



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 8, 2016

THE SMITH CENTER SHINES SPOTLIGHT ON LOCAL TEACHERS AT INAUGURAL HEART OF EDUCATION AWARDS, MAY 7

*More than 800 educators from the Clark County School District recognized for
exceptional efforts*

LAS VEGAS – On Saturday, May 7, [The Smith Center for the Performing Arts](#) honored educators from the Las Vegas valley as it hosted **The Heart of Education Awards**. The special event powered by **The Rogers Foundation** recognized hundreds of Clark County School District (CCSD) teachers who have gone above and beyond for their students and have greatly contributed to their education, livelihood and betterment.

In its inaugural year, The Heart of Education Awards recognized more than 800 finalists for their outstanding contributions. Of those 800 plus finalists, 21 teachers received special recognition and were awarded a commemorative Heart of Education trophy, a cash prize of \$5,000 sponsored by **Wynn Las Vegas** and a \$1,000 check to benefit a program of their choice at their school. These recipients are:

Allison Halpin, Arbor View High School
Amanda Jones, C. P. Squires Elementary School
Beatriz Romero, Western High School
Brittany Boyle, Vegas Verdes Elementary School
Christa Fialkiewicz, Green Valley High School
Donald Bernard, West Preparatory Academy
Elizabeth Mulvey, Whitney Elementary School
Eric Stensrud, Cimarron-Memorial High School

Heather Houchens, Barbara & Hank Junior High School
Jessica Banales, J. E. Manch Elementary School
Justin Brecht, John F. Mendoza Elementary School
Linda Coleman, John W. Bonner Elementary School
Lynne Gronert, Selma F. Bartlett Elementary School
Marc Rogers, Cimarron-Memorial High School
Melissa Gillespie, Global Community High School
Michele Kamleiter, Martin Luther King Jr. Elementary School
Paul Beuning, Chaparral High School
Robin Fulmer, Moapa Valley High School
Samantha Jiminez-Hooks, Jack & Terry Mannion Middle School
Sheburra Moore, Roy W. Martin Middle School
Shirley Cunningham, Charles Silvestri Junior High School

An additional award was presented by the *Las Vegas Review-Journal*, “R-J’s People’s Choice Award,” to **Martin Vece** from Canyon Springs High School, who received a \$10,000 cash prize after taking in more than 10,000 votes. Five principals were also honored for their exceptional efforts, each receiving a \$5,000 check presented by **The Public Education Foundation**. These recipients are:

Debbie Brockett
Dr. Dustin Mancl
Dr. Reece Oswalt
John Haynal
Lisa Burkhead

The show produced by The Smith Center president and CEO, **Myron Martin** featured Las Vegas headliner **Frankie Moreno**, renowned singer **Clint Holmes**, Broadway singing sensation **Capathia Jenkins** and famous poet, writer and performer **Shane Koyczan** – all who delivered extraordinary performances in honor of the special event. The evening was emceed by stage, film and TV star **Erich Bergen**, who currently appears in *Madam Secretary*. The invitation-only affair also featured an appearance by **Pat Skorkowsky**, CCSD Superintendent, Rogers Foundation representatives **Beverly Rogers** and **Rory Reid** as well as **Mayor Carolyn Goodman**, who came out to support this honorary initiative. Also presenting was *Las Vegas Review-Journal* Publisher **Craig Moon**, President and CEO of The Public Education Foundation **Judi Steele**, Chairman of the Board for The Smith Center, **Don Snyder**, Vice Chairman **Dr. Keith Boman** and **Roger Thomas**,

Designer.

For high-res photos from the event, please click here:

<http://bit.ly/1ZtPn5w>

Credit: Erik Kabik and Geri Kodey

For broadcast quality video from the event, please click here:

<http://bit.ly/1VPf5mU>

Credit: Cade Cridland from the Clark County School District

Inspired by a program created by the Kennedy Center in Washington D.C., The Heart of Education Awards celebrates outstanding teachers from various Clark County schools, inviting nominated applicants to share personal accounts of how they positively impacted the needs and education of a student or classroom. In addition to The Rogers Foundation and Wynn Las Vegas, major supporters included **AEG Live**, **Cirque du Soleil®**, the **Las Vegas Review-Journal**, **Switch**, **Las Vegas Motor Speedway** and **NV Energy**.

For more information about The Heart of Education Awards, please visit TheHeartOfEducation.org.

###

MEDIA CONTACT:

Erica Benken / Olivia Steinberg

Kirvin Doak Communications

EBenken@kirvindoak.com / OSteinberg@kirvindoak.com

702-737-3100

ABOUT THE HEART OF EDUCATION AWARDS:

The invitation-only event, which celebrates outstanding teachers from various Clark County schools, was inspired by a program created by the Kennedy Center in Washington D.C. A long term commitment from The Rogers Foundation made this program possible, and gracious Las Vegas community members came together to make it great. Nominated applicants were invited to share personal accounts of how they positively impacted the needs and education of a student or classroom. All applications were reviewed by community leaders, education experts, sponsors and The Smith Center staff.

ABOUT THE SMITH CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS:

The hallmark of downtown Las Vegas' 61-acre urban development known as Symphony Park, [The Smith Center for the Performing Arts](#) is a public-private partnership that

opened in March 2012. Heralded as the city's Heart of the Arts®, The Smith Center is an architectural triumph and long-awaited cultural achievement that educates and entertains the citizens of Southern Nevada. The \$470 million world-class performing arts center offers a blend of performances by resident companies, first-run touring attractions, lectures and internationally-acclaimed performers in music, theater and dance. The five-acre campus features four performance spaces including the 2,050-seat Reynolds Hall, the 258-seat Cabaret Jazz club, the 240-seat Troesh Studio Theater and the 1.7-acre Donald W. Reynolds Symphony Park for outdoor concerts. Additionally, the campus is home to the Discovery Children's Museum that opened in March 2013. For more information about The Smith Center for the Performing Arts, please visit www.TheSmithCenter.com. Keep up with news and events on [Facebook](#) and follow The Smith Center on Twitter at [@SmithCenterLV](#).

ABOUT THE ROGERS FOUNDATION:

The Rogers Foundation is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization based in Las Vegas, Nevada. Founded in 2013 by Jim and Beverly Rogers, The Rogers Foundation awards scholarships to individual students in Southern Nevada, grants to educational institutions in Southern Nevada, and support for artists and organizations that support the arts in Southern Nevada. Founded and based in Southern Nevada, The Rogers Foundation can be contacted at 702.657.3114 or online at therogers.foundation.

ABOUT CLARK COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT:

Established in 1956, Clark County School District is the fifth largest school district in the country, educating almost 75 percent of all students in Nevada with more than 320,000 students enrolled in Kindergarten through 12th grade. The district encompasses 357 schools and approximately 8,000 square miles in southern Nevada and is a minority majority student district. With more than 40,000 employees, CCSD is also the largest employer in the state.

CCSD is governed by a Board of Trustees comprised of seven members who represent different geographic regions within the county. The mission of the board is to ensure "all students progress in school and graduate prepared to succeed and contribute in a global diverse society". The district offers nationally recognized Magnet Schools and Career & Technical Academies as well as an online secondary school (Nevada Learning Academy) and several International Baccalaureate programs available to elementary, middle and high school students.

Services offered by the district also include a school police department, adult education courses, special education, and partnerships with higher education institutions and community organizations such as Vegas PBS and the Public Education Foundation. As the largest school district in Nevada, CCSD plays a pivotal role in ensuring the future

success, growth and advancement of the state.