

The Superintendent's Info EXCHANGE

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Chad Miller is Hawaii's 2012 State Teacher of the Year

CHAD MILLER – Windward Oahu District, Kailua High School.

On the first day of school, Chad sets clear expectations and creates an environment in which students become active agents in their education.

Drawing from Matthew Lipman's *Philosophy for Children*, Chad serves as a facilitator while his students take ownership of their learning. Student inquiry becomes the main driver for English instruction, and every assignment requires students to demonstrate their thinking and reasoning.

For seven years, Chad has conducted workshops to share his effective teaching practices with colleagues. He facilitates reflective meetings where teachers discuss successes, failures, struggles, and frustrations. Teachers emerge from meetings with new lessons, strategies, and reenergized to focus on engaging, relevant, and rigorous instruction.



Chad Miller



Mitzi Hasegawa

MITZI HASEGAWA – Maui District, Hana High and Elementary.

When she was a student, Mitzi loved learning and solving challenging problems. So, it was a natural transition for her to become a teacher, a career she says allows her "to be a student forever."

As a math teacher, her goal is to create relevant lessons and convince

students that math is useful, makes sense, and can even be fun.

Mitzi advocated for a K-12 Math Professional Learning Community where teachers now meet at least twice monthly to strengthen the curriculum. She also resurrected Hana School's Math Matters team, creating a venue for upper elementary students to practice math problems after school.

Mitzi's teaching passion is fueled by her desire to spread a love for lifelong learning to her students.

LUANE HIGUCHI – Leeward Oahu District, Waianae Intermediate.

Luane never imagined she could have accomplished so much in school – she was student body president, joined volleyball, softball and track, and even competed in a speech tournament. Teachers who believed in her also inspired Luane



Luane Higuchi

to become an educator determined to make a difference in children's lives.

Luane draws from her own struggles growing up to teach and support her students. She encourages them to be responsible for their learning, and believes extra-curricular activities are essential for student development.

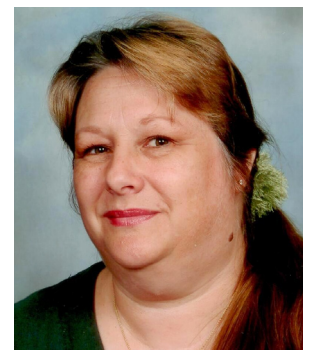
Most recently, Luane coordinated the American Savings Bank's Bank for Education contest, bringing \$100,000 to Waianae Intermediate. As a media teacher, Luane has held numerous academic summer workshops, and her students have created award-winning public service announcements.

Luane's message to teachers: "We have the power to make a change in each child. Teach them. Inspire them. Love them."

NANCY IAUKEA – Hawaii District, Pahoa High and Intermediate.

A former business owner and Marine Corps officer, Nancy found her calling in the classroom after serving as a substitute teacher.

She is now a highly-qualified science educator who holds a Masters Degree in Special Education and is seeking National Board Certification – a testament to Nancy's belief that she must constantly advance herself professionally to help students maximize their learning.



Nancy Iaukea

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Her commitment is showing results: for the past five years, Nancy's special education students have consistently won awards and honors at district and state science fairs.

Nancy focuses her teaching on real-world service learning projects such as recycling and composting to instill in students a sense of responsibility and ownership of the environment.



Meghan McCormick

MEGHAN McCORMICK – Central Oahu District, Wheeler Middle.

In her first year at Wheeler Middle School, Meghan realized her job was much larger than just that of a teacher. She was a mom, friend, disciplinarian, and a role model to her students.

Meghan is constantly brainstorming to find ways to enrich her students' learning experiences – whether she is creating new programs and partnerships, volunteering with her students in an animal shelter, or serving as a guest storyteller afterschool or on weekends.

Meghan was instrumental in establishing the school's Leaders with an Emphasis on Achievement and Determination, a program that fosters relationships among teachers, students, their families, and the community.

Meghan leads her students by example and devotes her time to the community to show them the importance of giving back.

SHERIANN MOISES – Kauai District, Chiefess Kamakahahei Middle.

When students reach SheriAnn's classroom, they are often more than two years behind their peers in reading comprehension. But SheriAnn brings reading alive, and develops strong relationships that lead to academic growth.

Organized and efficient, SheriAnn's strong classroom management skills establish a caring and productive environment where students can flourish. She spends one-on-one time with students, and tailors her teaching to meet the diverse and specific needs of each child.

She attributes her students' successes to the valuable skills she learned in professional development and by collaborating with her peers. Selected to lead the school's English Language Arts Department, SheriAnn examines school data to improve student achievement.

In the words of her principal: SheriAnn engages the hearts and minds of her students.



SheriAnn Moises

KAEOKULANI VASCONCELLOS – Honolulu District, Roosevelt High.

Kaeo's motivation to become a teacher came from his father, grandfather, and a model fifth-grade teacher – all of whom inspired and encouraged him to pursue a career where he could "influence lives, impact the future of young people and truly touch the future."

Through project-based lessons supporting nonprofit groups, Kaeo's students begin to view volunteerism as their responsibility to the community. Currently seeking a doctorate in Educational Foundations, Kaeo has also helped launch programs to reach minority students and assist graduates in applying for college.

Kaeo's contributions extend well beyond his classroom: he has volunteered as a running back coach, participated in campus cleanups and beautification projects, and judged speech and debate tournaments.

As the parent of a student stated: "It would be a perfect world if all the teachers were like him."



Kaeokulani Vasconcellos

The State Teacher of the Year is selected from among Hawaii's seven District Teachers of the Year. During the TOY ceremony, the Polynesian Cultural Center, the State TOY program's corporate sponsor for more than 25 years, awarded \$500 to each District TOY, and an additional \$1,000 to the State TOY; gifts of instructional software for each District TOY and other classroom technology to the State TOY were presented by the SMARTer Kids Foundation; and the Hawaii Automobile Dealers' Association, TOY co-sponsor for 12 years, awarded the State TOY with a free one-year lease of a new car. A special MAHALO to our sponsors!