



MEDIA RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SMCS FACULTY AND STAFF AWARD WINNERS ANNOUNCED

NEENAH/MENASHA: The following individuals received special recognition at the annual year-end prayer service for St. Mary Catholic Schools faculty and staff that was held at the Jane Bergstrom Fine Arts Education Center on June 2, 2017. The recipients of these three annually-bestowed awards were each nominated by several parents, students and/or peers. Then, an administrative committee reviewed and prayerfully considered the nominating essays and chose the finalists. A list of the comments from their supporters was given every person who was nominated for an award.

The St. Frances Xavier **Positive Influence Award** was presented to **Karie Ann Zeinert**. In her position as a fifth grade teacher at St. Margaret Mary Elementary School, Zeinert consistently goes above and beyond expectations to recognize students' passions and to help her students achieve to their highest potential. She is a consistent, positive role model of faith in action and a strong work ethic. With endless energy and enthusiasm, she plans and implements innovative lesson plans for her classroom and spearheads outstanding STEM-based activities for the entire school.

The St. John Baptist de la Salle **Outstanding Teacher Award** was presented to St. Mary Catholic High School German teacher **Kristy Albrecht**. Albrecht is known among students, parents and her peers as a dedicated educator who seeks out innovative ways to present lessons and to encourage students to excel in understanding, writing and speaking the German language. She has organized the school hosting a statewide high school German language competition for several consecutive years, and obtained the training and licensure needed to bring CAPP German to St. Mary Catholic High School. Albrecht was also one of a handful of American teachers selected to participate in a two-week seminar in Germany this summer.

The **TCCES Spirit Award** was given to SMCS employee and teacher **Michelle Dejno**. As the director of community relations and fund development, the high school

marketing teacher and as a parent of an alumna and current student, Dejno wears many hats at St. Mary Catholic Schools. Common to all of her roles is her positive influence, hard work and commitment to doing many things, and doing them very well. As one person noted on her nomination form, "(You can count on Michelle to) be there with her whole heart to make our schools a better place."

The **St. Isidore of Seville Award for Promising Innovation** was given to a St. Margaret Mary Elementary School third grade teacher, **Stacy Sweetalla**. She received this award, which recognizes excellence in an educator in the first five years of teaching, as a result of her passion for finding new ways to engage students in the classroom. She also takes on projects that benefit the entire school, such as the Fuel Up to Play 60 grant, which she applied for and implemented for the school's K-5 students. Sweetalla will now take on the challenge of developing the SMCS Aquinas Program, a project-based honors program for elementary school that is targeted to begin with the 2018-19 school year.

St. Mary Catholic Schools (SMCS) includes St. Mary Catholic High School and St. Mary Catholic Middle School in the Village of Fox Crossing and St. Mary Elementary Schools (St. Margaret Mary and St. Gabriel in Neenah, and St. Mary in Menasha). SMCS is dedicated to the individual development of each student in grades Pre3-12, by providing the highest quality education focused on faith, academics and service in a rapidly changing world.

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