

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Nashville Education Leaders Inducted into the Public Schools Hall of Fame

The Nashville Public Education Foundation celebrates its 20th anniversary and challenges community to help city prioritize children and youth during first in-person event in three years

NASHVILLE, TENN. – Sept. 8, 2022 – Today the [Nashville Public Education Foundation](#) (NPEF) hosted the city’s educators, community and business leaders, and policymakers at its annual Public Schools Hall of Fame luncheon. Returning to the Music City Center after two consecutive virtual celebrations, the Hall of Fame honored seven individuals and two organizations dedicated to bettering the city’s public schools and investing in its students. This year’s event, presented by First Horizon Foundation, coincided with the foundation’s 20th anniversary year. Nearly 700 people attended including Mayor Cooper and Director of Metro Nashville Public Schools Dr. Adrienne Battle.

“The Public Schools Hall of Fame is the time each year when we come together to honor the amazing people in our public schools and those in our community who do so much for our students” said **Katie Cour, Nashville Public Education Foundation President & CEO**. “In honor of our 20th anniversary, we are asking the community to not only celebrate this year’s honorees, but also to work together to help make Nashville a city that prioritizes children and youth in all aspects.”

This year’s event was co-chaired by **Lisa Ferrelli**, a 2021 Hall of Fame Distinguished Alumni honoree and a Senior Vice President at Bank of America, and **Alfonzo Alexander**, the Chief Ethics and Diversity Officer of the National Association of State Boards of Accountancy (NASBA), who serves on the NPEF board of directors. Awards were sponsored by Belmont University, Lipscomb University, Nissan, UBS, and Vanderbilt University.

“Celebrating the outstanding people working tirelessly to improve our public schools is an honor,” said **Carol Yochem, First Horizon Bank Middle Tennessee Region President**. “Each year, we are proud to stand alongside organizations like NPEF and our fellow Hall of Fame sponsors to recognize the great work happening in Nashville every day.” First Horizon Foundation is the presenting sponsor of the Public Schools Hall of Fame for the fifth consecutive year.

For 18 of its 20 years, NPEF has honored Nashville individuals and organizations committed to supporting the city’s public schools and students during the Public Schools Hall of Fame. The [Hall of Fame](#) has become an annual milestone for community leaders to gather to celebrate the successes happening in Nashville’s schools and to inspire solutions to challenges in education.

The 2022 Public Schools Hall of Fame Honorees are:

- Kay Simmons, founding director of Nashville Alliance for Public Education (now NPEF), Nelson C. Andrews Distinguished Service Award
- Dr. André Churchwell, graduate of East High School, Distinguished Alumni Award
- Diane Janbakhsh, graduate of Overton High School, Distinguished Alumni Award

- Dwayne Tucker, graduate of North High School, Distinguished Alumni Award
- Angela Allen, McGavock High School, Inspiring Educator Award
- Laura Vignon, McGavock High School, Inspiring Educator Award
- The Black Book Project, Inspiring Innovation Award
- Urban Green Lab, Inspiring Innovation Award
- K.C. Winfrey, Cora Howe School, Inspiring Leader Award

For two decades, the Nashville Public Education Foundation (NPEF) has prioritized the needs of students and schools in a rapidly evolving city. With an unwavering focus on helping to shape a future where every student thrives, NPEF has proven that bold change is best achieved with an informed and united community of educators and business and civic leaders.

Since its founding in 2002, NPEF has fostered data-driven solutions that have led to tangible results in professional learning for teachers, school funding, teacher pay, principal quality, and more. To learn about the milestones of NPEF's support of Metro Nashville Public Schools and its students, visit nashvillepef.org/history.

Director of Metro Nashville Public Schools Dr. Adrienne Battle Commends Recent Successes in MNPS and Congratulates Hall of Fame Honorees

Caption: Director of Metro Nashville Public Schools Dr. Adrienne Battle spoke at the annual Public Schools Hall of Fame, highlighting the accomplishments of the district and of the Hall of Fame's latest honorees.

Pictured: Dr. Adrienne Battle



The Late Kay Simmons' Family Accepts the Nelson C. Andrews Distinguished Service Award, NPEF's Highest Honor, on Her Behalf

Caption: Keith Simmons, the husband of the late Kay Simmons, and his children accepted the Nelson C. Andrews Distinguished Service Award from Vanderbilt University award sponsor Nathan Green at the Public Schools Hall of Fame on September 8, 2022.

Pictured, from left to right: Lauren Beem, Nathan Green, Keith Simmons, Jennifer McGugin, Barton Simmons



Distinguished MNPS Alumni Dr. André Churchwell, Diane Janbakhsh, Dwayne Tucker, Inducted to NPEF Hall of Fame with Belmont University Award Sponsor Dr. Greg Jones

Caption: The Distinguished Alumni Award recipients were chosen for their contributions to Nashville’s community and public schools. These outstanding MNPS graduates use their unique skills and gifts to give back to the city’s students and exhibit the greatness that can be achieved through quality education.

Pictured, from left to right: Dwayne Tucker, Dr. Greg Jones, Diane Janbakhsh, Dr. André Churchwell



Annette Eskind Inspiring Educators Angela Allen and Laura Vignon Receive Cash Prize with UBS Award Sponsor Scott Brisson

Caption: The Annette Eskind Inspiring Educator Award, presented by UBS, recognizes two MNPS educators transforming the lives of students in the classroom and beyond. Each Inspiring Educator receives \$2,500 along with an additional \$2,500 for their schools to support their work.

Pictured, from left to right: Angela Allen, Scott Brisson, Laura Vignon



Inspiring Leader K.C. Winfrey Receives Cash Prize with Lipscomb University Award Sponsor Dr. Candice McQueen

Caption: The Inspiring Leader Award, presented by Lipscomb University, is given to an educational leader in MNPS who demonstrates exemplary achievements in public education at the district or school level. The winner receives \$2,500 along with an additional \$7,500 for their school.

Pictured, from left to right: Dr. Candice McQueen, K.C. Winfrey



Thomas J. Sherrard Inspiring Innovation Award Recipients The Black Book Project and Urban Green Lab Receive Cash Prize with Nissan Award Sponsor Markita Terry

Caption: The Thomas J. Sherrard Inspiring Innovation Award, presented by Nissan, honors organizations going above and beyond to make a difference for Nashville's students. Each Inspiring Innovation honoree is awarded a \$5,000 grant to further their mission.

Pictured, from left to right: Meredith McKinney, Markita Terry, Todd Lawrence



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About the Nashville Public Education Foundation

The Nashville Public Education Foundation is a nonprofit organization that works to remove the barriers to educational experiences by highlighting success, serving as a strategic thought partner to Metro Nashville Public Schools, convening stakeholders, and advocating for change so all students can thrive in school. Since its founding in 2002, NPEF has fostered data-driven solutions that have led to tangible results in professional learning for teachers, teacher pay, principal quality, college access and success, and more. To learn about NPEF's support of Metro Nashville Public Schools and its students, visit nashvillepef.org.

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ACCESS TO HIGH RESOLUTION PHOTOS: [Dropbox](#)