



HOLMDEL TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICT

"A COMMITMENT TO EXCELLENCE"

Office of the Superintendent of Schools
65 McCampbell Road
Holmdel, NJ 07733
tel: 732-946-1800
fax: 732-946-1875

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Robert McGarry, 732-946-1800

HOLMDEL EDUCATORS NOMINATED FOR NATIONAL LIFECHANGER OF THE YEAR AWARD

HOLMDEL (December 14, 2016) - Holmdel High School AP Literature teacher Stephen Touma and Holmdel Township Public Schools physical therapist Susan Stanzione have been nominated for the 2016-17 national LifeChanger of the Year Award.

Sponsored by the National Life Group Foundation, the national LifeChanger of the Year program recognizes and rewards the very best K-12 public and private school educators and employees across the United States who are making a difference in the lives of students by exemplifying excellence, positive influence and leadership.

Touma was nominated by a student who wishes to remain anonymous. "Mr. Touma expands his students' minds through education," said his nominator. "As a literature teacher, he changes his students' lives by teaching them about past literature and events and helping them form strong, educated opinions about current events. That way, they can help make the world a better place."

Stanzione was nominated by a colleague, Doreen Riegal. She has worked in the district for over 25 years and has developed several creative solutions to meet her students' needs. Eight years ago, she worked with a colleague to create the STRIVE Program, an after-school job sampling club that gives students the opportunity to develop basic work skills and engage in career awareness. She has also brought in Unified Sports and other programs that have played an instrumental role in integrating students with disabilities with their peers.

"Individuals who passionately embrace and advocate for others on a daily basis are inspirational," said Riegal. "Ms. Stanzione is one of these special individuals. She takes on the daily challenge of removing barriers for her students that would have otherwise limited their participation in school and community activities. Her enthusiasm and dedication to Holmdel and our students have positively influenced our community to be its best."

Each school year, the LifeChanger of the Year program receives hundreds of nominations from all 50 states and the District of Columbia. For 2016-2017, there will be a total of 15 individual LifeChanger of the Year awards. In addition, a 16th prize, the "National Spirit Award," is given to the school and nominee whose community demonstrates the most support for their nomination. Each winner will receive a cash award that is split between the individual winner and their school. The national Grand Prize award is \$10,000. Winners are announced via surprise

award ceremonies held at their schools. The top five winners will also be honored at a national awards ceremony in Naples, Florida. Winners will be announced in Spring 2017.

Winners will be chosen by a selection committee comprised of former winners and education professionals. Nominees must be school district employees. Award winners are selected based on the following criteria:

- A proven ability to make a beneficial difference in the lives of students
- An ability to positively add to the development of the school's atmosphere
- Is involved in leadership activities at the school and/or community level
- A demonstrative record of excellent performance at the professional level
- A commitment to producing a nurturing atmosphere
- Adherence to high moral and ethical standards