



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

CONTACT: Edwin M. Schaffler, President

972.661.9792

**THE CATHOLIC FOUNDATION PRESENTS 20 DALLAS-AREA EDUCATORS, STAFF  
WITH “WORK OF HEART” CASH AWARDS**

***Recipients receive \$500 each for personal use***

DALLAS – A group of 20 local educators and staff, ranging from principals to coaches to administrative assistants, will receive a thank you from The Catholic Foundation for their hard work and dedication – a Work of Heart Award and \$500 gift.

The Work of Heart Awards were established by an anonymous Dallas family through The Catholic Foundation to honor educators and staff of Catholic lower, middle and high schools located in the Diocese of Dallas. Since 2005, the Catholic Foundation has presented 406 grants totaling \$288,500 to individuals who serve children in 37 area schools. Recipients are nominated by students, teachers, parents, administrators and community members and receive \$500 for their personal use.

“The Work of Heart Award is just a small token of the high regard our community holds for the special teachers, administrators and staff in Dallas-area Catholic schools,” said Edwin M. Schaffler, Foundation president and CEO. “The Catholic Foundation presents the awards to give dedicated individuals some well-deserved recognition for the work to which they have dedicated their lives – providing guidance, education, encouragement and support to our children.”

Recipients of the Work of Heart Awards were selected from written nominations submitted to the Catholic Foundation and judged based on traditional merit criteria including tenure and leadership, acts of kindness or charity, Christian example, mentoring and simply going the extra mile for an individual student, family or the community.

The following recipients each received a \$500 Work of Heart Award in recognition of their outstanding service. Each is listed with a comment from the nomination letter submitted on his or her behalf.

-more-

**Catholic Foundation Work of Heart Awards**  
**Page Two**

Bishop Lynch High School

- Ben Dasch, Football Coach

*"Ben's service to the community at Bishop Lynch High School is unparalleled. Ben is the backbone of our football program...he is fervent in his commitment to the betterment of any community in which he resides. I have never heard or seen a student reluctant to approach him."*

- Michelle Dunkins, English Teacher

*"Michelle has been teaching for about five years and she is now one of my inspirations even though I am the experienced veteran...She goes out of her way to make sure the kids know and understand what they are doing. Michelle, as anyone can tell you at Lynch, has a heart of gold."*

Collins Catholic School, Corsicana

- JoAnn Stutts, Technology/English Teacher/Librarian

*"When you get to her age and you can still find excitement in the newest project, really want to move that child onto the next level, can crawl around on the floor to shelve books or run cable – then you're looking at teaching that has to be motivated from heartfelt love of service."*

Holy Trinity Catholic School

- Carolyn Alvarez, Teacher Assistant

*"She's an institution and a force of nature all in one. She is fearless and funny and kind. Plus, I'm pretty sure she never sleeps. Holy Trinity Catholic School is a better place because of her."*

Jesuit College Preparatory School

- Rob McGhee, English Teacher

*"Rob McGhee is a truly inspirational and loving individual. (His) passion for social justice inspires others. Year after year, (his) prayer services are insightful, encouraging, and motivating."*

John Paul II High School

- Suellyn Chesal, Math Teacher

*"The ones who take the time out of their day to help another despite what is going on in their life shine in this saddened world. I have the perfect candidate who has touched my heart and so many other students. The pure spirit found in my math teacher, Mrs. Chesal."*

- Hailey Drescher, English Teacher

*"Mrs. Drescher is without a doubt the teacher I will remember throughout my school career. She is who I use as a model for how I should act when in doubt. I nominate Mrs. Drescher for her enthusiasm, caring spirit and her daily Christian example."*

- Peg Waldschmidt, Drama Teacher

*"With the help of some students, she builds the set, does the tech work, directs the musical, handles the money and works on almost any and everything she is not required to do. Mrs. Peg Waldschmidt would be an excellent candidate for the Work of Heart because all she does is work to help students succeed in life and help them achieve their goals."*

Mary Immaculate Catholic School

- Vivian Marino, Music Teacher

*"When I see Vivian rushing around the building, passing out music, pushing carts full of instruments down the hall, playing the piano, and leading a class in song, I marvel at her energy. It seems as if she never rests! I smile and think how lucky we are to have this talented teacher here at Mary Immaculate."*

## Catholic Foundation Work of Heart Awards Page Three

### Mount St. Michael Catholic School

- Melissa Harmon, 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade Teacher

*"Walking into her classroom is a joy! The children are engaged and excited because of Melissa's nurturing balance of love and discipline. Under her instruction and example, the children grow in knowledge and virtue."*

### Our Lady of Perpetual Help

- Rosemary Fougerousse, Kindergarten Teacher

*"She does a wonderful job preparing our kindergartners for first grade. Rosemary always finds ways to make learning fun for her students. She is pleasant, friendly and a delight to work with."*

### Santa Clara of Assisi Catholic Academy

- Todd Higginbotham, Principal

*"He has brought with him a vision for the future of Santa Clara. The results are becoming evident in a gradual manner and they will continue to grow in the near future for the betterment of the school, the staff and faculty. His contribution by bringing Santa Clara grant money, a new literacy program, and a vision of hope for the school sends a positive message to the community."*

*"From what I know he is the best principal we have ever had at this school. And as a student, I would like to nominate Mr. Higginbotham, our principal, to be rewarded for all the things he has done."*

### St. Augustine Catholic School

- Lela Jackson, 1<sup>st</sup> Grade Teacher

*"She is so wise. She is so calm. She is pure professional. To sum it up – she is a class act!"*

### St. John Catholic School, Ennis

- Brian Pierce, History Teacher/Basketball Coach

*"He is a very committed teacher in that he understands the benefits that each student has at such a small Catholic school. He has gone above and beyond his duties as a teacher..."*

### St. Joseph Catholic School

- Charlene Boss, Business Manager

*"Charlene is the kind of person who takes pride in what she does and definitely takes her job seriously. She always has the best interest of the school at the top of her list. Now, we are proudly 309 students and Charlene can still call every student by name. She has handled all the growing pains that come with a growing school with such poise and eagerness."*

### St. Mark Catholic School

- Patti Corsi, Music Teacher

*"Patti Corsi is a music teacher at my old school. She goes out of her way to help others in subjects they are having trouble with. She is so nice and always has a smile. I believe Patti Corsi deserves this award more than anyone else."*

### St. Patrick School

- Therese Sabine, Religion/Guidance Teacher

*"She started the Outreach Program at St. Patrick Parish in order to assist the Sudanese "Lost Boys" to survive and succeed in the United States. Every Sunday, more than 200 refugees attend the Outreach Program at St. Patrick, and almost every parishioner has been in some way involved in this program... There can be no finer example of what it means to be a child of God than Therese Sabine. Her life is truly a Work of Heart."*

### St. Thomas Aquinas School

- Louise Bartosik, Administrative Assistant

*"Ms. Bartosik is that tireless employee who works in the office and does not get the recognition that teachers usually do. You will find her up at school late at night making sure all the little details are done for school to open the next day."*

-more-

**Catholic Foundation Work of Heart Awards  
Page Four**

- Michelle Simpkins, 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade Teacher

*"I truly believe that in every child's life there is one teacher that makes THE difference. Our son has been blessed to have that teacher this year in Michelle Simpkins. We can never thank (her) enough for the self-confidence and self-esteem she has nurtured and helped build in our children."*

Ursuline Academy

- Amanda Hahn, English Teacher

*"Ms. Hahn truly deserves this award as she is known to go the extra mile for her students and sets a wonderful example."*

To nominate a candidate for the "Work of Heart" Award, please contact the Foundation's Web site at **[www.catholicfoundation.com](http://www.catholicfoundation.com)** for instructions on the nomination process. Anyone serving as a full- or part-time employee in a Catholic school located in the Diocese of Dallas may be nominated. In addition to the \$500 awards, The Catholic Foundation will present up to eight Grand Awards of \$5,000 each during the school year.

An anonymous family has solely funded the Work of Heart Awards for the past three years and is now inviting like-minded individuals to join them. The family has offered to match individual donations to The Catholic Foundation for the Work of Heart Awards fund up to an undetermined amount, in an effort to permanently endow the program.

Chartered in 1955, The Catholic Foundation was founded by a group of dedicated Catholic laymen with a vision that extended far beyond the charitable needs of the moment. For over 50 years, this independent, nonprofit corporation has dedicated its resources to compassionate charitable giving through grants provided by benefactors through its many planned giving programs. The Foundation has been able to provide approximately \$21 million through hundreds of grants to various religious, educational and charitable organizations within the Diocese of Dallas during its 50 plus years of existence. In addition, donor-advised funds maintained at the Foundation have accounted for many more grants amounting to millions of dollars over the years.

**For additional information about The Catholic Foundation, call 972.661.9792.**

###