



# NEWS RELEASE

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## **Woodlawn Middle School educator chosen as Baltimore County's new Teacher of the Year for 2024-25**

***Principal, Assistant Principal of Year also chosen at BCPS Champions for Children gala***

TOWSON, MD. – Stephanie Gerhold, an English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) teacher at Woodlawn Middle School, was named the 2024-25 Teacher of the Year for Baltimore County Public Schools today during a gala celebration of the county's more than 9,000 classroom educators as well as its school administrators, staff, and community supporters.

Also announced during the event at George Washington Carver Center for Arts and Technology in Towson were the 2024-25 BCPS Principal of the Year, Melissa Lingenfelder of Sandalwood Elementary School in Essex, and 2024-25 Assistant Principal of the Year, Dorian Barnes of Deer Park Magnet Middle School in Randallstown.

"We are so proud – and so grateful – to have such exceptional educators as Stephanie Gerhold, Melissa Lingenfelder, and Dorian Barnes serving children in Baltimore County Public Schools," said BCPS Superintendent Dr. Myriam Rogers. "The dedication, professionalism, leadership, and talent they bring into our classrooms and schools every day is amazing. They are superb representatives of our teachers and school leadership, and we congratulate them and all the Champions for Children we celebrate today."

Gerhold, the BCPS Middle School Teacher of the Year, was among three finalists from across the county who were honored by Dr. Rogers, Board of Education of Baltimore County Chair Tiara Booker-Dwyer, and Baltimore County Executive Johnny Olszewski. Also congratulated

were finalists Kim Brackeen, a social-emotional learning teacher at Padonia International Elementary School and BCPS Elementary School Teacher of the Year, and Kate Clemmens, an English language arts teacher at Woodlawn High School and the BCPS High School Teacher of the Year.

A teacher for 20 years, Gerhold has taught ESOL, Spanish, and English, and she currently is department chair of the ESOL, World Languages, Science, and Library Media Services programs at Woodlawn Middle. A National Board Certified educator and Fulbright Scholar, she has taught students from PreKindergarten to college and has been both a resource teacher and an instructor in the BCPS Virtual Learning Program. Gerhold earned a bachelor's degree from Washington College in English and Hispanic studies and a master's degree from Salisbury University in teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages. An advocate of active student engagement and an inclusive learning environment, Gerhold says serving the region's expanding English language learner population has been a joy.

“Witnessing students become the first in their families to attend college or hearing that former students are now teachers themselves is extremely rewarding,” Gerhold said. “Collaborating with administrators, educators, staff, and local stakeholders to provide top-notch instruction, regardless of ZIP codes or English language proficiency, is a privilege. This daily inspiration drives me to ensure all students receive culturally responsive, high-quality instruction tailored to their needs, celebrating their diverse backgrounds and cultures.”

The BCPS Teacher of the Year was chosen by a committee composed of BCPS administrators, staff, students, TABCO representation, and the 2023-24 BCPS Teacher of the Year, Beverly Folkoff. This year, a record 171 Teacher of the Year nominations were received from 176 BCPS schools, centers, and programs.

The 2024-25 BCPS Teacher of the Year program is supported by a generous array of education partners, including The Education Foundation of BCPS, Inc., First Financial Federal Credit Union, Flowers & Fancies, NTA Life, the Padonia Park Club, Chick-fil-A, American Design Associates, Media Star Promotions, the Little Free Library, the Caravan of Gratitude, and the Exchangeree – Gizmos and Gadgets Galore.

The BCPS Teacher of the Year will represent the school system and its more than 9,000 professional educators in the Maryland state Teacher of the Year program.

Lingenfelder and Barnes stood out among strong slates of finalists for school administrator honors. Joining Lingenfelder as finalists for Principal of the Year were Adam Carney of Cockeysville Middle School and Dr. Scott Rodriguez-Hobbs of Patapsco High School and Center for the Arts. Assistant Principal of the Year finalists, in addition to Barnes, were Erica Lundy of Lyons Mill Elementary School and Kevin Whatley of George Washington Carver Center for Arts and Technology.

Both Principal and Assistant Principal of the Year were chosen after asking BCPS students and their families, staff, and the public for nominations, which were then considered by the staff and leadership of the Education Foundation of BCPS, Inc. In all, BCPS received 1,068 nominations for Principal of the Year and 847 for Assistant Principal of the Year.

BCPS also celebrated eight new “Champions for Children” at the event who were selected by administrators and staff, employee union representatives, and other members of the BCPS community. Honored at Thursday’s gala were:

- Rising Star Teacher of the Year – Meaghan Doyle, PreKindergarten teacher, Glenmar Elementary School
- Supervisory Leader of the Year – MiVida Parham, technical programs supervisor, Office of Career and Technical Education
- Supporting Services Employee of the Year – Ceaira Isaac, paraeducator, Meadowood Education Center
- Community School Facilitator of the Year – Courtney Warlick, Battle Grove Elementary School
- Transportation Champion – Terrilyn Millen, bus driver, Rosedale Bus Lot
- AFSCME Employee of the Year – Thelma Thomas, custodial trainer, Department of Facilities Management and Strategic Planning
- Volunteer Champion – Karen Nelson, Milbrook Elementary School
- Business Partner Champion – Eric Church, CEO, First Financial Federal Credit Union

*(Note: Photographs of [Gerhold](#), [Lingenfelder](#), and [Barnes](#) can be found on Flickr.)*

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