



2021 EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP AWARDS

The Excellence in Educational Leadership Award is for practicing school administrators who have made significant contributions to the improvement of administrator preparation. Each year, the UCEA Executive Committee invites member university faculties to select a distinguished school administrator who has an exemplary record of supporting school administrator preparation efforts. This is an unusual award in that it affords national recognition, but individual universities select the recipients. It provides a unique mechanism for UCEA universities to build good will and recognize the contributions of practitioners to the preparation of junior professionals.

Dr. JoAnn Andrees

*Senior Outreach Specialist and Manager, Michigan State University Office of K-12 Outreach
Nominated by Michigan State University*

Dr. JoAnn Hurd Andrees is a senior outreach specialist and manager in the Office of K-12 Outreach at Michigan State University, where she works with the Flint Community School and Detroit Public Schools Community District's Osborn Evergreen High School. Dr. Andrees has been a role model and mentor for aspiring educational leaders throughout her career. Her areas of expertise include coaching and providing professional learning opportunities for central office staff and leadership teams and supporting boards of education and superintendents as they work to expand educational opportunity for students. For nearly 7 years she has been lead facilitator on the C. S. Mott Foundation funded project with the Flint Community Schools supporting multiple superintendents and central office staff and is currently cofacilitating the development of the district's strategic plan. In addition, she cofacilitates a module on district-level leadership as a part of the Office of K-12 Outreach's Enhanced Leadership modules series with the Lansing School District. Dr. Andrees served as superintendent in West Bloomfield, Michigan and West Haven, Connecticut. She was a Fulbright Scholar in Germany and traveled to Japan to study and experience the country's educational systems. In addition, she has served as adjunct professor at Wayne State University. Among many awards and recognitions, Dr. Andrees was named to the 2012 Michigan Association of Superintendents & Administrators Winner's Circle for her tutorial program for African American males closing the achievement gap. JoAnn leads with her heart and is ever inspiring in her own drive to continue learning and serving.

Mr. Matthew Bristow-Smith

*Principal, Edgecombe Early College High School
Tarboro, North Carolina
Nominated by North Carolina State University*

Matt Bristow-Smith is the 2019 Wells Fargo NC State Principal of the Year and has served as principal of

Edgecombe Early College High School (EECHS) since 2014. During Mr. Bristow-Smith's tenure as EECHS principal, his school's enrollment has grown by 50% while maintaining a 100% graduation rate and a North Carolina School Performance Grade of A. Mr. Bristow-Smith takes great pride in knowing every student and staff member at his school personally, and he believes that strong relationships and a highly qualified team are the force multipliers for everything positive that takes place at EECHS. Prior to his principalship at EECHS, Mr. Bristow-Smith served as an English teacher at Tarboro High School for 15 years, where he learned the importance of putting down deep roots in a small community. He is a North Carolina Teaching Fellow, a North East Leadership Academy Fellow, a National Board Certified teacher, and a graduate of Appalachian State and North Carolina State. In 2010, Mr. Smith was recognized as a finalist for the NC State Teacher of the Year. Mr. Bristow-Smith is married to his college sweetheart, April, who is the English Department chair at Nash Community College, and he has two daughters, Sophie, age 9, who wants to be a shark scientist, and Sydney, age 16, who plans to become a teacher.

Mr. Phillip Chavez

*Deputy Superintendent, Edgewood Independent School District, San Antonio, Texas
Nominated by the University of Texas at San Antonio*

Mr. Phillip R. Chavez is a graduate of Memorial High School, Class of 1979. He received his bachelor's degree from William Marsh Rice University in 1983. In 1987 he earned his Secondary Science Composite teacher certification and taught secondary science for 13 years and chaired the Science Department for 9 of those years.

In 1997 he began working as a high school administrator. In 1998 he earned his master's degree in Education from the University of Texas at San Antonio. In 2001 he was selected as the Executive Director of Curriculum, where he worked for 5 years. In 2006 he earned his Superintendent Certificate at the University of Texas at San Antonio. In 2006-2007 he served as the Interim Superintendent for Southside ISD. In 2007 he became the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction,

where he has served for 7 years. He served as the Associate Superintendent for Instructional Services at Somerset ISD from 2014-2016. In August 2016 he joined the Edgewood community as the Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning. In 2018 he was named the Chief Transformation & Innovation Officer at Edgewood, where he worked to bring the System of Great Schools initiative to the district. In 2019, Mr. Chavez was named Deputy Superintendent, the position he currently serves; since that time, the district has approved five operating partners to operate seven campuses to provide choice for students and parents.

Mr. Chavez served in various offices for the local Alamo Area chapter of the ASCD. He serves on the Educational Advisory Board for Texas A&M University at San Antonio, advising on their educator certification program. Mr. Chavez also serves on the board of the Westside Development Center.

Dr. Mary Elizabeth Davis

*Superintendent, Henry County Schools, Georgia
Nominated by University of Georgia*

Dr. Mary Elizabeth Davis joined Henry County Schools in November 2017, and since then, the district has seen an 11-point increase in state accountability metrics, with more than half of the 50 schools posting double-digit gains, including a steep increase of reading proficiency across the district in the early elementary grades. She led efforts with the Board of Education through the development of a Unified Governance Model, which created alignment and focus for the organization from the boardroom to the classroom. Prior to Henry County Schools, Dr. Davis served as the Chief Academic Officer in Cobb County Schools, and she was previously Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction in Gwinnett County Public Schools. She began her career as a chemistry teacher in Fairfax, Virginia and is a 2015 graduate of the Broad Academy.

Mr. John DeTommaso

*Superintendent, Bellmore-Merrick Central High School District, Long Island, New York
Nominated by St. John's University*

Over the last 8 years, John DeTommaso served as the superintendent of the Bellmore-Merrick Central High School District, overseeing six campuses. In total, he has been an educator for 33 years, working as a teacher, athletic director, assistant principal, principal, and superintendent. He retired at the end of the 2020-21 school year. DeTommaso is also a decorated lacrosse player and coach, winning multiple college and world championships as well as Nassau County High School Coach of the Year.

Dr. Julie Fogt

*Director, Centennial School of Lehigh University
Bethlehem, Pennsylvania
Nominated by Lehigh University*

Dr. Fogt currently serves as the Director of the Centennial School of Lehigh University, where she has worked since 1996. Prior to this role, Dr. Fogt was a school psychologist at Centennial for 20 years. She also served in the roles of Elementary Program Coordinator, Centennial Partial Hospitalization Program Director, and Associate Director. She holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology from Muhlenberg College, an Educational Specialist degree from James Madison University, and a Doctorate of Education in Educational Leadership from Lehigh University.

Dr. Fogt has served as an adjunct professor at Lehigh University, teaching numerous courses in special education and school psychology since 2009 as well as mentoring aspiring principals and school leaders. She supervises school psychology doctoral interns and practicum students. Her record of publications is notable with articles in journals such as *Behavioral Disorders*, *Education and Treatment of Children*, and *Journal of School Psychology*. Not only is she an esteemed scholar, but Dr. Fogt also leads professional development and training for teachers, staff, and administrators. She has given over 80 presentations at both local and national conferences to share her expertise. Additionally, Dr. Fogt has achieved National Certification for School Psychologists (NCSP).

Dr. John Gordon III

*Superintendent, Suffolk Public Schools, Virginia
Nominated by University of Virginia*

Dr. Gordon has captured enthusiasm and cultivated great buy-in for his vision of educational excellence in small, large, suburban, and urban school districts (Salisbury, MD; Richmond City, VA; Chesterfield County, VA; Fredericksburg City, VA; and Suffolk City, VA) throughout his impressive school leadership career. With substantive opportunities for national experience and exposure, he has encouraged others to imagine how the condition of the community may be lifted in the school districts he has led. He leads with an eye for innovation, appealing to all to recognize the needs and styles of today's learners. His educational leadership team shares his vision, enthusiasm, imagination, and devotion to innovation.

Dr. Gordon is igniting collaboration and results in Suffolk Public Schools through public and organizational consensus, identified for this large and active community. His public outreach is contagious as he inspires a belief in student growth with partnerships among community, faith-based, and business organizations. He has a broad set of relationships and contacts locally, regionally, nationally, and

internationally, whom he regularly calls upon to bolster the mission of his school district and public policy directions beyond his school district.

Dr. Gordon is recognized by his peers as a leader among leaders. As a two-time graduate of the University of Virginia, his pedagogical training has permitted him to become a leading voice among educational leaders and superintendents nationwide. He has published and consulted in areas underscoring the effectiveness of strategies to reduce inequities, the implementation of systemic approaches to large-scale change, and the power of community engagement.

Dr. Gordon is loyal to his alma mater as an active, leading member of the University of Virginia's K12 Advisory Council. Dr. Gordon is also a leading member of the School of Education and Human Development adjunct faculty, having facilitated the growth and success of master's-level cohorts in his district and across Virginia.

Dr. Joseph Jensen

*Principal, Timpanogos High School
Alpine School District, Utah*

Nominated by Brigham Young University

Dr. Jensen has made many significant and meaningful contributions to the Brigham Young University School Leadership Program as a coteacher, adjunct professor, coauthor, presenter, and liaison with the school district.

Racing mountain bikes in Leadville, Colorado, running down Boylston Street in Boston, or just commuting by bike to school, Joe lives the life of an endurance junkie. That training serves him well as the principal of Timpanogos High School, where he revels in creating conditions and building capacity with an amazing team of educators to intentionally nurture connection/well-being as well as deliberately develop a culture for deep learning (6Cs) in students and staff. In his 27th year in education, Joe has been an English teacher, athletic coach, assistant principal, junior high principal, and high school principal. He teaches as an adjunct in Brigham Young University's education department, preparing the future generation of school administrators. He consults with other districts and has presented in many professional settings as he tries to improve a deep learning professional learning community culture for all schools.

He would rather play catch with his 9-year-old in the backyard than attend an NFL football game. He would rather plan a good road trip with Julie and his six kids than book a Caribbean cruise. And he would rather garden than go to a garden party. In his endurance pursuits, he lives by the mantra, "There's no bad weather, there's just bad gear."

Dr. Laura McGowan-Robinson

*Founder & CEO, Diversity in Leadership Institute
Los Angeles, California*

Nominated by Loyola Marymount University

Dr. Laura McGowan-Robinson is the founder and CEO of the Diversity in Leadership Institute. She is focused on expanding educational leadership opportunities for emerging and current Black and Latinx K-12 public school leaders in California through advocacy, coalition, and capacity building.

She began focusing her efforts on mentoring and retaining racially diverse school leaders while serving as Senior Vice President of Regional Advocacy and later as Chief Operating Officer at the California Charter Schools Association. Previously, McGowan-Robinson founded and served as Executive Director of a middle school in South Los Angeles. A lifelong educator, McGowan-Robinson began her teaching career as a Chicago Public Schools teacher before moving west and becoming a high school English teacher and literacy coach with the Los Angeles Unified School District.

Dr. McGowan-Robinson serves as a board member for the Loyola Marymount University, School of Education Alumni Association, STEM Prep Schools, and chair of the National Charter Collaborative. She also serves on the executive committee for the Black Equity Collective, an organization dedicated to strengthening the long-term sustainability of Black-led and Black-empowering organizations in Southern California. She earned her bachelor's degree in English/Rhetoric from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, a master's degree in Instructional Leadership in English from the University of Illinois at Chicago, and her doctorate in Educational Leadership for Social Justice from Loyola Marymount University.

Dr. Jimmy Shaw

*Superintendent, Florence City Schools, Alabama
Nominated by University of Alabama*

Dr. Jimmy Shaw has 20 years of experience in the field of education. He has served as a classroom teacher, Assistant Principal of a high school, Director of Federal Programs, Director of Instruction and Assessment, and Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction. He currently serves Florence City Schools as Superintendent. Jimmy has been in administration for 14 years. Jimmy is a graduate of Florence City Schools (Bradshaw Class of 1992). Jimmy has an associate's degree from Northwest-Shoals Community College. He holds bachelor's, master's, and educational specialist degrees from the University of North Alabama. He holds a Doctor of Education degree from Samford University. He has been married to his wife, Felicia, for 24 years and has three sons. He is a member of the Florence Rotary Club, Class XXIX of Leadership Alabama, and the Kappa Nu Lambda Chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc.

Dr. Marcia Smith

*Associate Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, Springdale Public School District, Arkansas
Nominated by University of Arkansas*

Dr. Marcia Smith has served as the Associate Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction at Springdale Public School District since 2018 (the largest school district in the state of Arkansas). During her time in Springdale, she has served as a math teacher, department chair, assistant principal, principal, Assistant Superintendent for Secondary Curriculum and Instruction, and Associate Superintendent. Dr. Smith earned a master's degree in curriculum and instruction, a specialist's degree in educational leadership, and a doctorate in curriculum and instruction, all from the University of Arkansas, where she teaches doctorate and master's-level classes in statistics and serves on dissertation committees for the Educational Leadership program. In 2020 Marcia Smith was named Administrator of the Year by the Arkansas Association of Curriculum and Instruction Administrators.

Dr. Douglas Stevens

*Teacher, Cincinnati Public Schools, Ohio
Nominated by University of Louisville*

Dr. Douglas Stevens (PhD, Educational Studies, University of Cincinnati) has 30 years of experience as an educator in the Cincinnati Public School District. Dr. Stevens currently serves as teacher and instructional leader at Hughes STEM High School. In addition, Dr. Stevens serves as an adjunct instructor at the University of Louisville, teaching doctoral-level research courses and serving as an external representative on dissertation committees. Dr. Stevens has presented at professional conferences, including the American Educational Research Association, the Coalition of Urban and Municipal Universities, and the International Congress of Qualitative Inquiry. Dr. Stevens' coauthored peer-reviewed research appears in journals including the *Journal of Special Education Leadership*, *The Educational Forum*, and *The High School Journal*. He also has a published chapter in the *Handbook of Action Research*, 3rd edition (SAGE, 2015).

Dr. Mia Williams

*Chief of the Office of African American Male Achievement (AAMA), Seattle Public Schools
Nominated by University of Washington*

Dr. Mia Williams serves as the Chief of the Office of African American Male Achievement (AAMA), which works to reconstruct Seattle Public Schools' educational environment to support the brilliance and excellence of Black boys and teens. In this cabinet-level role, Dr. Williams steers AAMA as it supports the district in intentionally cultivating the cultural and academic strengths of African American male students while simultaneously addressing their needs.

Dr. Williams' work to advance racial and educational justice has been consistently recognized. In 2019, she received the National Education Association Mary Hatwood Futrell Human and Civil Rights Award for her institutional leadership in eliminating barriers for women, creating formal support networks, and helping young women scholars gain access to equitable education opportunities. She was recognized as the 2018 John Morefield Mentor of the Year by Danforth University of Washington and the 2016 Washington State Middle Level Principal of the Year.

Previously, Dr. Williams worked as an educator in Seattle Public Schools for 27 years, including serving as principal of Aki Kurose Middle School for 11 years. Dr. Williams was previously the assistant principal at Denny International Middle School and Salmon Bay K-8, and taught at Cleveland High School, John Marshall, Rainier Beach High School, and NOMS (New Options Middle School, now Salmon Bay School) before becoming an administrator. Dr. Williams attended Central Washington University, where she received her teaching certificate, and the University of Washington, where she earned an MEd of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies, principal credentials, and an EdD.

