



The future belongs to the educated

# MILKEN EDUCATOR AWARDS

#MilkenAward



**“ Winning the Milken Award tells me that I have a chance to impact the lives of students and teachers I’ve never met. While it would be easy to accept the recognition and carry on with life as usual, I feel that by receiving this honor, we are being called to help shape the future of education.”**

**RACHEL WILLIS**

2010 GEORGIA MILKEN EDUCATOR  
CEO AND FOUNDER, ELEVATING EQUITY

# A MESSAGE FROM LOWELL MILKEN



*The Education Commission of the States honored Milken Family Foundation Chairman and Co-Founder Lowell Milken with the James Bryant Conant Award for significant individual contributions to American education.*

**Education is at the heart of nearly everything we value as individuals, as citizens and as productive human beings.**

This philosophy and its implementation has been the driving force in our initiatives at the Milken Family Foundation since 1982. Essential to this pursuit is the development and support of an effective and respected teaching profession.

As a nation, we depend on our teachers and principals to produce students and graduates who are not only literate, numerate and conversant in the humanities and sciences, but who are creative, motivated and confident. As a society, we seek to develop young people who are able and willing to think independently and act with integrity and compassion.

Education's role as the most important of all professions is a message that the public should hear and understand. It is also a message that our educators need to hear as they strive to maintain high expectations, provide quality instruction, and offer emotional support regardless of the challenges.

The talented educators who teach and prepare students to meet these demands are doing nothing less than laying the foundation for our national security. For whether a school is urban, suburban or rural—whether it represents the most affluent or those most in need—within the course of a school day, research confirms that nothing has more

impact on student learning than the effectiveness of the teacher in the classroom, whether that classroom is in-person or virtual.

In creating the Milken Educator Awards, my goal was to bring to the fore those educators who epitomize achievement, but who also have the potential to make even more profound contributions moving forward. Since presenting our first Awards to one dozen exemplary California educators in 1987, we have seen how focusing the spotlight of recognition on such excellence inspires not only educators, but students and entire communities to new heights of commitment and expectation.

With each new class of Milken Educators, we are reminded that the power and promise of education must be replenished from generation to generation if we are to sustain our course as a democracy with opportunities for all. In a complex and changing world, the watchwords of the Milken Educator Awards ring true:

***The future belongs to the educated!***

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lowell Milken".

**Lowell Milken**

*Chairman and Co-Founder,  
Milken Family Foundation*

*Chairman and Founder,  
National Institute for Excellence in Teaching*

A woman with dark curly hair, wearing glasses and a maroon leather jacket, is speaking into a microphone. She is smiling and looking slightly to the right. In the background, an American flag is visible on the left, and a blurred audience is on the right. A blue callout box on the right contains a quote and her name and title.

**“ The Milken Educator Award presentation was a surprise for us all. My colleagues and students had the chance to hear my story and to learn that I was once a statistic—raised by a single parent, living in poverty—but through continued educational opportunities, I was able to transform and impact my life in a positive way. My students realized that we are more alike than different.”**

**DR. TIFFANY TYNES CURRY**  
2016 OHIO MILKEN EDUCATOR  
TRANSFORMATION COACH  
COLUMBUS CITY SCHOOLS

# THE MILKEN EDUCATOR AWARDS

## TOUCHING MINDS AND HEARTS

Since 1987, more than two million students have experienced that special day when an educator was surprised with a \$25,000 Award, hailed as a celebrity, and showered with attention from students, colleagues, VIPs, media and the community. And while circumstances during the 2020-21 school year may prevent large in-person assemblies, the recognition of greatness in education will continue with more passion and purpose than ever!

Unlike most teacher recognition programs, the Milken Educator Awards have no formal nomination or application process. Candidates are sourced through a confidential selection process and then reviewed by blue ribbon panels appointed by state departments of education. Those most exceptional are recommended for the Award, with final approval by the Milken Family Foundation.

The surprise announcements are made before cheering students, respected colleagues, distinguished officials, the media—and a stunned new Milken Educator. In a moment's time, these unsung heroes gain a significant, unrestricted financial prize of \$25,000 and experience the unfamiliar but well-deserved acclaim and acknowledgment they rightly merit.

Media multiplies the message of the pivotal role that talented educators play in student achievement. News stories across all forms of media herald the inspiration and contributions of these newly discovered role models in education. These stories catch the attention of communities young and old, voters and policymakers alike.



**“ The Milken Educator Award reminds students that teaching is like being a lawyer or being a doctor. It’s one of our society’s most respected professions and it’s something that they can consider as part of their life dreams.”**

**JOHN WHITE**

LOUISIANA STATE SUPERINTENDENT  
OF EDUCATION, 2012–2020



**“ Nothing assures the success of a nation more than education. And nothing assures the quality of education more than dedicated classroom teachers instilling a love of learning and a sense of wonder in their students.”**

**MICHAEL MILKEN**

PRESIDENT AND CO-FOUNDER, MILKEN FAMILY FOUNDATION

# HELPING TEACHERS AND STUDENTS REACH THEIR POTENTIAL

“ Milken Educators point to their Award as a pivotal professional milestone. They understand that encompassed in this recognition is the responsibility to grow as a leader at and beyond the school level. Encouraged and supported, these outstanding educators discover a renewed passion and purpose as they stretch their professional practices and policy influence to ever-higher levels.

As a 1994 recipient from Indiana, I know firsthand the value I placed on colleagues I met first in my Indiana network and then across the country. To this day, these interactions continue to recharge my batteries and remind me of the importance of our work and why we chose to be educators: to be the catalyst and guide that helps all students reach their potential.”

DR. JANE FOLEY

1994 INDIANA MILKEN EDUCATOR

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT, MILKEN EDUCATOR AWARDS





# GOALS

Outstanding educators who continue to learn are essential to the fostering of student growth, the improvement of schools, and the enhancement of the education profession. Hence, the goals of the Milken Educator Awards are to:

- ✓ Honor and reward outstanding K–12 educators for the quality of their teaching, their professional leadership, their engagement with families and the community, and their potential for even greater contributions to the healthy development of children.
- ✓ Focus public attention on the importance of excellent educators.
- ✓ Encourage able, caring and creative people to choose the challenge, service and adventure of teaching as a career.
- ✓ Create national and state networks that:
  - Foster the active professional development and career enhancement of Milken Educators and other professionals.
  - Encourage Milken Educators to help shape the educational policies that influence their classrooms and schools.
- ✓ Engage nonprofit, business and policy partners in assisting Milken Educators and in supporting policies that advance education.

**“ As educators, we shape the world. In order to do so, we must continuously be lifelong learners ourselves. Those who are educated will have the unique ability to continue to break down barriers, find cures, achieve great success in their profession and ultimately impact the lives of those around them. Education is truly power.”**

**DESI NESMITH**

2014 CONNECTICUT MILKEN EDUCATOR

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION  
FOR ACADEMICS & INNOVATION

CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF  
EDUCATION



# THE CRITERIA

The criteria for the selection of outstanding elementary and secondary teachers, principals and specialists as Milken Educators include all of the following:

- ✓ Exceptional educational talent as evidenced by effective and innovative instructional practices and student learning results in the classroom and school.
- ✓ Exemplary educational accomplishments and leadership beyond the classroom that provide models of excellence for the profession.
- ✓ Individuals whose contributions to education are largely unheralded yet worthy of the spotlight.
- ✓ Early- to mid-career educators who offer strong long-range potential for professional and policy leadership.
- ✓ Engaging and inspiring presence that motivates and impacts students, colleagues and the community.



**“ I was quite young, having just started my seventh year of teaching, when I received this awesome, unexpected and life-changing Award. My first response was, ‘They must think I’m doing something really great, so I’d better get started.’**

**I used the Award money to earn my master’s degree, which launched my career into administration. Many doors opened because of my association with the Milken Family Foundation, and I have had an amazing journey.”**

**DR. ANGIE BESENDORFER**

1996 MISSOURI MILKEN EDUCATOR  
REGIONAL VICE PRESIDENT AND CHANCELLOR  
WESTERN GOVERNORS UNIVERSITY -  
MISSOURI

# NATIONAL MILKEN EDUCATOR FORUM

A professional highlight of receiving the Milken Educator Award takes place annually as the newest class of Milken Educators comes together to meet and be inspired by fellow Award recipients, as well as “veteran” Milken Educators whose accomplishments continue to impress. *Whether virtual or in person, recipients share experiences, techniques and accomplishments while developing bonds that last a lifetime.*

During sessions with national policymakers and education leaders, Milken Educators learn how to cultivate their impact beyond the classroom and to advance educational excellence at state and national levels. Most importantly, the Forum helps Milken Educators articulate their passions and develop their “voice” into leadership roles.

## MILKEN EDUCATOR NETWORK

### Cultivating Effective Leadership and Education Reform

The Milken Educator Award’s visibility and reputation results in unlimited opportunities for educators to improve education from local to international levels. New recipients join the Milken Educator Network, a group of more than 2,800 distinguished professionals whose expertise serves as a valuable resource to fellow educators, legislators, school boards and others shaping the future of education.

The Milken Educator Network fosters effective leadership and education reform through its state and national engagement. Network meetings, discussion forums, national gatherings, webinars and other experiences promote collegiality and enhance communication among education stakeholders.



**“ No one goes into teaching for recognition. You go into teaching because you love children and have hope for our future generation. Getting the Milken Award has pushed me to accept new opportunities and challenges that I would never have attempted before. My students and my teaching are better for it.”**

**EMILY CALDARELLI**

2016 RHODE ISLAND MILKEN EDUCATOR  
4TH GRADE TEACHER  
LOWELL MILKEN CENTER FELLOW



**“ While the Award money is indeed a benefit, the lasting thing is the public recognition, the validation of excellence and the opportunity to join a national network.”**

**LOWELL MILKEN**

CHAIRMAN AND CO-FOUNDER, MILKEN FAMILY FOUNDATION

# STATE NETWORKS

Across the country, Milken Educators...

## CELEBRATE

### Hawaii Milken Educators

Aloha State Award recipients from years past travel from the neighboring islands to take part in the surprise notifications. Their collective support sheds light on the professional possibilities awaiting the newest members of the Milken Educator family. A special highlight is an annual event to honor the new recipient and present mini-grants to early-career teachers.



## ELEVATE

### Virginia Teachers of Promise

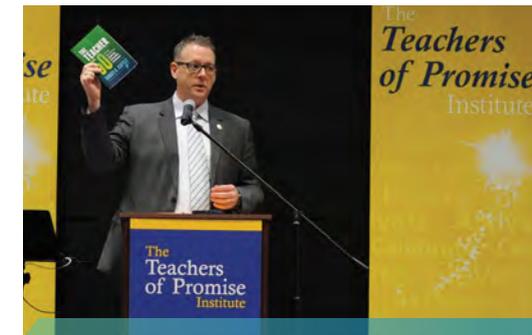
Inspired by the Milken Educator Awards, in 2001 the Virginia Milken Educator Network, established three goals: celebrate the teaching profession in Virginia; elevate the status of the profession; and activate both future and practicing educators to pursue excellence. Three years later, the Teachers of Promise Institute ([www.teachersofpromise.com](http://www.teachersofpromise.com)) debuted with an annual two-day event designed to inspire and inform future teachers who demonstrate potential for classroom excellence.

**“ We are identifying and honoring the next generation of great teachers and are working to advance their understanding of what teaching and learning really are. Truly they are our last, best hope for navigating the astounding potential hidden in our schools.”**

#### WADE WHITEHEAD

2000 VIRGINIA MILKEN EDUCATOR  
5TH GRADE TEACHER  
PRESIDENT, TEACHERS OF PROMISE  
FOUNDATION

To date, over 3,000 future teachers from two dozen Virginia college and university schools of education have been recognized as Teachers of Promise. More than 100 master educators from across the nation—many of them Milken Educators—have served as mentors and presenters. The Institute is funded by the Teachers of Promise Foundation, a 501(c)(3) established by Wade Whitehead, VA '00, in 2010. Over \$1,000,000 has been raised in support. Wade serves as executive director with Stephanie Bishop, VA '01, and Laura Marshall, VA '08, as co-directors.



## ACTIVATE

### MEA Why Not Us

Milken Educators know instantly that the Award is an honor. It is also a responsibility with opportunities and expectations to grow as a leader in the profession. Recipients are challenged to be teacher leaders—role models who use their example, voice and influence in schools and diverse settings far beyond their campus. But they are not left on their own to meet these expectations!

Freshmen Milken Educators are invited to participate in a one-of-a-kind partnership between new and veteran Milken Educators called “MEA Why Not Us.” Through focused communication, along with personalized support and coaching, veteran Milken Educators assist their “MFFs” (Milken Friends Forever) in determining how, when and where they will “Activate” to explore, prepare and serve in leadership roles that influence practice and policy.

Pursuing the MEA Why Not Us philosophy, new and veteran Milken Educators become thought partners with common qualities of passion, excellence and drive. They connect through monthly calls, webinars and Zoom meetings to determine priorities, set goals, outline strategies and timelines. Deep professional relationships provide an atmosphere of trust to discuss professional activities, offer feedback, share areas of expertise, and build bridges among their nationally recognized colleagues within the vast Milken Educator Network.

What has transpired is that Milken Educators are growing and leading at an exponential rate. By impacting teachers and students across our nation, they strengthen the legacy of our motto: “The future belongs to the educated.”



**“ Instead of the typical mentor-mentee model that assumes the mentor is the sage, Milken Friends Forever recognizes the rewards the veteran Milken Educator receives from being paired with a new Milken Educator. It is such a gift to have relationships with other incredible educators across the country... especially when we have opportunities to reimagine education together.”**

**DILHANI J. USWATTE, ED.D.**

2009 ALABAMA MILKEN EDUCATOR  
NATIONAL DISTINGUISHED PRINCIPAL

# MILKEN EDUCATORS AS LEADERS

The Milken Educator Award is an ongoing relationship that provides recipients with additional resources and opens up a world of opportunities.



**“ I vividly remember Lowell Milken at my notification telling me that he expected great things from me. I recall him saying that this Award was being given for what I was going to do to make a positive difference in education. I took that to heart! I will remember that day forever because I suddenly had an entire ‘family’ who believed that I had the ability to make a difference. That is extremely powerful.”**

**SHANNON GARRISON**

2008 CALIFORNIA MILKEN EDUCATOR

4TH AND 5TH GRADE TEACHER

NATIONAL ASSESSMENT GOVERNING BOARD, 2010–2018

While continuing in her role as a classroom teacher, Shannon was one of three educators on the National Assessment Governing Board, which sets policy for the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), also known as “the Nation’s Report Card.” She was reappointed for a second term in 2014 and chaired the Assessment Development Committee for six of her eight years on the Board.

Throughout the years, Milken Educators have assumed the challenges and responsibilities of leadership, frequently earning new accolades along the way. The recent achievements listed below are but a sampling of the thousands of leadership roles undertaken to strengthen education in its many forms.

### STATE CHIEF SCHOOL OFFICERS

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**Dr. Michael Johnson**, 2008 Alaska Milken Educator, Commissioner of Education and Early Development for the State of Alaska

**Pender Makin**, 2001 Maine Milken Educator, Commissioner, Maine Department of Education

### STATE LEGISLATORS

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**Roger Fuller**, 1993 Maine Milken Educator, Maine House of Representatives, 59th District

**Arnold Roblan**, 1997 Oregon Milken Educator, Oregon State Senator, District 5

**Carol Juneau**, 1993 Montana Milken Educator, Montana State Senator

### NATIONAL ASSESSMENT GOVERNING BOARD

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**Nardi Routten**, 2014 Florida Milken Educator, Board Member

### STATE DEPARTMENTS OF EDUCATION: MILKEN EDUCATORS IN KEY ROLES

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**Bruce DePlanty**, 1999 Arizona Milken Educator, Director of Certification and Outreach, Arizona Department of Education

**Desi Nesmith**, 2014 Connecticut Milken Educator, Deputy Commissioner of Education for Academics & Innovation, Connecticut State Department of Education

**Dewey Gottlieb**, 2003 Hawaii Milken Educator, Mathematics Resource Teacher, Hawaii Department of Education

**Aaron McKinnon**, 2009 Idaho Milken Educator, Science Coordinator, Idaho State Department of Education

**Matt Walsh**, 2003 Indiana Milken Educator, Curriculum Specialist, Indiana Department of Education

**Deborah Grinnage-Pulley**, 2003 Maryland Milken Educator, Executive Director, Maryland Department of Education

**Rich Meserve**, 2009 Maine Milken Educator, Director, School and Student Supports, Maine Department of Education

**Michelle Ryan**, 2015 Massachusetts Milken Educator, History and Social Science Content Support Lead, Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

**Mark Wagner**, 1992 North Dakota Milken Educator, Assistant State Director, North Dakota Career and Technical Education

**Angela Mansfield**, 2002 Minnesota Milken Educator, Teacher Effectiveness Specialist, Minnesota Department of Education

**Dixie Grupe**, 1996 Missouri Milken Educator, Director of Social Studies, Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

**Dr. Jacquelyn Sampsell**, 1999 Mississippi Milken Educator, Science Content Specialist, Mississippi Department of Education

**Tonya Breland**, 2006 New Jersey Milken Educator, Director, Office of Professional Development, New Jersey Department of Education

**Beverly Plein**, 2003 New Jersey Milken Educator, Social Studies Coordinator, New Jersey Department of Education

**Katarina Sandoval**, 2003 New Mexico Milken Educator, Deputy Secretary, New Mexico Public Education Department

**Erika Klose**, 2017 West Virginia Milken Educator, K–12 Technology Integration Coordinator for STEM and Computer Science, West Virginia Department of Education

**Dr. Vaughn G. Rhudy**, 2003 West Virginia Milken Educator, Executive Director, West Virginia Department of Education

### STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION MEMBERS

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**Catherine Payne**, 1995 Hawaii Milken Educator, Hawaii State Board of Education

**Sue Belish**, 1995 Wyoming Milken Educator, Vice Chair, Wyoming State Board of Education

**Walt Wilcox**, 2007 Wyoming Milken Educator, Chair, Wyoming Board of Education

# STATES HONOR NEW MILKEN EDUCATORS

An important and unique feature of the Milken Educator Award is state-level recognition during which the Chief State School Officer presents the signature Award obelisk. These special ceremonies can take place at state board meetings, governor's mansions, legislative sessions, conferences and awards banquets.



*Brian Allman, 2019 West Virginia Milken Educator, celebrated at the Governor's Mansion after addressing the State Board of Education.*



*Susan Moreno, 2019 Texas Milken Educator and Family honored by the Texas State Board of Education*

# AFFILIATED INITIATIVES IN EDUCATION



“ Real heroes tower and guide. They are the North Star that today’s youth can look up to. But their stories need to be discovered and heard. And when we do, we have the opportunity to motivate new generations to aspire to values that are essential during the challenging times we face individually, as a nation, and as a world community.

**That is the purpose of the Center for Unsung Heroes.”**

LOWELL MILKEN  
FOUNDER

# Lowell Milken Center FOR *Unsung Heroes*



The Lowell Milken Center for Unsung Heroes (LMC) transforms classrooms and communities through student-driven projects that discover Unsung Heroes from history—individuals who changed the world through their courage and compassion, yet are not found in history books. Established in 2007 as a partnership between Lowell Milken and 1992 Kansas Milken Educator and history teacher Norm Conard, LMC’s unique project-based learning approach integrates research, critical thinking and creativity for students and educators across diverse cultures and academic disciplines.

LMC has reached over one million students worldwide via its online projects, educator resources and student competitions. The Fort Scott, Kansas, headquarters has welcomed visitors from over 90 countries. The Hall of Unsung Heroes museum was added in 2016, featuring an inspirational, high-tech space with interactive exhibits and expanded research opportunities. LMC is an initiative of the Lowell Milken Family Foundation.

[www.LowellMilkenCenter.org](http://www.LowellMilkenCenter.org)

## Unsung Hero (n):

One who created positive change in history by improving the lives of others, and has yet to be recognized for his or her actions.





Despite finally making it through the front door of the high school, the Little Rock Nine were never welcome there. As a nationwide battle raged outside the school walls, the Nine suffered relentless physical and verbal abuse from many of their white peers.



"My choice to join this group of nine was an act of bearing witness to the suffering of all those who have spilled their blood in the struggle for equal rights in this country. My acceptance of the baron they passed along is my testimony to future generations who must finish the work started by their ancestors we share in common."



### FRIENDSHIP: A BATTLE ON THE STORM

...ed one of the...  
...y creating an...  
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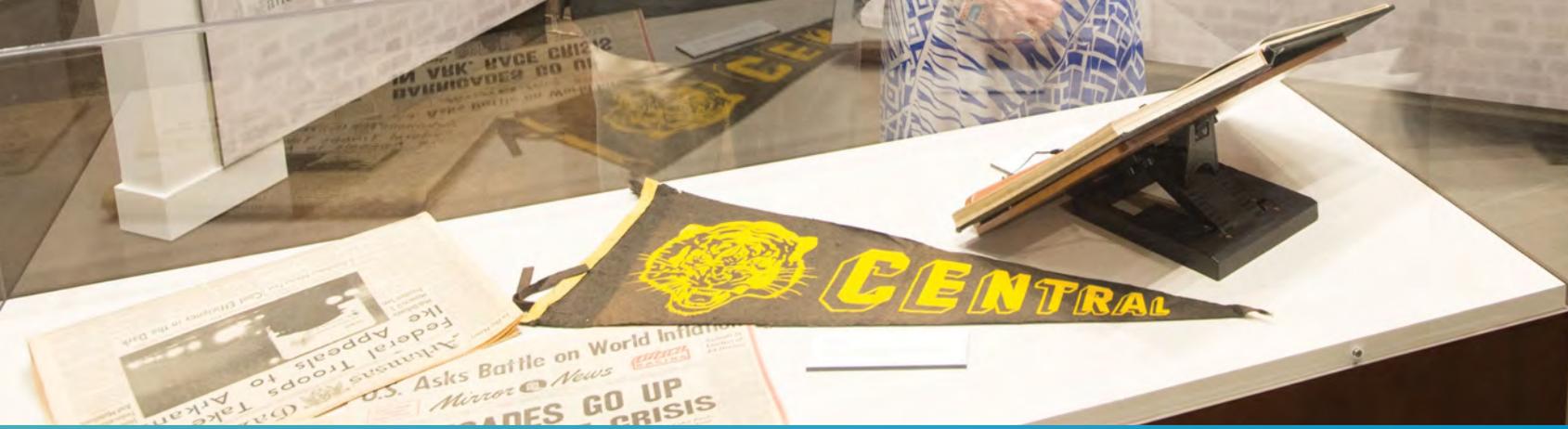
### The climate of hate and prejudice endured throughout the school year.

One day, broken glass was put in the gym shower before Ken got in. He also received bomb threats to his home and vile calls from community members degrading him. As the calls continued, Ken's parents restricted his night and weekend activities. But they always supported his courage and were proud of the example he set.

Despite the violence and threats, Ken maintained his kindness toward the Little Rock Nine, making a point to speak with each of the students. He would often write letters to them and Terrence's letters, and visit with them in the gymnasium. Although Ken had little to gain by doing so, he insisted on doing the right thing, as true heroes do.

Ernest Green (pictured here with Ken [Rheinhardt]) was the only Little Rock Nine member to graduate that year. The principal told him that it was not a senior there had been people... That he walks the stage... against him. However, Ernie told the... had to walk the stage since his mother, grandfather... and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. were in the audience to watch him.

**Unsung Hero Ken Rheinhardt and his wife Judy explore the Hall of Unsung Hero museum and think tank.**



# LOWELL MILKEN CENTER FELLOWS

The LMC Fellowship attracts top educators from the U.S. and around the world to the historic Fort Scott headquarters. The prestigious, merit-based professional development program focuses on a distinctive discovery process rooted in project-based learning.

“ The stories of unsung heroes discovered, researched and presented by students are engaging, empowering and eye-opening. This fellowship made me want to use my classroom to teach about past heroes and encourage my students to be the heroes we need today!”

JOHN LARY

2015 LOUISIANA MILKEN EDUCATOR

2016 LOWELL MILKEN CENTER FELLOW



“ Through LMC Unsung Hero Projects, my students are exposed to inquiry, innovation and the opportunity to apply 21<sup>st</sup>-century skills—for example, producing a documentary to share with the world.”

STACEY DONALDSON

2015 LOWELL MILKEN CENTER FELLOW



[www.LowellMilkenCenter.org](http://www.LowellMilkenCenter.org)

# STUDENT COMPETITIONS

Illustrating its motto to **“Discover–Create–Change,”** LMC holds two annual competitions offering students a total of \$29,500 in cash prizes.

## DISCOVERY AWARD

Uncovering and then sharing the impact of an Unsung Hero takes resourcefulness, determination and passion on the part of students. In the process, young people learn invaluable research, communication and life skills. LMC’s Discovery Award offers financial prizes totaling \$14,000 to students in grades 4–12 who produce compelling Unsung Hero Projects. Entries can take the form of a documentary film, performance or website, and must include a process paper.



**“ History is the connective tissue between generations. It provides the moral fiber. By uncovering these stories, we hope to instill these values in our own generation and our children’s generation.”**

**CALEB JOHNSON**

2013 DISCOVERY AWARD GRAND PRIZE  
TEAM MEMBER

12<sup>TH</sup> GRADE, PRINCE GEORGE, VIRGINIA

## THE ArtEffect PROJECT

**DISCOVER** the power to **CREATE** positive **CHANGE** through art.

The ArtEffect Project offers cash prizes totaling \$15,500 to students in grades 6 through 12 from around the world who share the lives and lessons of history’s Unsung Heroes through the visual arts. Students are encouraged to showcase completed projects beyond the classroom walls in order to stimulate positive community impact and inspire social action. Winning artwork is considered for display in the LMC Hall of Unsung Heroes gallery.



**ArtEffect Project**

2020 GRAND PRIZE  
“SAVED BY SCIENCE”  
CHARLES ROUNDS III  
12<sup>TH</sup> GRADE, JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI

[www.LowellMilkenCenter.org](http://www.LowellMilkenCenter.org)

# CHILDREN'S BOOK SERIES

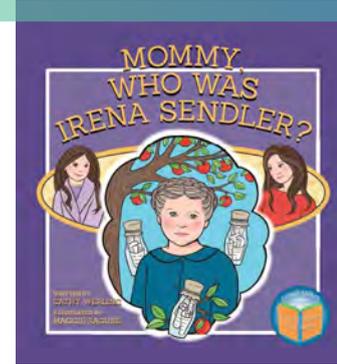
Inspiring children and adults alike with uplifting stories of Unsung Heroes

It's never too early for elementary school students to gain an appreciation of history and character. The LMC Unsung Heroes Children's Book Series by award-winning educator Cathy Werling does just that with stories like these:

- ✓ A teenage Ken Reinhardt stood up against racism during the 1957 integration of Little Rock Central High School.
- ✓ Sergeant Stubby, a stray dog, captured the heart of a soldier and went on to save countless lives during World War I.
- ✓ Andrew Jackson Higgins never gave up on developing the boats that delivered troops to France on D-Day and helped to end World War II.
- ✓ Irena Sendler, a Catholic social worker who rescued hundreds of Jewish children from the Warsaw Ghetto during World War II and was the catalyst for the Lowell Milken Center's creation.

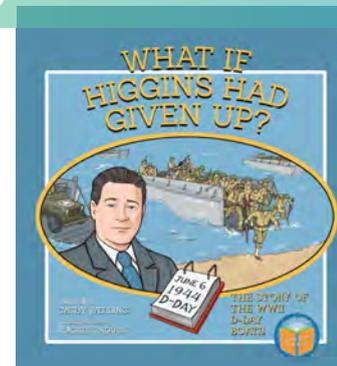
Their actions provide important examples for children as young students discover their own power and responsibility to effect positive change in the world. Each compelling story is complemented by colorful illustrations.

Books are available on the LMC website and major online booksellers.



“ I love the story and the colorful illustrations in this beautiful book about Irena Sendler! Every young girl should read this story of a woman who risked her life to save 2,500 children during the Holocaust. It may inspire young girls everywhere to believe in ‘the power of one’ to change the world.”

AMAZON REVIEW



“ Truly, boys and girls need to know that to succeed in life, all you need is an idea and an ‘I can do this’ attitude. Thank you for wanting to bring this positive message to today’s next generation.”

READER



**MILKEN CENTER**  
for **ADVANCING** the  
**AMERICAN DREAM**

The Milken Center for Advancing the American Dream (MCAAD) opened virtually in spring 2020, with a mission to expand access to education, health and economic freedom, and to empower an entrepreneurial mindset that takes full advantage of opportunity. The highly anticipated 2023 grand opening of the American Dream Visitor Center on Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington, D.C., will feature immersive exhibits, moving stories, contests and productive dialogue aimed at solutions and actions.



A Milken Educator Dream Team composed of co-leaders Dr. Jane Foley (IN '94) and Stephanie Bishop VA '01), together with content specialists in English Language Arts and Social Studies Lauren Jensen (NY '15),

John Lary (LA '15), Michelle Ryan (MA '15), Nader Twal (CA '03), Kathleen Vasquez (CA '03), and Wade Whitehead (VA '00) were honored to assist MCAAD in creating its first competition. *I, Too, Am the Dream* is an annual contest for rising high school seniors to ENGAGE students in describing dynamic stories about the American Dream, REIMAGINE an inclusive and evolving vision, and drive a bold national conversation to ADVANCE the American Dream for themselves and others. (See [mcaad.org/itooamthedream](http://mcaad.org/itooamthedream) for more information and to learn how students can enter.)

[www.mcaad.org](http://www.mcaad.org)



**“ As a black female educator who was the first in my immigrant family to graduate from a four-year college, and having spent most of my teaching career serving predominantly black and brown children, I was focused on leveraging and inviting student voices from all backgrounds [to express their thoughts with] I, Too, Am the Dream.”**

**MICHELLE RYAN**

2015 MASSACHUSETTS MILKEN EDUCATOR



The Milken Scholars Program was founded in 1989 by Lori and Michael Milken to honor exceptional young men and women based on scholarship, leadership, service, character and triumphs over obstacles. Scholars are graduating high school seniors from New York, Washington, D.C., and Los Angeles County who go through a rigorous nomination and interview process.

Each receives a \$10,000 scholarship, but what makes the program unique is the access to a lifetime of resources, including mentorship throughout their college careers and beyond. The annual three-day Summit in Los Angeles, with presentations by outstanding leaders from diverse fields, allows Scholars to form and renew friendships as they exchange ideas and aspirations. Milken Scholars is a joint initiative of the Milken Family Foundation and the Milken Institute.



**“ The Milken Scholarship is so much more than money. It's an unexpected blessing that also pays in connections. Through Milken I am exposed to a network full of like-minded individuals who are looking to support one another on their respective paths. I'm given mentors, career advice and honestly, friends. I'm given a spot in the sorts of places I could never reach alone. This is a line in the sand for my future. And I am truly humbled to have the opportunity.”**

**NAOMI NESMITH**

2020 MILKEN SCHOLAR

BROWN UNIVERSITY

[www.MilkenScholars.org](http://www.MilkenScholars.org)



# MILKEN SCHOLARS ANNUAL SUMMIT

NAVIGATING A WORLD  
IN INNOVATION

**“ Whether they become doctors, research scientists, educators, entrepreneurs or diplomats, the common denominator of Milken Scholars is a genuine sense of service.”**

**MICHAEL MILKEN**  
FOUNDER, MILKEN SCHOLARS

# TEAM

## PROFESSIONAL STAFF

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**Lowell Milken**

*Chairman and Co-Founder*

**Lawrence Lesser**

*Senior Vice President, Creative Services*

**Bonnie Somers**

*Senior Vice President, Communications*

**Richard Yee**

*Chief Financial Officer*

**Michael Milken**

*President and Co-Founder*

**Dr. Jane Foley**

*Senior Vice President, Milken Educator Awards*

**Joni Milken-Noah**

*Vice President, Mike's Math Club*

**Dahlia Geilman**

*Program Director, Grants*

**Richard Sandler**

*Executive Vice President and Secretary*

**Ralph Finerman**

*Senior Vice President and Treasurer*

**Gary Panas**

*Vice President of Design*

## MILKEN EDUCATOR AWARDS STAFF

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**Dr. Jane Foley**

*Senior Vice President*

**Joyce Cheng**

*Senior Associate*

**Greg Gallagher**

*Senior Program Director*

**Dr. Melinda Love**

*Program Assistant*

**Wesley Wilson**

*Program Coordinator*

## COMMUNICATIONS STAFF

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**Bonnie Somers**

*Senior Vice President*

**Andressa Rogers**

*Media and Public Affairs Database Manager*

**Jana Rausch**

*Director of Communications*

*National Institute for Excellence in Teaching*

**Lara Santos**

*Communications Project Coordinator*

**Erika Kerekes**

*Social Media and Online Content Director*

A woman with long brown hair, wearing a red and black plaid top and a dark jacket, is smiling and holding a blue award plaque. The plaque features a circular logo with the text 'MILKEN EDUCATOR AWARDS' and 'The future belongs to the educated' around an open book icon. To the right of the logo, the name 'Brooke Powers' is printed in a gold-colored serif font.

**“ I know there are big things yet to come for me in the education world, and when people ask me how I changed K-12 education the answer will be easy: The Milken Educator Award first changed me.”**

**BROOKE POWERS**

2017 KENTUCKY MILKEN EDUCATOR

DIRECTOR OF PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

OPEN UP RESOURCES



**For inquiries, please contact:**

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