



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Ashwaubenon educator named Wisconsin Special Services Teacher of the Year

Andrea Pasqualucci to receive \$3,000 from Herb Kohl Educational Foundation

MADISON — In a surprise ceremony at her school, Andrea Pasqualucci, a school social worker at Valley View Elementary School in Ashwaubenon, was named Wisconsin’s Special Services Teacher of the Year for the 2014-15 school year.

State Superintendent Tony Evers made the announcement during an all-school assembly. As part of the Teacher of the Year honor, Pasqualucci will receive \$3,000 from the Herb Kohl Educational Foundation.

“A Teacher of the Year represents the passion educators across our state have for children and their educational success,” Evers said. “They go the extra step to meet student needs, knowing that the education our kids receive in their school years must prepare them for college and careers.”

“We need strong teachers in our classrooms and recognizing excellence through the Teacher of the Year program builds morale and encourages young people to think about teaching as a career,” said U.S. Sen. Herb Kohl (retired), who co-sponsors the program through his educational foundation. “Educators who are named a Teacher of the Year are leaders in their classroom, school, and communities. They contribute so much to our children and to Wisconsin’s future.”

Described as “a tireless advocate for students” and someone with a “passion for working with people in need,” Pasqualucci has developed a number of programs and partnerships to help students in the Ashwaubenon School District, who are homeless or from low income families. “I strive to work with students, families, and educators to help all students achieve academically in spite of the enormous challenges facing them outside of school,” she wrote in her application materials.

Pasqualucci was instrumental in developing and managing the Food Pantry Partnership, supported by student-led food drives, that serves families from the school and the community. She also established a partnership with the local Optimist Club for the Weekend Food Backpack program to address all too common food insecurity. ASHCARES is an e-mail based donation system she developed to correspond with more than 200 district staff and community members to help fill students’ unmet needs, which have ranged from size 4T pants, to beds, dressers,

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and household items. Laundromat vouchers and school supply backpacks also help meet the needs of families. Pasqualucci also reaches out to parents to build trust so they are more involved in their children's education. She developed a Culturally Responsive Checklist that is part of the behavior and support intervention system and presents inservice sessions to school staff on equity and anti-bullying issues.

“I struggle with the fact that students with great potential may never realize their gifts,” she said. “Many families I encounter are consumed with meeting the basic needs of their children and have little energy or financial resources left to expose their children to the multiple stimulating experiences other children encounter every day. Over time, these differences accumulate and the gap between the ‘haves’ and the ‘have-nots’ grows.”

In the community, she is part of the Brown County Homeless and Housing Coalition and chaired the county's National Hunger and Homeless Awareness Week activities. She is a member of her church's Social Concerns Commission, bringing her first-hand knowledge of social issues to help the commission affect change and meet the needs of parishioners and community members.

Pasqualucci holds a bachelor's in social work degree from the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay and earned her Master's of Science in Social Work from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She began her career as a social worker in the Crystal Lake School District in Crystal Lake, Ill., and worked for the North Chicago School District, also in Illinois, before coming to Ashwaubenon in 2008. Evers will recognize Pasqualucci as the Wisconsin Special Services Teacher of the Year during his State of Education address Sept. 25 in Madison.

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NOTES: This news release is available electronically at http://news.dpi.wi.gov/files/eis/pdf/dpinr2014_93a.pdf.