



May 2015 Update for District Contacts for Paraeducator Issues

The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE), established the District Contacts for Paraeducator Issues to disseminate information of importance to paraeducators and their supervisors. The focus of this newsletter is to provide resources for more effective teacher and paraeducator collaboration.

Reminder: Anne Marie Murphy Paraeducator of the Year Nomination Forms Due June 5!

Last year, the CSDE and the School Paraprofessional Advisory Council renamed the Connecticut Paraprofessional of the Year Award to the Anne Marie Murphy Paraeducator of the Year Award in honor of Anne Marie Murphy, a special education paraeducator who was killed in Newtown. The 2015 Anne Marie Murphy Paraeducator of the Year is, Geri Lavallee, Behavior Coach from Squadron Line Elementary School in Simsbury.

Additional information regarding the 2015 Award, can be found on the CSDE Paraeducator Information and Resources page: www.ct.gov/sde/para-cali. The nomination form, letters of recommendation and application form must be postmarked by Friday, June 5, 2015, and sent to:

Iris White
Education Consultant
Anne Marie Murphy
Paraeducator of the Year Award
Connecticut State Dept. of Education
165 Capitol Ave., Room 340
Hartford, CT 06106

The Anne Marie Murphy Paraeducator of the Year will be announced during a ceremony on Thursday, October 1, 2015, 5:30-8:00 p.m. at the Four Points Sheraton, Meriden.

The Paraeducator of the Year will become a member of the School Paraprofessional Advisory Council and will represent Connecticut at the National Resource Center for Paraeducators Conference.

National Resource Center for Paraeducators Conference is a major success!

Over 200 Paraeducators, teachers, administrators, service providers, and higher-education faculty from around the world attended the National Resource Center for Paraeducators (NRCP) Conference held at the Hartford Hilton April 16-18. Much appreciation and credit goes to the members of Local Arrangements Committee and to the NRCP! The NRCP is staffed by two committed professionals, Marilyn Likins and Emily Phillips. Both ladies did a tremendous job preparing for the conference and organizing the meeting logistics. Presenters from all over the world presented on diverse topics such as Autism, Creating Independent Learners, Assistive Technology, and Early Childhood. The night before the conference on Wednesday, April 15, the State Leadership Network Meeting took place. Participants received updates on ESEA Reauthorization and shared best practices at the school, district, union, and state levels.

On Thursday morning, the conference kicked off with welcomes from Commissioner Designate, Dr. Dianna R. Wentzell, who spoke about the important role that Paraeducators play in collaborating with teachers to support students followed by the Lt. Governor, who provided the dedication of the *Anne Marie Murphy Scholarship*. This scholarship will provide funding for the Connecticut Anne Marie Murphy Paraeducator of the Year to attend the annual NRCP Conference. The NRCP and the CSDE will share the costs for attendance.

This was followed by a spirited panel of Paraeducators of the Year, facilitated by Anthony Brisson, consultant, State Education Resource Center (SERC). Anthony played the role of Ellen DeGeneres, and got the conference attendees on their feet to the sounds of the song, "Happy."

Friday morning featured a welcome from Melodie Peters, AFT Connecticut president, who shared the progress for Paraeducators in Connecticut. The keynote address was delivered by Dr. George Sugai, who presented

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National Resource Center for Paraeducators Conference a success continued



Lt. Nancy Wyman announces the dedication of the Anne Marie Murphy Scholarship

on Positive Behavior Intervention Supports (PBIS). Dr. Sugai highlighted the important role of Paraeducators in the social development of children and youth. You can view the Power-Point and handout on the Best Preventive Behavior Management Practices, on the PBIS site: <http://www.pbis.org/presentations>.

Saturday morning featured an interactive morning café where attendees learned about the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development's (ASCD), *The Whole Child Initiative* and reflected on their role in supporting the whole child. Launched in 2007, ASCD's *Whole Child Initiative* is an effort to change the conversation in education from a focus on narrowly defined academic achievement to one that promotes the long-term development and success of children. To read more about the ASCD's *Whole Child Initiative*, please visit: www.ascd.org/whole-child.aspx.

All presentations from the conference will be posted soon on the NRCP Web site at www.nrcpara.org.

Thank you to all who attended, presented, and/or supported their Paraeducators attendance at the conference. The NRCP will announce the location of next year's conference, this Summer.



"The Ellen Show," featured a panel of Paraeducators of the Year and was facilitated by Anthony Brisson, SERC consultant, as Ellen.



One of the 50 plus, breakout sessions that were offered over the 2 1/2 days. Thank you to SERC for taking the photos. To view more photos please go to: <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/rwwdtmnd1ueowq/AAB10EqISEZ-Dx5KbmLVFyBva?dl=0>.