PRESS RELEASES

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Chicago Public Schools Proud to Celebrate Two Finalists for Illinois State Board of Education Awards

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CHICAGO – Chicago Public Schools (CPS) proudly announces Sauganash Elementary School teacher Claire Trainer is one of 10 finalists for the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) Teacher of the Year Award which celebrates the most innovative and exceptional teachers in the state. The award is part of the **Those Who Excel** program that also recognizes administrators, volunteers, and school support personnel for extraordinary contributions to education. CPS Principal Okab T. Hassan will also be among those honored as part of the Those Who Excel program.

Martinez. "We are extremely proud of these individuals who've guided their students and staff during such an uncertain time in education."

Trainer is a science teacher at the far north side school and is in her 11th year of teaching. Over time, she has been named a teaching fellow with several education associations such as Grosvenor Teacher, Teach Plus Policy, and the Ecology Project International.

“This [award] is surreal; I’m still trying to process this,” said Trainer, a Bowling Green State University and UIC graduate. “I always wanted to teach in Chicago Public Schools. This award is a reflection of all the talented educators I’ve worked with over time – and who continue to help me.”

Hassan, the principal at Ferdinand Peck Elementary School since August 2000, will receive the Those Who Excel award for excellence, an award that’s selected by a committee of administrators, teachers, educational service personnel, student support personnel, and past Illinois Teacher of the Year winners.

Hassan, who held several positions at CPS over the span of 40 years, including teaching, bilingual and English as a Second Language (ESL) coordinator, and acting assistant principal, said he was honored to learn the news that he will be recognized.

“After all these years, winning this award demonstrates what an educator does for a community,” said Hassan. “At Peck, especially during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, we’ve had to expand the scope of what our students and their families need in terms of social and emotional learning, while keeping them on track with education support and training. Education is an essential nutrient for our children in Chicago. Equity can not be achieved without access because equity plus access equals justice – that’s what we all strive to achieve.”

ISBE will recognize all its awardees and will announce the Teacher of the Year later this spring.

Thursday’s announcement follows recent news that 13 CPS teachers and two principals were named as finalists for Golden Apple Awards.

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