

Council #10



CUDAHY • FRANKLIN • GREENDALE • GREENFIELD • OAK CREEK • ST. FRANCIS • SOUTH MILWAUKEE

Congratulations to Award Winning Teachers!

It is the season to honor teachers for outstanding ideas, achievements and leadership. Several teachers in the south suburban area recently received various awards and fellowships.

Tom Stock of Oak Creek High School was selected as the 2010 WEAC School Bell winner for his entry Knight Vision Production. He will be honored at this year's WEAC Awards and Recognition Banquet during the Representative Assembly in Green Bay.

Michelle Christianson of South Milwaukee Middle School and **Catherine Hulett** of Greendale High School are recipients of the 2010 Herb Kohl Fellowship award. Fellowship recipients are chosen for their superior ability to inspire a love of learning in their students, their ability to motivate others, and for their leadership and service within and outside the classroom. Each fellow's school receives a \$1,000 grant.

Rachel Swick of Lakeview Elementary in South Milwaukee is a recipient of the first annual Wisconsin Promise Schools of Recognition Fellowship. This fellowship is awarded to teachers who demonstrate passion for their work and motivation from within. Rachel will receive \$5,000 to explore conservation and wildlife in three diverse ecosystems in Australia. She will be blogging with her colleagues and students from Australia this July.

The next step in Moving Education Forward

School funding continues to be our union's number one priority, and you can help in Moving Education Forward by joining actions in your community to raise awareness of school funding reform.

It's a way for us to show our community and our elected officials how school funding problems have impacted our schools. We need to show our district's parents and family members that class sizes are growing and course offerings are being cut back. We need to explain to our state legislators that the state school funding formula is putting too much of a burden on local taxpayers to fund education.

In short, our students need your help. Reach out to your local union president to see what's being done in your district. The first action as part of the Moving Education Forward effort is for your local union to do an assessment of how school funding has affected your school and to have your colleagues and community members sign a resolution supporting reform. The next action is to engage the community in why school funding reform is needed. And the third action is to tell lawmakers what they can do to help our state's students.

There's much we can do to Move Education Forward, and it's time to take the next step. Your local president and UniServ Director have information about actions being organized to educate our community and our lawmakers that we need a better way to fund our schools. Some of it is as simple as writing a postcard or wearing a button. Reach out to your local president or UniServ Director to see how you can help out. You can also visit www.weac.org/schoolfunding to learn more about how we're Moving Education Forward.

THIS PUBLICATION IS AN 11.29 COMMUNICATION WITH WEAC MEMBERS

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Council #10 Website
www.weac.org/council10

MAKE CONNECTIONS

WEAC Representative
Assembly (RA), April 23-
25, Green Bay

Southeast Legislative
Breakfast, Saturday, May
1, Location and Time
TBD

WEAC Summer
Academy, July 25-28,
Steven's Point, WI

Great
Schools



weac.org

Please Help Us Advocate for Great Public Schools at the Federal Level

With so much going on in our own communities and at the State Capitol, it is sometimes easy to forget that what goes on in Washington, D.C. also has a big impact on our schools. The truth is that the federal government can and does get very involved in how we run and fund public education in this country.

One prime example is the “No Child Left Behind” law, which desperately needs some common sense revisions and full funding. On a more positive note, there was last year’s federal stimulus package, which helped save or create 325,000 education jobs in the country and provided \$25 billion in school construction bonds. We now need an Emergency Education Jobs Proposal to save and create jobs during 2010 and 2011.

It is very important that we work to elect federal office holders who believe that every school should be a great public school and are willing to support legislation to make it happen. The way we support candidates like this is through the NEA Fund for Children and Public Education, our Political Action Committee or PAC.

In the next month or two, you will be asked by one of your colleagues to support the NEA Fund for Children and Public Education. Please consider a contribution of \$36 – \$3 a month in the course of a year – or however much you feel you can afford. It will be a very important investment in the future of public education in Wisconsin and throughout the country.

Should we be Happy about Health Care Reform?

According to national polling, when Americans are asked whether they support the health care reform legislation recently passed by Congress, a slight majority answer “no.” But when the same respondents have the main elements of the actual legislation described to them, by wide margins a majority supports the reforms. Our take on this disparity is that we still have a lot of work to do to clarify for people what health care reform actually does and what it will actually accomplish for people.

Here are some important facts about the reform that all of our members should know:

1. The National Education Association (NEA), our parent organization representing over three million educators in all 50 states, strongly supports the new health care law. They do so because the law guarantees coverage for all children, makes affordable coverage available for many of our members who don’t have quality insurance and takes many effective measures to finally rein in the health care hyperinflation that has been eroding our pay and benefits for years.
2. The law immediately establishes an affordable plan for the uninsured. Adults and children who have been uninsured for six months or more due to a pre-existing condition can obtain coverage right away through a special insurance program that will include premium and cost sharing help for lower income families.
3. The law will significantly contain and likely reduce health insurance premium costs. According to the independent and non-partisan Congressional Budget Office, people who get coverage through their employer today will likely see lower premiums. Reform will lower premiums by reducing administrative costs, increasing competition between insurance companies and creating a larger pool of insured Americans (reducing cost shifting).
4. The law includes major benefits for retirees. A new multi-billion dollar fund will be created to make post retirement health insurance offered by employers much cheaper. The law will also improve Medicare by offering preventative care with no cost sharing, closing the prescription drug “doughnut hole,” and ending excessive payments to private insurers who help administer Medicare. The life of the Medicare Trust Fund will be extended by an estimated nine years.
5. The problem of the excise tax on “high cost” health plans has been significantly alleviated. It will not take effect until 2018, no longer includes the cost of dental insurance and the threshold will be significantly raised for groups like ours with demographics including large numbers of women and retirees.

For much more detailed information on health care reform visit the National Education Association website at www.nea.org.