



About the Awardees

By Stephen M. Rocketto
srocketto@aquilasy.com

The Connecticut Science Teachers Association is proud to announce that Mr. Matthew A. Erickson of the Edgewood School in New Haven has been selected for to receive its **Middle School Science Teacher of the Year Award**. The award was presented at the Association Banquet at the New Haven Lawn Club on the evening of April 27th.

Mr Erickson teaches 7th grade life science and 8th earth science . He is noted for his enthusiasm and sense of humor. Over almost two decades, he has provoked student inquiry and effectively leads his classes in the challenges of science education. His calm demeanor, even when students might misbehave, has earned him respect in the classroom but he always focuses on the less on at hand and as one student states, "stuff I don't understand, he explains it and makes it fun."

Mr. Erickson earned a Bachelor's Degree in Biology, a Master's Degree in Environmental Education, and a Sixth Year Certificate from Southern Connecticut State University and has taught at both St. Stanislaus in Meriden and Fair Haven Middle School in New Haven. During that

2009 Science Educator Awards Banquet honors outstanding science educators.

Many attend to honor Excellence in Science Teaching and Science Supervision awardees.



Photo Credit: Anrea Livolsi

Dr. Ralph J. Yulo Jr. is interviewed at Peabody Museum reception by WTNH Channel 8 about Excellence in Science Teaching Awards. Dr. Mel Goldstein, WTNH meteorologist, and award recipient in foreground.

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time, he has been active in school accreditation and school improvement programs and has served in a number of leadership positions. His extracurricular work centered on science fair programs in New Haven.

His work with other teachers is noteworthy. A colleague praises work in curriculum modification and his "open embrace of new ideas and ...new methods." His work has been shared with new teachers and his impact extends beyond his classroom into the district as whole.

Contact Information:

Matthew A. Erickson
matthew.erickson@smet.net

Jessica Kane

Ms Jessica Lee Kane of the Saxe Middle School in New Canaan has been selected for to receive its **Elementary School Science Teacher of the Year Award**.

Ms Kane teaches 6th grade science and focuses

on inquiry based learning in which the students maintain a logbook of their science work both in and out of class. She focuses on teaching her students to understand fundamental concepts of science and articulate what they have learned by writing and the utilization of standard scientific tools such as sketches and graphs. One of her students illustrated the importance of his journal by stating that "My notebook is my sanctuary. It is where all my scientific thinking goes. It is my writer's notebook for all the science I do."

Ms Kane was educated at Keene State College and is a candidate for a Masters Degree in Education from Southern Connecticut State University. She has attended a number of educational workshops during the summer months and adheres to the credo that reflection and continual education is the core of her objective to be a "life long learner."

But Ms Kane is also a teacher of teachers and has offered a number of innovative workshops for

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2009 CSTA and CSSA Excellence in Science Education and Science Supervision Awardees



Photo Credit: Fred Myers

Dr. Sigmund Abeles Science Advocate Award is presented by Dr. Ralph J. Yulo Jr. at left to Dr. Mel Goldstein for his outstanding contributions to the science education community.



Photo Credit: Fred Myers

Jessica Kane from Saxe Middle School - New Canaan receives the Excellence in Elementary School Science Teaching Award from David Hostage, CSTA President.



Photo Credit: Fred Myers

Matthew Erickson (at Left) from Edgewood School-New Haven, is congratulated as he receives his Excellence in Middle School Science Teaching Award from David Hostage, CSTA President



CSSA 2009 Outstanding Science Supervisor



Photo Credit: Fred Myers

Julia Sherman at E.O. Smith - Storrs, is presented the 2009 CSSA Outstanding Science Supervisor Award by Harry Rosvally, CSSA Vice-president.



Photo Credit: Fred Myers

Bill Peltz presented 2009 Marty Tafel Awards to Ryan D. Kerr from St. Joseph School, Danbury and to Christina A. Cotte from St. Gregory the Great School, Danbury.



Photo Credit: Fred Myers

Chris Joseph Willems of Wilbur Cross H.S. receives congratulations from David Hostage, CSTA President for the Excellence in Secondary School Science Teaching Award.



Photo Credit: Fred Myers

Sig Abeles and Dr. Mel Goldstein enjoy a lighter moment at the 2009 Awards Banquet.

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her colleagues. Much of her effort has focused on modifying “cookbook” labs to make them more a student directed activity. In March of 2008, she and her collaborators presented the work at the National Science Teacher Association national conference.

She also directs student extracurricular activities in the arts and has directed and choreographed a half dozen musical plays and has taught a summer program for younger students in multi-cultural dance.

Contact Information:

Jessica Lee Kane

jessica.kane@newcanaan.k12.ct.us

Chris Joseph Willems

Mr. Chris Joseph Willems of the Wilbur Cross High School in New Haven has been selected for to receive its High School Science Teacher of the Year Award.

Mr Willems teaches five sections of biology at Wilbur Cross . He has been commended by one of his students for his class control and his promotion of a learning environment. They look forward to his laboratory sessions because they incorporate “real-world” technology and and enjoyable experiences.

Willems is an active member of the community of teachers which include his school, district, and the state. A New Haven native and Wilbur Cross graduate, he serves on school planning teams and community educational organizations.

He holds two Baccalaureate degrees: one in German from the University of Connecticut and another in biology from the University of Massachusetts in Boston. His Masters Degree in Education is from Lesley University.

Before coming back to Connecticut, Willems was active in a wide range of bio-environmental programs. He worked in integrating the water quality, bird and insect diversity projects with the

Massachusetts science frameworks which led to a series of student workshops in the Charles River environs.

In New Haven, he has continued this work in the city parks and at the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station.

A colleague praises his ability to “foster partnerships with outside agencies” such as Yale University.

One of his students recently won a paid three

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week internship at the Yale Engineering Laboratory as a result of his participation in Willems Bio21 course.

Contact Information:
Chris Joseph Willems
203-467-4727
chris.willems@New-Haven.k12.ct.us

Dr. Mel Goldstein — “Dr. Mel”

Awarded the Dr. Sigmund Abeles Science Advocate Award. A joint award of CSTA and CSSA.

“From the time he was a young boy, Dr. Mel Goldstein has been fascinated by the weather. So fascinated, he started a meteorology club when he was in the 8th grade, and decades later, the club is still in existence.

Now Dr. Mel is studying the weather for Connecticut viewers on News Channel 8 at Noon.

A popular meteorologist- Dr. Mel wears many hats. Since 1970, Mel has taught at Western Connecticut State University, where he developed the Weather Center and established the first and only Bachelor’s degree program in meteorology in Connecticut. He also developed a severe-storm prediction index used by numerous electric utilities across the country.

He has been a consultant to firms such as IBM, Union Carbide, General Electric, Detroit Edison, Philadelphia Electric, Northeast Utilities, and United Illuminating.

Mel’s media career began with a single radio station, and by 1976 his broadcasts were on dozens of radio stations nationwide. He then began doing television and in the 1980’s, his forecasts were seen across the country on the Satellite News Channel, an all-news cable effort of ABC and Westinghouse. He became the Chief Meteorologist at WTNH-TV in 1986. Dr. Mel earned a Ph.D. in Meteorology from NYU and holds honorary doctorates from Albertus Magnus College and Mitchell College.

In addition, Dr. Mel has made the transition to author by writing “*The Complete Idiot’s Guide To Weather.*” It’s a quick and easy guide that can answer any question about weather. The profits from this book are donated to cancer research.

Dr. Mel also wrote a weekly column for the Hartford Courant in Northeast Magazine for 20 years.

All of Mel’s hard work has not gone unnoticed. He has received the President’s Award from Western Connecticut State University for his teaching and community service; the Connecticut Bloomer

and a nomination for an Emmy award for a series of educational vignettes about the weather.

Dr. Mel also won Best of Connecticut poll for an on-air meteorologist on each of the past eight years. This reader’s poll is conducted by Connecticut Magazine.

He has served as director on several boards, including the Connecticut Academy for Education, the Long Island Sound Foundation, and the Ronald McDonald House. He also has an endowed research fund in his name at Yale University. The research is for multiple myeloma.

A scholarship fund has been created in his honor for meteorology students at Western Connecticut State University.

While he has retired from teaching, he holds the honorary title of Director Emeritus at the Western Connecticut State University Weather Center.

When he’s not in front of the camera, Dr. Mel can be found playing jazz piano at his home overlooking Long Island Sound. He and his wife, Arlene, have two daughters, Laura and Melodie.

Dr. Mel talks about Multiple Myeloma and anything else on his mind at drmelmyeloma.com”

2009 Marty Tafel Award Winners

Ryan D. Kerr

Grade 8

St. Joseph School, Danbury, Connecticut

Award winner in Life Science. His topic: “The Effect of Phytohormones on Plant Growth and Development.”

Christina A Cotte

St. Gregory The Great School, Danbury, Connecticut

Award Winner in Physical Science. Her topic: “*Metal Corrosion.*”

Both awardees are writing about their reearch which will appear in the Summer 2009 issue of the *Connecticut Journal of Science Education* — a publication of CSTA.

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Don’t be shy...

Nominate a colleague for the 2010 CSTA Outstanding Science Teacher Award.

We would like to have applications for Elementary, Middle School and Secondary nominees.

Visit CSTA’s website csta-us.org for award requirements and to download an application.

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