

The CEA Voice

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MLK award winners are...

CEA congratulates our 2014 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. award winners. We will honor them on Jan. 16 at our annual King dinner.

The Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Humanitarian Award goes to **Dr. Charles E. Booth**. He has served as the Senior Pastor of Mt. Olivet Baptist Church for the past 35 years. He is a strong supporter of education at every level. For years, he has honored high-performing students for their academic achievements. He is the founder of the Gloria S. Friend Christian Academy and has supported the development and operation of the county's SMART Freedom School summer and after-school programs serving high-poverty youngsters in the Trevitt Heights community.



Dr. Charles E. Booth

Rev. Booth has supported ballot issues for Columbus City Schools, focusing on the conditions affecting children's lives. He often refers to Dr. King as one of his most treasured role models and is invited regularly to speak and preach nationally in celebration of Dr. King's life during the King Holiday weekend. Booth is a professor at Trinity Theological Seminary where he teaches a class entitled, "The Theology of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr."

Booth, who holds a Ph.D., has earned degrees from Howard University, Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary and United Theological Seminary. He has been listed among the *Ebony* magazine Honor Roll of Great Preachers and has traveled internationally on humanitarian missions, receiving the Alpha Kappa Alpha Humanitarian Service Award. Pastor Booth serves as a trustee for the Center for Family Safety and Healing at Nationwide Children's Hospital. He is helping administer a campaign to build the Family Life Center in downtown Columbus to address issues of unemployment, homelessness, education and health.

CEA President **Rhonda Johnson** is the winner of the Helen David Jenkins Award. She became CEA's sixth president in 2004, after serving as Vice President for 10 years and following a 16-year career as a business teacher at Northwest Career Center. She is active in the community, previously serving on the board of United Way of Central Ohio and currently on numerous advisory committees for NEA.



Rhonda Johnson

Johnson's chief concern has been to enhance teacher professionalism through cooperative reform. She represented Columbus City teachers as a chief member of

TURN (Teacher Union Reform Network) and shared CEA's activities with national, state and university organizations. In 2005, she received the AFL-CIO George Meany Award.

One of Johnson's most significant achievements was to expand the Peer Assistance and Review model by incorporating state requirements and enhancing opportunities for new teachers to receive mentorship. As the new Ohio teacher evaluation system has taken shape, Johnson engaged teachers to develop a district evaluation process, aligning it with CCS's and the state's expectations. She is the consummate leader, standing firm in support of teachers' rights, using her negotiation skills with our district administration. Always up to date on legislation efforts, Johnson stands on the front line to ensure teachers have a seat at the discussion table.

Rhonda also works to keep our ultimate focus on our kids. Locally, Johnson was a key member of Mayor Michael Coleman's Columbus Education Commission, representing teachers as students' best allies and reminding other commission members that partnerships comprise the most effective method of addressing community problems affecting student health and welfare.

The NEA selected Johnson as an international representative, sending her to Cape Town, South Africa, to participate in a global education meeting. She was part of an NEA committee that gave input on Capitol Hill to the reauthorization of the national Elementary and Secondary Education Act—a high honor.

Rhonda will retire at the end of school year. Her mark will endure.

Join us in saluting these award winners. The annual dinner is Thursday, Jan. 16, at the Hilton Columbus Downtown. Get your tickets early. This event is always well attended. Tickets are \$30 per person. Tables of eight are \$240.

Retiring? Let CCS know earlier

Because of district budget cuts, we expect a number of layoffs. We will keep you posted. Even though the contract requires members to notify the district of retirement intentions by Feb. 1 of their retirement year for enhanced severance pay, we recommend that you notify CCS as soon as you have made a decision. When you do this, you may prevent a colleague from being laid off.



Do not wait on a buyout. We do not believe one will be available. So take some time to think about this. But make the best financial decision for yourself.

He feels the power of service

John Coneglio knows the power of CEA. In 2002, when his high school principal was unwilling to address a problem, he called upon all of his training as a Faculty Representative to address the situation. Knowing the contract and knowing that his union would back him made a huge difference.

Coneglio, who now teaches social studies at Independence HS and serves on our Board of Governors, also felt the power when he got involved with our anti-SB5 campaign. He was an OEA “Top 250” signature gatherer and helped get the issue on the ballot. John also worked the phone banks and joined demonstrators at the Ohio Statehouse—and his zeal to represent you did not stop there. John recognizes the difficulties his colleagues face as legislators tinker with education policy in our state—and as CCS struggles to regain the trust of taxpayers. High school teachers, in particular, have unique stresses and responsibilities.

“In 2013, I had two opportunities to lobby at the Statehouse on behalf of teachers and students,” Coneglio said. “I think it is important to promote the concerns of high school teachers.”

Coneglio has been an OEA delegate since 2002 and an NEA delegate since 2008. He lives in Clinton Township with his wife, Michelle, a kindergarten teacher at Clinton ES, their two daughters who attend Indianola Informal K–8 and “our dog who recently ate my camera.” He loves backpacking, camping and watching the Buckeyes and the Cleveland Browns. He also serves as a Clinton Township Trustee.



John Coneglio

Got a great idea?

It can be hard to be innovative in the classroom, especially with a multitude of testing and state mandates. However, we encourage teachers to keep exploring new and exciting ways to engage our students. That’s what the Reform Panel is designed to do.

When you come up with an idea, the panel can grant you a variance to try something new. Article 1503 of the contract details the process. The panel consists of representatives from CEA and the administration.

It’s simple: Begin by making a suggestion to your ABC. The Senior Faculty Representative conducts a building vote, then refers it to the Reform Panel with signatures from both the principal and Senior FR.

Create a cadre of staff members and parents to seek new and innovative programs that would benefit your students. Do your research and make a proposal. The Reform Panel will also help you define potential problems and recommend further steps.

CEA believes that the best decisions about teaching and learning are made at the building level by the people who work there. Successful districts have moved from centralizing operations and support to building-level support. Reynoldsburg is a good example. Supt. Steve Dackin told the Columbus Education Commission that he has very few supervisors at the top level of the district. Instead, he trusts his principals who in turn trust their teachers to do the important work of educating kids.

We have a tool: the Reform Panel. We need to use it. Some excellent practices have come out of it, including staggered school starts for kindergarten students, block scheduling, parent conference make-up days for nurses and pilots for the SRI reading program.

So what’s your great idea?

PAS enrollment window extended

Despite an unforeseen delay, enrollment for the Performance Advancement System (PAS) is now open. PAS allows individuals or groups of teachers who volunteer to work toward specific improvement goals to qualify for PAS bonuses of \$2,500 for demonstrated accountability for student progress.

You may enroll in the 2013–2014 PAS program online at <http://columbus.blackboard.com>. After logging in, click on the “PAS 2013–2014” tab at the top of the screen. The PAS application deadline is 5 p.m. on Monday, Jan. 6, 2014.

United Way update

We thank you. You have truly made a difference for our families. Because of your generosity to United Way, our kids will live in safer neighborhoods, have access to medical



care and live with less stress because their families have needed services to help them improve their lives. We congratulate the Georgian Heights ES staff. They won our early-bird drawing for breakfast with CEA President Rhonda Johnson and Supt. Dan Good. Special thanks go to Senior FR Julia Skidmore and Principal Rochelle Wilkerson.

We also thank the campaign leaders for their work spreading the word and those who collected pledges since our last report: 5th Street Annex, 6th Street Annex, Arts Impact MS, Beatty Park ES, Brookhaven HS, CAHS, CEC, Cedarwood ES, Colerain ES, Columbus Africentric EC ES, Columbus Downtown HS, Columbus Scioto 6–12, Columbus Spanish Immersion, Dominion MS, Eakin ES, Fairmoor ES, Forest Park ES, Hilltonia MS, Huy ES/A.G. Bell Program, Independence HS, Juvenile Detention Center, Lincoln Park K–6, Linden STEM Academy K–6, Medina MS, Moler K–6, Neil Avenue Center, Northtowne ES, Ohio Avenue ES, Parkmoor ES, Siebert K–6, South HS 7–12, Watkins ES Wedgewood MS, Whetstone HS and Winterset ES.

Everyone needs a TBT

Unified arts teachers and elective teachers are a creative bunch. When they get together, they share fantastic ideas and valuable information about their students. Don’t forget that they want to be included in a Teacher Based Team (TBT), also known as a Professional Learning Community.

Everyone should be a member of a TBT and have that opportunity to meet with colleagues for about 45 minutes at a time, each week. In some buildings, staff and the administrators have figured out how to provide this time, embedding (during the work day) this vital professional development for all teachers. Our teachers who specialize in elective subjects and unified arts classes are just as important to the learning process as core academic teachers. Some of our students come to school in part because they look forward to these classes.

So reach out! Make sure everyone is at the table.

CEA elections are coming

By now you should have received a postcard from us containing our election dates. You will vote to fill the following positions: President and Vice President; Governors in Districts 1, 4, 5 and 10; as well as OEA and NEA Delegates. Declaration of candidacy will end on Jan. 27, with campaigning Jan. 28–Mar. 3. We will count the votes on Mar. 4.



Any necessary runoffs will be Mar. 10–31 for campaigning and Mar. 18–31 for voting. Votes will be tabulated on Apr. 1.