



# SPECIAL EDITION



Issue 2, 2017

## SSD Teacher of the Year Helps Students Achieve Full Potential

A desire to help others and guide students to find their passion is why Adam Holt became a welding teacher.

Holt teaches the two-year welding program at SSD's South Technical High School and was recently named SSD's 2017 Teacher of the Year for his dedication to students and collaboration with community partners.

Holt has been a teacher with SSD for 12 years. He currently has 30 full-time students in the welding program at South Tech.

Some of Holt's accomplishments include attending welding competitions with his students and helping them to win prizes including partial and full scholarships. To date, with Holt's teaching and guidance, his students have won 61 district competitions, 41 state competitions and three national competitions.

Additionally, his students have earned more than \$340,000 in scholarships to post-secondary welding institutions. That includes 10 full-ride scholarships.

Holt said he treats the classroom as a job site and has high expectations of his students.

"Believing in students is the most important thing we can do as educators," Holt said in his interview for Teacher of the Year. "The students come to my class ready to work, but I also facilitate a fun learning environment. I want to guide and prepare them for getting a job when they graduate."

South Tech principal Jacob Lohse said Holt's devotion to his students goes above and beyond his job description.

"Adam embodies three characteristics that make him a high achieving and successful instructor. His capacity to build positive and professional relationships with his students provides him with the foundation of a strong and competitive course," said Lohse.

Lohse added, "His ambition and determination to build successful students drives his program and creates opportunities for our

students. And finally, Adam is results-oriented. When traveling to welding competitions, his students regularly finish first, second and third, at the same event, often sending the best welders to post-secondary institutions for free."

Holt's students have nothing but praise for their teacher.

"Mr. Holt has had a huge impact on helping me find my passion in life," said Lily Bedwell, a senior in the welding program. "He is one of the most inspiring teachers I have ever had the pleasure of being in class with. He is very passionate about what he does and it rubs off on all of us."

Holt was selected as one of SSD's 10 Key to the Classroom Award winners. The Key to the Classroom Award honors SSD's top teachers for their creative approaches to student learning, innovative programming and commitment to student success.

Holt will represent SSD next year in the statewide competition for Regional Teacher of the Year, a program sponsored by the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. Regional winners go on to compete for Missouri State Teacher of the Year. ■

*Turn the page to see a complete list of this year's staff award honorees and Special Ambassador award winners.*



Go to [www.vimeo.com/ssdstlco/toy2017](http://www.vimeo.com/ssdstlco/toy2017) to watch a short video and hear more about Holt's impact on students.

# SSD SALUTES STAFF, COMMUNITY FOR EXCELLENCE



SSD HAS A WIDE RANGE OF AWARD PROGRAMS TO RECOGNIZE INDIVIDUALS WHO CONTRIBUTE TO THE SUCCESS OF STUDENTS WHO RECEIVE SERVICES FROM SSD. THIS YEAR'S WINNERS ARE:

## Special Ambassador Award Winners

The Special Ambassador Award is the highest recognition given by SSD. The award is presented to community members who demonstrate an extraordinary commitment to the students and/or staff of SSD.

### Groups

- **Accent Group**
- **Camp Guardian**
- **Renaissance Hotel Banquet Department**

### Individuals

- **Natasha Baebler**, Yoga Instructor, UDYoga
- **Gregg Cleveland**, Athletic Director, Eureka High School, Rockwood School District
- **Sue Keller & Terri O'Leary**, Physical Education Teachers, Parkway Central High School, Parkway Schools
- **Dr. Meg Brooks**, Principal, Chesterfield Elementary, Rockwood School District
- **Dr. April Regester**, Associate Professor, University of Missouri-St. Louis
- **Tyler Kearns**, Kid Zone Coordinator, School District of Clayton
- **Poorva Sheth**, Student, Marquette High School, Rockwood School District
- **Dr. Maxine Valdez**, Assistant Superintendent, Hazelwood School District
- **Dr. Tara Sparks**, Assistant Superintendent, Lindbergh Schools
- **Jennifer Proffitt**, Curriculum Coordinator for High School (STEM), Parkway Schools
- **Tami Webb**, Transportation Manager, Voluntary Interdistrict Choice Corporation (VICC)

## Key to the Classroom Award Winners

The Key to the Classroom Award honors the top teachers at SSD. The SSD teacher and location to which he or she is assigned are:

- **Daniel Hehner**, Sperreng Middle School, Lindbergh Schools
- **Tracy Heiland**, Countywide, SSD
- **Adam Holt**, South Technical High School, SSD
- **Angela Laramie**, McCluer North High School, Ferguson-Florissant School District
- **Joe Matschiner**, Parkway North High School, Parkway Schools
- **Shannon Morley**, Truman Middle School, Lindbergh Schools
- **Kathleen O'Brien**, Countywide, SSD
- **Wendy Ralston**, Litzsinger School, SSD
- **Elizabeth Rock**, Parkway South High School, Parkway Schools
- **Melanie Schweizer**, Marquette High School, Rockwood School District

## Building Block Award Winners

The Building Block Award honors SSD's outstanding paraprofessionals for their contributions to the lives of students who receive services from SSD. The SSD paraprofessional and the location to which he or she is assigned are:

- **Tracy Brown**, Green Pines Elementary, Rockwood School District
- **Rich Brzenk**, Eureka High School, Rockwood School District
- **Clementine Carbery**, VA Medical Center, Jefferson Barracks, Vocational Skills Program, SSD
- **Elisa Chamov**, Craig Elementary, Parkway Schools
- **Diane Leeper**, Green Pines Elementary, Rockwood School District
- **Josh McGrotty**, MRH Elementary, Maplewood Richmond Heights School District
- **Elizabeth Webster**, Neuwoehner High School, SSD

## Lasting Impression Award Winners

SSD honors other dedicated individuals within the District through the Lasting Impression Award. Created in 2006, it is awarded to SSD support staff who make a difference in the lives of students both within and outside the classroom.

- **Ralph Barroso**, Desktop Support Technician, SSD
- **Chris Beardsley**, Equipment Design Fabricator, Litzsinger School, SSD
- **Mary Daman**, Bus Monitor, South Garage, SSD
- **Ann Marie Guntli**, Social Worker, Webster Groves High School and Brentwood School District
- **Elaine Kistner**, Real-Time Translator, Aftton High School, Aftton School District
- **Carrie Klein**, Social Worker, Vocational Skills Program, SSD
- **Donna McKenzie**, Bus Driver, South Garage, SSD
- **Scott Mulvaney**, Adaptive Physical Education Teacher, Lindbergh Schools
- **Susan Sears**, Speech-Language Pathologist, Valley Park Elementary, Valley Park School District
- **Arthur Silverman**, Lead Road Supervisor, Transportation Department, SSD

Visit [www.bit.ly/2017ssdwards](http://www.bit.ly/2017ssdwards) to read more about each of this year's Special Ambassador Award honorees.

# Special Education Foundation

Success Beyond the Classroom

## Learning to Lead

The Special Education Foundation (SEF) offers the Fred Saigh Leadership Program for high school students with disabilities. Participants enhance their skills through a yearlong training curriculum that introduces them to debate, teamwork, public speaking and participation in community-related activities. At the completion of the program, students return to their respective schools better prepared to campaign for school office, manage school projects and assume leadership positions.



Each month during the school year, students visit community institutions and meet leaders throughout the metropolitan area. They learn the benefits of philanthropy firsthand by raising funds, selecting recipients and distributing aid. Participants are introduced to the St. Louis County Executive, participate in an editorial board meeting of the St. Louis Post-Dispatch, meet with their state representatives and are recognized on the floor of the Missouri House of Representatives in Jefferson City, receive a docent tour of the Holocaust Museum and visit the Buzz Westfall Justice Center. Other session topics include the environment, diversity, manners, team building and cyberbullying.

The Fred Saigh Youth Leadership Program's success is reflected in the accomplishments of the many graduates who have become effective leaders in their schools, their communities and in the colleges and universities they attend.

To apply or nominate a student for the Fred Saigh Youth Leadership Program, visit the Programs section of the SEF website at [www.sef-stl.org/programs](http://www.sef-stl.org/programs). Applications and nominations are due May 12.

## Save the Date

The annual Dianne Arbeiter Celebration of Success will be held on June 1. This year, the evening honors Dianne Arbeiter and JoAnn Sauer. Each contributed more than 25 years of service to children and youth served by SSD. The event will benefit students with disabilities and raise funds for hearing aids for children who are deaf or hard of hearing. For information, visit the Events section of the SEF website at [www.sef-stl.org/events](http://www.sef-stl.org/events) or call the SEF office at 314.394.7030.

## MINI-GRANTS SUPPORT SUPPLEMENTAL PROGRAMS FOR STUDENTS

Students who receive services from SSD are benefitting from a mini-grant program funded by the Special Education Foundation.

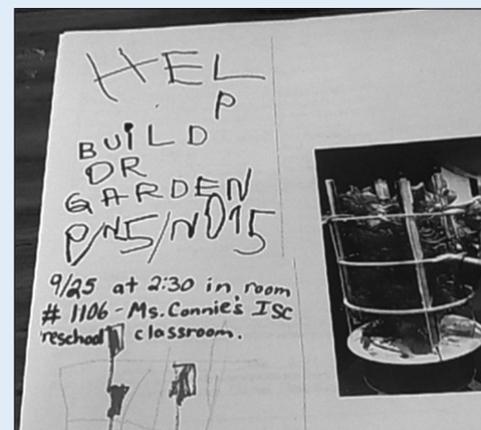
The program allows teachers to apply for mini-grants, which can be used for “extras” that create learning opportunities, foster social growth and relationships and allow for the purchase of additional technologies and materials.

Connie Fiore, SSD early childhood teacher at Parkway's Instructional Learning Center (ISC) in Parkway Schools, received a mini-grant for the 2016-2017 school year to purchase an indoor tower garden. The tower garden is connected to academic lessons in science, math and literacy. It also supports physical development and social-emotional activities and learning experiences.

Indoor tower gardens simplify traditional gardening, using a unique vertical garden system that makes it easy to grow fruits, vegetables and herbs.

“My students, parents and staff enjoy the gardening unit from seed to harvest,” said Fiore. “It is my favorite beginning to a school year.”

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## Board of Education

- **Ms. Jan Goodman**, Board President  
jagoodman@ssdmo.org
- **Mr. John F. Koeper**, Board Vice President  
jkoeper@ssdmo.org
- **Dr. Dan Cuneo**, Director  
dcuneo@ssdmo.org
- **Dr. John Gaal**, Director  
jgaal@ssdmo.org
- **Ms. Peg Lestina**, Director  
plestina@ssdmo.org
- **Mr. Douglas Riggs**, Director  
driggs@ssdmo.org
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lwinston@ssdmo.org
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dbohannon@ssdmo.org

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**MISSION:** In collaboration with partner districts, we provide technical education and a wide variety of individualized educational and support services designed for each student's successful contribution to our community.

**VISION:** Partners for every student's success

**VALUES:** student success • collaboration • integrity • stewardship • continuous improvement • equity

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## NEWS FROM SSD



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### MINI-GRANTS, CONTINUED >>

Students have the opportunity to study the life cycle of plants, use measurements, make predictions and estimations, and practice social-emotional skills. They are also learning about healthy nutrition.

Fiore said that SSD's area coordinator for Hazelwood West High School, Matt Moellering, purchased a tower garden for his Essential Living Skills classes after he attended Fiore's garden launch.

"The garden is used in science classes and students make predictions and take daily measurements of the plants," said Moellering. "Students are also required to check water levels and balances. Once the plants are ready to harvest, then the students follow recipes as part of their Health and Nutrition class."

Dana Brown Teacher Mini-Grants support programs that help students learn. For the 2017-2018 school year, the SEF awarded nearly \$70,000 in mini-grants to support 99 programs.

Since 1992, the SEF has played an important role in the lives of students who receive services from SSD. The SEF collaborates with SSD and helps fund and support scholarships, summer camps, arts in the classroom, assistive equipment, a high school leadership program and a student recognition program. ■

To see a list of the 2017-2018 Dana Brown Teacher Mini-Grant recipients, visit:  
<http://sef-stl.org/programs/dana-brown-teacher-mini-grants>

