

SEDI Announces 2018 Teacher Awards \$18,000 in Awards for Excellence



Recipients of the SEDI Teacher Awards for Sustainable Curriculum: (l to r front row): Linda Lenz, Molly Goulden, Katie Krause, Marla Guggenheimer, Lauren Bradshaw, Lesley Lang, Erin Hermanson, Janeece Henes, Russell Randall; (l to r back row): Laurie Altringer, Jon Griffith, Tim Begley, James Haynie, Pradip Misra, Rich Krueger, Jessica Kissinger.

In schools across northern Arizona, teachers are becoming more creative in their determination to help children learn. They are incorporating the principles of education for sustainability to prepare the leaders of tomorrow to deal with the world they will soon take over. SEDI, the Sustainable Economic Development Initiative, recognizes those teachers who help their students excel. This year, a select group of outstanding teachers received a total of \$18,000 in cash awards from donors who support education, the largest single cash award for excellence in education in Arizona. Those donors include The NARBHA Institute, The W. A. Franke School of Business, Wayne and Lynn Fox, John Neville and Jawn McKinley, and Linda Buchanan.

“This year brought applicants for the SEDI award from Bagdad to Show Low and our team of expert judges were hard put to select the best from so many outstanding teacher-led programs” said Eric Marcus, SEDI executive director. “The way the children were able to combine Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math into valuable real-world experiences is both impressive and heartening.”

The Teacher Awards for Sustainable Curriculum began as the brain-child of Lynn and

Wayne Fox. Lynn retired from teaching middle school in Flagstaff and Wayne retired as Assistant Dean at The W. A. Franke School of Business at Northern Arizona University. As Lynn recalled, “The idea for the awards came while we were out walking and trying to think of ways to recognize teachers for their special efforts in the classroom. I know how difficult it is to provide today’s students with a great education when schools are so terribly underfunded. When we decided to step up and finance the fledgling program, we never dreamed it would become so successful so quickly.”

The awards are open to teachers in Apache, Coconino, Mohave, Navajo and Yavapai Counties and include kindergarten through twelfth grade. The purpose of the awards is to recognize development and implementation of innovative educational approaches that instill in students the importance, value and practicality of local environmental, social and economic aspects of sustainability. As such, they mirror the economic development mission of SEDI in Arizona.

The programs judged to be the best for 2018 are:

- Laurie Altringer, Big Park Community School, *Interdisciplinary Sustainability Unit*
- Tim Begley and Katie Krause, W. F. Killip Elementary School, *Energy Saving Buddies*
- Lauren Bradshaw, Puente de Hozho Elementary School, *Water in Our World*
- Jessica Kissinger, Coyote Springs Elementary School, *Growing Sustainability*

The projects were judged for their innovative approaches, the actions taken, real-world applications, and sustainable outcomes. The projects had to demonstrate practical application that empowers action at the local level while aligning with the Arizona Department of Education Standards. Each winning teacher receives a check for \$2,500 as a thank you for their leadership. While these award winners were outstanding, there were many others that also deserved recognition.

This year, thanks to two additional generous donations, SEDI is able to offer eight runner-up awards of \$1,000 each. These exceptional educators include:

- Jon Griffith & Molly Goulden, Mt. Elden Middle School – Alpine Leadership, *Sustainable Economics and Biomimicry*
- Erin Hermanson, Heritage Middle School, *Designing a Life that Balances Energy Inputs/Outputs*
- Lesley Lang, Dr. Daniel Bright Elementary School, *Makerspace: Creative Recycling*
- Pradip Misra , Bagdad High/Middle School, *Growing Food to Learn Science*

For the first year in our program’s history, the judges decided to give four \$500 honorable mention awards. The 2018 honorable mention award winners are:

- Julie Coffinger, Whipple Ranch Elementary School, *Little Hands Making a Big Difference*
- Janeece Henes, Flagstaff Arts & Leadership Academy, *Experiential Learning Trip to Border/Mexico*
- Kimberly Demoney, Oak Creek School, *Soil and Compost*
- Linda Lenz, Flagstaff High School, *Developing a Model for Service-Learning Expeditions*

The Sedona-based Giving is Living Fund has collaborated with SEDI to offer two \$1,000 awards. The 2018 Giving is Living Fund award winners are:

- Marla Guggenheimer and James Haynie, W. F. Killip Elementary School, *Growing Fit Kids*
- Russell Randall, Coconino High School, *Community Free Store and Book Exchanges*

The teachers will be properly recognized and feted at an event on May 17th at the 1899

Bar & Grill in Flagstaff, thanks to a generous donation by W.A. Franke School of Business. “We wish we could do more for all the hard-working, under-appreciated teachers in Arizona,” said John Neville, former head of the SEDI Education Team. “Our children are our future, and their teachers help them into the world we’re creating for them. Today, children need all the help they can get, and these creative teachers are going well above and beyond to provide learning experiences that prepare them to deal with the challenges they will face.”

To learn more about SEDI, the teachers’ awards and the other economic programs, visit www.SEDInaz.org or contact Eric Marcus at 928.856.7000 for more information.

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