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Excellence in education awards for 2017 were presented to (left to right), David Fenton, Lewis Smith, Colleen King, Bob Henson, Nancy Flickinger , Cear Baggett, and Kellie Clark.

## **Cincinnati honors top CPS educators at annual dinner**

**Cincinnati, Ohio** – When his colleagues talk about Cear Baggett, they talk about a principal who is the first to arrive at Ethel M. Taylor Academy and the last to leave.

They talk about someone with little interest in “being right” but great interest in “what’s right.” They talk about pizza parties for perfect attendance homerooms, about quarterly student awards for academic accomplishment and citizenship, and about “data talks” with students to involve

them in their own goal-setting. They talk about him crying alongside a grieving student or about how he applied for a grant for P.E. equipment on his own time.

Most of all, they talk about a principal who puts students first, who inspires his team and who is always the first to believe and the last to give up.

For those reasons and more, Mr. Baggett is receiving the James N. Jacobs Award for Outstanding Administration in the Cincinnati Public Schools, awarded by the Cincinnati Association. As his nominator put it, Mr. Baggett is a leader who sets an example: “When you walk through the door of Ethel Taylor, you will see Cear interacting with students in the halls, at lunch, and especially in the classroom. He makes himself available at all times. He has created such a power community of learners among students and more specifically among the teachers. He is setting a powerful example for principals everywhere.”

The Jacobs Award is one of three Excellence in Educator Awards that Cincinnati presents each year to CPS educators. The 2017 awards were presented Tuesday, Feb. 14, 2017, during a dinner at the Kingsgate Marriott Conference Center at the University of Cincinnati.

“These awards spotlight both the exceptional achievements of the educators being honored and the longstanding commitment of the Cincinnati Association to educational excellence in our community,” Cincinnati President Elliot Grossman said. “In recent months, our association has shifted its primary mission to attacking poverty. Nothing holds more promise to reduce poverty – to help more people achieve the American Dream – than educators who make a difference in children’s lives.”

Our awards were presented as part of dinner and program that also included additional awards or P-12 educational excellence presented by universities in the region.

“I’m very proud of our Cincinnati Award winners,” CPS Superintendent Mary Ronan said. “They richly deserve this recognition for their dedication to our schoolchildren. We appreciate the Cincinnati Association and the universities for their sponsorship of these meaningful awards that honor our wonderful employees and volunteers.”

Here is more about the 2017 awardees:

### **James N. Jacobs Award for Outstanding Administration**

**Cear Baggett** is the principal at Ethel M. Taylor Academy, a CPS elementary school serving pre-K through 8th grade students in the Millvale, South Cumminsville, Camp Washington, and North Fairmount neighborhoods.

Here are additional words from his nominator: “Cear Bagget instills in children a love for learning and desire to achieve. He is innovative, compassionate, respected, and visionary. Cear is constantly asking, ‘What can we do together to improve our school, our classrooms, and our students’ learning?’ When it comes to individual students, he doesn’t ask, ‘How can I stop this student from causing so many problem?’ but rather, ‘What can I do to help this student overcome

his or her difficulties?’ The focus is always on the students and how we as a district and as dedicated professionals can work together to make a difference in their lives.”

This award memorializes the outstanding lifetime contributions of James N. Jacobs, superintendent of Cincinnati Public Schools from 1976 to 1985. Recent previous award winners include Susan Bunte; Tianay Amat; Jacquelyn Rowedder; and Cheryl Broadnax.

### **John E. Pepper Award for Outstanding Volunteer in Public Education**

**Lewis Smith** is a volunteer at Bond Hill Academy, a neighborhood school serving pre-K through 6<sup>th</sup> grade students. Mr. Smith has organized fund-raising events and food drives, chaperoned field trips, directed traffic at morning drop-off, tutored, and headed the Parent-Teacher-Student-Organization.

Here are words from his nominator: “Lewis Smith is the most dedicated father and volunteer that I have ever had the pleasure of working with. While I was working at Bond Hill Academy, Mr. Smith – a military retiree – would arrive before the school opened five days a week to set up traffic cones in the parking lot.... Of all the roles that Mr. Smith had at Bond Hill Academy, a friend and role model were most important. Mr. Smith was an outstanding example for everyone at Bond Hill.”

This award memorializes the outstanding volunteer service and leadership to education of John E. Pepper, former Chairman of Procter & Gamble. Recent previous award winners include Sandra Smith; Linda Bingham; V. Anthony Simms-Howell; and Leroy Carter.

### **Cincinnati Woodward Trust Distinguished Teacher Award**

**David Fenton** is a special education teacher at Woodward Career Technical High School (7005 Reading Rd, Cincinnati, OH 45237). Mr. Fenton oversees Woodward’s ICAN (Independent Career Advancement Now) program to help students with disabilities achieve more independence as they transition from school to adult living.

Here are words from his nominator: “Mr. Fenton has demonstrated a positive impact on student achievement levels. He has set a goal for himself to provide each student with the skills necessary to love and work as independently as possible. The evidence of his students’ achievement is not simply defined by a test they have taken or credits they have earned, but by their ability to function as positive, contributing member of our society.... Mr. Fenton serves as a role model who encourages others educators to achieve excellence.”

This award memorializes the outstanding contributions of William Woodward and the Cincinnati Association in the development of free education in Cincinnati, Covington and Newport. Recent previous award winners include Dorothy Lickert; Alan Brian Cruser; Brenda Childs; and Tracey Greeley Howard.

### **Additional awards**

The Cincinnati Association was pleased once again to collaborate with the University of Cincinnati, Northern Kentucky University, Xavier University and Mount St. Joseph University to present their Outstanding Educator Awards, honoring innovative teachers who actively participate in the school community beyond the expectation of their teaching duties. Each of the universities' colleges of education were involved in the selection of these prestigious awards.

These awards stem from an original collaboration in 2004 of the presidents of UC, NKU, and Xavier, who launched the C3 (Conversations, Connections and Collaboration) dialogues. The goal was to discuss areas of common concern facing our communities and to take action regarding those concerns. The educator awards program was one result of the conversations. The winners demonstrate extraordinary teaching skill in the classroom, and are active participants in their home communities.

Here are the 2017 honorees:

- **Outstanding Cincinnati Area Public School Educator:** Nancy Flickinger, Taylor High School, 56 Cooper Avenue, Cleves, OH 45002, Three Rivers School District.
- **Outstanding Northern Kentucky Public School Educator:** Kellie Clark from Randall K. Cooper High School, 2855 Longbranch Road, Union, KY 41091, Boone County School District.
- **Outstanding Parochial School Educator:** Bob Henson from Villa Madonna Academy, in Villa Hills, Ky., 2500 Amsterdam Road, Villa Hills, KY 41017, Diocese of Covington
- **Outstanding Student Teacher Mentor:** Colleen King from Riverview East Academy, 3555 Kellogg Avenue, Cincinnati, OH 45226, Cincinnati Public Schools.