**Outstanding Educator Award Honorees, 2019**

Congratulations to our 2018-19 Outstanding Educator Award honorees! The awards committee was impressed to see how much our school community appreciates the hard work our educators do every day, and enjoyed learning a bit more about our Cascadia team. We hope you’ll be inspired by the kind words and by the generous hearts represented by this stellar group. Below are excerpts from the nominations received by the committee.

**WINNERS**

**Jessica Gibbons, Second Grade Teacher**

*Ms. Gibbons is an incredibly organized, warm, and enthusiastic teacher who goes above and beyond to foster the academic and social growth of her students. She is a new teacher, but she’s a pro, teaching like she has 25 years of experience. She quickly established routines and expectations but also really dialed in to each kid (and family) to make all feel welcome, safe, and eager to learn. She seems genuinely excited about every project…. Her passion is contagious, and she creates an amazing learning environment that should be recognized.*

**Katie Shae, Front Office**

*Katie Shae is the kind of staff member who can make a school feel more like home to our kids. She is on the front lines working with every student in the school, and she does it with immense respect and compassion. Katie is always 100% on in the school: she is the friendly voice that greets the kids, the one who guides them in lunch and on the playground, and one of the key people when it comes to making our school and events run…. Katie is willing to go the extra mile to make sure that the right things happen in a positive way. She’s always stepping in to lend a hand wherever needed…. She is cheerful, patient, calm under pressure, and organized.*

**FINALISTS**

**Merrick Bodmer, Librarian**

*Ms. Bodmer doesn’t just check out books. She encourages big thinking and new ideas through the love of reading…. She has created a safe and inviting space for all kids to read, learn, and explore new ideas. Merrick has been the amazing human being behind all-school education efforts including gender diversity and Day of Code activities. She trains the students in traditional and new information technology techniques and truly fosters a lifelong love of learning. Merrick knows each and every one of our kids, and she works hard to make the library accessible to students as much and as often as possible.*

**Kimberly Erickson, Third Grade Teacher**

*She helps everyone who asks, inspires people, is sincere, and keeps everyone’s spirits up.*

**Charrie Gibson, Fourth Grade Teacher**

*Charrie is so unique—she is creative, thoughtful and has an analytic scientific mind. Her teaching and classroom control are unparalleled but what makes her so special is her ability to meet each kid where they are, see them as individuals with something special to contribute and then empower them to unleash their best selves. She sets incredibly high standards and gives kids the tools and confidence to surpass their own expectations of themselves. She has an incredibly warm and loving demeanor. She is truly amazing and such an asset to the Cascadia community.*

**Eileen Gray, Reading & Writing Specialist**

*Year after year Ms. Gray is the thread of continuity for students and families. She has helped countless students develop confidence in their abilities to read, write, and communicate their learning. She is super encouraging to both kids and parents. She has been generous in taking time to give us advice about how to help our child at home. My child’s best writing has happened when he is working with her. She looks deeply to see the potential in kids.*

**Dr. Bill Keating, House Administrator**

*Dr. Keating’s general awareness of how his students may be feeling, and his ability to empathize and make people feel better about walking through the school’s doors every day is phenomenal. You can have great teachers who teach a subject in a class. Having a great educator influence how your students approach life outside of class is rare and shouldn’t be overlooked. His small, and often unnoticed acts of kindness and empathy have made and continue to make a huge difference.*

**Katilin Lawler, Second Grade Teacher**

*Her specialty is connecting with the emotional soul of each child. She is excellent at making them aware of how they treat others and how it impacts everyone’s feelings. She is an excellent teacher, and she makes school fun. She sees each kid where they are at and gets them the help they need to move forward. She makes each of her kids feel special.*

**Rachel Lopez, First Grade Teacher**

*She came into a brand new school and made all of her students feel so welcomed and loved. She transitioned the kids to Cascadia so seamlessly. She brings love, kindness, and patience to the class, which is so important for this young group of kids who are new to the school, each other, and a more challenging curriculum. I can’t think of a more perfect first grade teacher for any kid.*

**Laura Remme, Front Office**

*Laura helps keep the wheels on this bus called Cascadia. She is always kind, courteous, and professional—no easy feat, especially when it comes to new or prospective parents.*

**Kendra Rohrabaugh, Third Grade Teacher**

*Kendra is intelligent, wise, kind, thoughtful, compassionate, and level-headed. She pays attention to what matters, letting go of the “little things” and staying focused on the big picture, all while making sure her classroom is well-organized and running like a well-oiled machine. Her lessons are well-planned out and effective; she adds to the curriculum and flexes to make the curriculum work. She’s accessible and available, prompt in follow-up and a clear communicator. Additionally, she is with the students leading by example, even as she is clearly the person in charge: when she puts on a Go Noodle, she does the exercise with the students, for example. She is a great model of the growth mindset!*