the Year

## **Montgomery County – Jonathan Dunn, Sherwood High School** **General/Choral Music, Grades 9-12**

Johnathan Dunn received his master's degree in Educational Leadership from Hood College (2022) and a bachelor's degree in Music Education from The Catholic University of America (1999). Currently a general/choral music teacher at Sherwood High School, he coordinates the "One Sherwood Cultural Celebration," serves as a mentor to students and staff, and musically directs the fall musical. Johnathan is a member of the instructional leadership team, and serves as a Restorative Justice Coach. He is also a director of Sherwood's beloved "Rock and Roll Revival" production, and is the 2022-2023 Montgomery County Public Schools *Teacher of the Year* recipient.

## **Prince George's County – Evelyn Policarpio, Benjamin Tasker Middle School** **Math, Grade 8**

Evelyn Perez Policarpio, is an 8th grade Math teacher at Benjamin Tasker Middle School. She is originally from the Philippines and speaks four languages. Ms. Policarpio earned her Bachelor of Science degree in Education at Holy Angel University, Philippines. She received her Master's degree in Education with a concentration in Curriculum and Instruction at American College of Education. Ms. Policarpio has won numerous awards including: the 2021 MEGGY Award Winner, Outstanding Educator in Gifted and Talented Education-Teacher as Leader by EGATE, Outstanding Teacher by PDK International AU Chapter 0151, Outstanding Mathematics Teacher Region III and Irreplaceable Teacher of the Year.

## **Queen Anne's County – Cassandra Hosler, Churchill Elementary School and Sudlersville Elementary School** **Art, Grades PK-4**

Cassie Hosler is an award-winning artist and art teacher at Churchill and Sudlersville Elementary Schools. She is a presenter at the district, state, and national level on "Encouraging Communication with Parents in the Elementary Setting". She is a member of her school's Instructional Leadership Team, runs the Art Club and volunteers as a Jump Rope Coach. She received her Bachelor's Degree in Psychology and Art from the University of Delaware in 1999; Certification in Art Education from Delaware State University in 2006, and holds a Master's of Education in Instructional Technology from the University of Maryland, University College (2013).



# Maryland's 2022-2023 Teachers of the Year

## **St. Mary's County – Melissa Kiernan, Leonardtown High School** **Special Education and English, Grades 9-12**

Melissa Kiernan received her Certificate of Advanced Studies in Education from College of Notre Dame of Maryland University (2015), her Master's Degree in Teaching and Learning from Virginia Tech (2001) and a Bachelor's Degree in English from Virginia Tech (1999). Currently a special education teacher and department chair, she coordinates kindness initiatives in her high school and has served as class sponsor for 12 years (now for the Class of 2024). Melissa contributes to the instructional leadership team, as lead mentor for new/untentured teachers, in MTSS committee's Raider Spice Girls, and as Troop 10017 Brownie leader in her community.

## **Somerset County – Jennifer Carey, Carter G. Woodson Elementary School** **General, Grade 1**

Jennifer Carey's classroom learning environment promotes fun, growth, and a sense of family. Carey received her Master's Degree in Early Childhood Education (2010) and a Bachelor's Degree in Elementary Education (2004) from Salisbury University. During her 15 years of teaching, she obtained certifications in Reading and Special Education. Currently teaching first grade at Woodson Elementary, she serves as team leader and co-chairs the Math SIT committee. In addition, she has been an afterschool advisor for an educational club, a tutor for Multilingual learners and students with disabilities, and has presented workshops for new teachers. Mrs. Carey has strong communication with her families and coaches for Somerset County Parks and Recreation.

## **Talbot County – Katherine Spies, Easton Elementary School** **Kindergarten**

Katherine Spies is a passionate early childhood educator committed to giving students the most engaging, educational experience to begin their learning careers. She has her master's equivalency from Gratz College (2015), and Bachelor's Degree in Early Childhood Education from University of Maryland (2003). As a kindergarten teacher at Easton Elementary, she is a team leader, and mentor teacher for the primary grades. Spies is part of TCPS Kindergarten Curriculum team and an InquirED advocate for her school. She enjoys arranging many opportunities for field trips and guest speakers throughout the year to bring meaning to students' learning.

# Maryland's 2022-2023 Teachers of the Year

## **Washington County – Elizabeth McDonald, Washington County Technical High School, Biomedical Science, Grades 11 & 12**

Elizabeth McDonald leads the Academy of Biomedical Sciences, where high school students develop content knowledge and skills to prepare for college and career. She earned a Master's Degree from Marymount University and a Bachelor's Degree from Wake Forest University. She is a National Board Certified Teacher and utilizes an inquiry-based learning model to increase student engagement and exploration of challenging topics in science and medicine. Elizabeth sponsors HOSA Future Health Professionals and mentors students in competitive events and outreach programs, including a Mini Med School for elementary students. She actively supports school-community partnerships, including job shadowing and curriculum-embedded apprenticeships

## **Wicomico County – Rebecca Mathews, Wicomico High School Science, Grades 9-12**

Earning her BA in Biology from Swarthmore, Rebecca Mathews began teaching in 2000 and is currently pursuing National Board Certification. Rebecca has collaborated with educators to implement the nationally recognized WestEd's Nexus program in Maryland. Utilizing professional development opportunities, Rebecca has presented at seven conferences since 2015. Supporting student leadership and achievement, she advises SGA, NHS, Alliance, DI and JLAB; these groups have received local, state, and national recognition. Determined to help students succeed, Rebecca has been involved with tutoring, Evening High School, Summer School, Credit Recovery, Gear Up, Next Generation Scholars, and personally mentored 18 QuestBridge National Match finalists.

## **Worcester County – Kristin Cashman, Pocomoke High School English, Grades 9-12**

Kristin Cashman graduated from Salisbury University with a bachelor's degree in elementary education and a master's degree as a reading specialist. She holds four education certifications and is finishing up her fifth. Along with teaching English at Pocomoke High School, she is the coordinator for Worcester on Wheels (a mobile community engagement/outreach program), facilitator of the Women Who Rise (reach and inspire students through education) program, a member of her school and county's technology teams, an equity champion and lead for Pocomoke's equity team, the new teacher liaison at Pocomoke, and an adjunct faculty member in Salisbury University's education department.