SSD Teacher of the Year Helps Students Achieve Full Potential

Growing up in a family with strong educational role models, it was natural for Emily Moxey to see the joys and rewards of teaching.

Her father was a school district superintendent in her hometown and her mother was a teacher. Moxey knew the importance of a good education.

And then when she was a teenager, Moxey spent time with a family whose 2-year-old son was deaf. She would entertain him while the older kids played, and also drove him to some of his speech-language and auditory training appointments. That is when her desire to help and guide those who are deaf or hard of hearing came to life.

Moxey, a teacher of the deaf and hard of hearing who works at Brown Elementary in the Hazelwood School District, earned the 2016 SSD Teacher of the Year honor for her dedication to students and her innovative efforts to help them achieve their full potential.

“I am extremely honored and amazed to be named SSD’s teacher of the year,” said Moxey. “Hands-down, my favorite part of teaching is celebrating student successes.”

Moxey currently works with fourth- and fifth-grade students at Brown. She supervises student teachers, mentors first-year teachers and paraprofessionals, and serves as a data team leader for SSD. She is a member of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Area Leadership Team and the Brown Elementary Building Leadership Team.

Moxey believes in tailoring teaching methods to each individual student.

“As teachers we need to meet the students where they are and figure out what works for them. I continuously reevaluate and reflect on my teaching practices and how they are affecting my students,” Moxey said in her interview for Teacher of the Year.

SSD Area Coordinator Kathy Williams said Moxey’s devotion to her profession goes above and beyond her job description.

“Emily is committed not only to her students, but to their families as well,” she said. “Emily is one of the best teachers I have ever seen – from instruction to case management — she is truly the best.”

Matthew Phillips, principal at Brown, echoed those same sentiments.

“Emily doesn’t just think about what goes on in her classroom. She is more global,” said Phillips. “She doesn’t just focus on the four walls of her classroom. She joined our building leadership team and has taken on many roles at our school.”

Both Phillips and Williams noted that Moxey realizes the importance of the collaborative partnership that SSD has with partner school districts.

“Emily extends her talents and dedication not just to the students in her classroom, but also to teachers throughout the deaf and hard-of-hearing program and to all of the teachers at Brown,” said Williams. “She thinks about the countywide program and does anything she can to support it.”

Moxey was selected as one of SSD’s 10 Key to the Classroom Award winners in February. 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.

Moxey 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.

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
- The Gatesworth
- Heartland Industries
- Parkway Central High School English Collaborative Teachers
- SSM DePaul Hospital
- St. Louis Arc
- St. Louis Metropolitan Cab Company (Ed Oliver & Don Bradford)

Individuals
- Dr. Gregory Batenhorst, Assistant Superintendent, Clayton School District
- Marie Boesch, Guidance Counselor, Hazelwood School District
- Dr. Jami DeBosch, Principal, Bellerive Elementary School, Parkway School District
- Dr. Joe Dobrinic, Principal, Pattonville High School, Pattonville School District
- Dr. Keith Marty, Superintendent, Parkway School District
- Jim Salzano, Banquet Manager, The Renaissance Hotel
- Vanessa Sievers, General Manager, McAlister’s Deli, Creve Coeur
- Amy Will, Recreational Therapist, Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Jefferson Barracks

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:

- Julie Dee, University City High School, University City School District
- Stephanie Dillon, Neuwoehner High School, SSD
- Mike Feit, Parkway Central High School, Parkway School District
- Greg Ganley, Neuwoehner High School, SSD
- Megan Hall, Wohlwend Elementary School, Mehlville School District
- Susan Johnson, Bellerive Elementary School, Parkway School District
- Emily Moxey, Brown Elementary School, Hazelwood School District
- Therese Shain, Bayless Elementary School, Bayless School District
- Jabetha Temming, Hudson Elementary School, Webster Groves School District
- Kathleen Woepke, Truman Middle School, Lindbergh 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:

- Elissa Buckvar, Parkway North High School, Parkway School District
- Toni Johnson, Griffith Elementary School, Ferguson-Florissant School District
- Kelly Karas, Eureka Elementary School, Rockwood School District
- Tracey McKinney, Neuwoehner High School, SSD
- Monica McKissic, Monsanto-Creve Coeur, Vocational Skills Program, SSD
- Mimi Siebert, Green Park, Vocational Skills Program, SSD
- Sarah Skocik, Marquette High School, Rockwood School District
- Mary Syring, Bellerive Elementary School, Parkway School District
- Steve Young, Parkway North High School, Parkway School District

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.

- Laura Brozka, Occupational Therapist, Eureka Elementary School, Blevins Elementary School and Eureka High School, Rockwood School District
- Sandra Frazier, Substitute Paraprofessional, Neuwoehner High School, SSD
- Janet Harvey, School Psychologist, Kellison Elementary School, Rockwood School District
- Chandra Heinlein, Occupational Therapist, Concord Elementary School, Lindbergh School District
- Brooke Huffman, Speech-Language Pathologist, Concord Elementary School, Lindbergh School District
- Valerie Kamhi, SSD Area Coordinator, Parkway West High School, Parkway School District
- John Kirn, Bus Monitor, Central Garage, SSD
- Melinda Lunsford, Nurse, Bridges and Vocational Skills Program, SSD
- Kris Weingaertner-Hartke, Director of Planning and Development, SSD
Why CCI?

How Continuous Classroom Improvement Is Increasing Student Success

At Oakville High School, SSD teacher Danielle Fox’s classroom walls are filled with charts, graphs, schedules and other tools — each tailored to a specific student or classroom task. Among the display of data are the classroom mission statement and goal, as well as a sign that says “did I meet my goal today?” Each day, students can move their names on the sign to show the progress they made that day.

From the Board of Education down to each classroom, everyone at SSD is guided by the principle of continuous improvement. This foundation takes root at the classroom level with teachers and students taking part in a process called Continuous Classroom Improvement (CCI).

What makes CCI unique is its combination of student involvement and data-based decision making. Students and teachers work together throughout the entire process to plan and monitor success in the classroom.

“At the beginning of the year we established a mission statement and our class goals,” Fox said.

The mission statement is student-written and covers expectations of what is needed to be successful and how to make it happen. The other data posted on the walls is student specific, and charts the progress of different classroom activities. Having the data visible in the classroom helps students monitor their own improvements.

Student involvement is a key component of CCI. “We talk about our jobs — how we do things right and do things wrong and how to fix them,” said Morgan, a student at Oakville.

Another primary building block of CCI is the Plan-Do-Study-Act process, or PDSA. This four-step process allows the student to map out his or her requirements and results, and analyze what is working well and what needs improvement. Using past evidence and data ensures objectivity in the learning process.

“When a problem does arise again, we can go right to the wall and go over it,” Fox said. “Students can look at how they did, and compare to the last time.” The PDSA approach and posting data helps reduce redundancies, as students and staff can easily reference past actions just by going to the data posted on the wall.

The charts, graphs and other data sources for each student allow the staff to key in on each student’s specific needs. Fox affirms that having so much data easily accessible has helped teachers and paraprofessionals in her classroom work toward improving each student’s scores and progress in the class.

With CCI featured in classrooms throughout the county, SSD’s commitment to the core value of continuous improvement is apparent.

Watch this video to hear and see students and staff explain how they use CCI to help them in their classroom: https://vimeo.com/ssdstlco/ci
Event Offers Families One-Stop Access to Disability Resources

SSD’s Parent Education and Diversity Awareness Program will sponsor the North County Disability Resource Fair on April 20.

The event is scheduled for 4–7 p.m. at the Riverview Gardens Family and Community Resource Center, 1160 St. Cyr Road, St. Louis, MO 63137. It will feature information about programs and resources from SSD and other community agencies.

Attendees will have the chance to learn more about topics such as respite care, recreation opportunities, health care and other community resources.

Participants will include SSD’s Parent Education and Diversity Awareness Program, the Recreation Council of Greater St. Louis, St. Louis Regional Office and a wide array of nonprofit providers.

The event is free and open to the public. Registration is not required to attend. For more information, call 314.989.8194 (711 Deaf/HH).