

2018 PCSS Conference

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The 64th Annual Pennsylvania Council for the Social Studies Conference



October 19—October 21, 2017

**Red Lion Hotel
4751 Lindle Road
Harrisburg, PA 17111**



**October 18—October 20, 2018
Red Lion Hotel - Harrisburg East
4751 Lindle Road
Harrisburg, PA 17111**



Conference Theme:

Social Studies: More Important Than Ever

PCSS 64th Annual Conference - October 19 - 21, 2017

2017 PCSS Awards



COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
HARRISBURG


THE GOVERNOR

GREETINGS:

It is my pleasure to welcome everyone to Harrisburg for the 64th Annual Pennsylvania Council for the Social Studies (PCSS) Conference.

The opportunity for civic engagement is a privilege and responsibility of all Americans. As the theme of this year's conference "Social Studies: More Important than Ever," alludes, the studying of the Social Sciences is critical to the future success of the commonwealth. Pennsylvanian and PCSS are committed to preserving and perpetuating our nation and commonwealth's rich history, as well as creating curricula and standards that promote civic competence. PCSS has been an invaluable support system for Pennsylvania's educators and school districts, and especially for our students. Each member of PCSS strives to enable our students to understand the world through historical, humanist, and many other lenses, ensuring that we are building a bright future full of capable, knowledgeable, critical thinking, and socially minded citizens.

As Governor, and on behalf of the citizens of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, I am honored to welcome you to Harrisburg. Please accept my best wishes for an enjoyable, productive conference and continued success.


TOM WOLF
Governor
October 19-21, 2017



vehicle to educate and sustain the history especially through educational outreach. The pivot would eventually transform the Historical Society located in the Oakland section of Pittsburgh to the Senator John Heinz History Center in the strip District in Pittsburgh. This commitment to education continued to The Heinz History Center a 2375,000 square-foot education institution " that engages and inspires a diverse audience with links to the past, understanding in the present, and guidance for the future by preserving history and presenting the American experience with a Western Pennsylvania connection." The History Center also operates Meadowcroft Rockshelter and the Fort Pitt Museum. The Heinz History Center is the largest history museum in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. In 1998, Andy Masich became the Chief Executive Officer. The expansion to the educational mission of the History Center has continued and grown under his leadership.

The Heinz History Center, a Smithsonian Affiliate, has become the leader in social studies education in Western Pennsylvania. The Museum outreach has not only utilized its wonderful museum exhibits both permanent and traveling, but also offers a complete array of programs for teachers and students. Last year 23,776 learners were engaged through educational programming. The History Center served 4,645 students from Pittsburgh Public Schools as well as 1,889 9th grade students from Pittsburgh Public Schools who were a part of the Civics Summit program, which engages all 9th grade students to become involved in civic change in their community. Last year 629 teachers attended professional development workshops and 457 students participated in the National History Day regional competition held annually at the History Center.

New programs such as the Pittsburgh Imagineers afterschool program which saw 457 students participate as well as 327 preschoolers and caregivers who attended the Hop into History program. The History Center's program " History Near You," combines local historical associations through the History Center Affiliates Program and school districts to create products in the form of project based research. The Heinz History center has hosted programs from multiple organizations that provide instructional opportunities and programs to teachers. The World Affairs Council of Pittsburgh, the Teaching American History program, The Bill of Rights Institute and the Foreign Policy Research Institute are only a few of the organizations who use this venue for their programs, as well as universities, colleges and the Intermediate Units in the region.

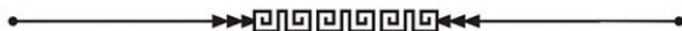
One of the first committees formed in the late 1980's was the Educational Advisory Committee which still exists today. Early members of the committee were Leo West, Dick Williams and Bill Switala Sr. and Steve Bullick, all presidents of the Pennsylvania Council for the Social Studies. The committee illustrates the long standing connection of the Museum to PCSS. The History Center also played host to the PCSS Conference in the late 1990's and became an early model for conferences being held in a museum location.

2017 PCSS Awards

The Kay Atman PCSS Award for Social Studies Innovation

Methacton High School (Anthony Maida) and Kensington Health Sciences Academy (James Williams)

Philadelphia's Kensington Health Sciences Academy and Montgomery County's Methacton High School are less than an hour's drive away from each other but the realities of the two institutions seem dimensions apart. Methacton educator Anthony Maida, inspired by his study of poverty and the writings of Jonathan Kozol, set up an exchange between his students and the students at Kensington Health Sciences High School that had students visit each other's school. Kensington principal James Williams, a Methacton parent, enthusiastically embraced the exchange. Maida's students read Kozol's *Savage Inequalities: Children in America's Schools* and explored questions of social justice in a society where such disparities in funding and opportunity exist between schools. But students from both schools said the best learning they experienced was just having the opportunity, rarely provided across such stark economic lines, to talk to each other.



The Ruth Stas PCSS Award for Social Studies Sustainability

Senator John Heinz History Center (Mariruth Leftwich and Steven Bullick)

Ruth Stas is a past president of PCSS (1995-96) and the longtime exhibits chair for the annual PCSS Conference. The award named in her honor--The Ruth Stas PCSS Award for Social Studies Sustainability--celebrates the retired Lancaster educator for her outstanding commitment to the field by honoring an ongoing program that or person(s) who promotes social studies education in the Commonwealth. The Senator John Heinz History Center is this year's honoree. It is an educational institution that engages and inspires a large and diverse audience with links to the past, understanding in the present, and guidance for the future by preserving regional history and presenting the American experience with a Western Pennsylvania connection. This work is accomplished in partnership with others through archaeology, archives, artifact collections, conservation, educational programs, exhibitions, library, museums, performance, publications, research, technical assistance, and increasingly through broadcast media and the internet.

In the late 1980's the Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania in Pittsburgh moved towards a new direction in not only preserving the regions heritage but in guaranteeing it would be a

2017 PCSS Awards

President's Award by PCSS President Nicole Roper

Harcum College (Kathy Smith and Gregg Volz)
Carl Pierce and Path Forward Foundation
Georgette Hackman - Cocalico Middle School
Paula McAvoy – Center for Ethics and Education at the University of Wisconsin-Madison

Program of Excellence Award

Norristown Area High School Youth Court (Audrey Dudley)

Outstanding Social Studies Project Award—Elementary Athens Area School District Third Grade Civil War Day (Athens Team)

Outstanding Social Studies Project Award-Secondary Law & Criminal Justice Program at Esperanza Academy Charter High School (Kyle Riley)

Outstanding Teacher of the Year

Mindy Fisher (K-8) - Dunbar Elementary School
Cheryl Stropko (Secondary) - Athens Area High School

Student Teacher of the Year

Alexander de Arana - Bodine High School

Rendell Friend of Social Studies

David S. John, Jr. - Pennsylvania State Alliance of YMCA

The Leo West PCSS Award for Social Studies Awareness & Promotion

Pennsylvania Bar Association Young lawyers Division
High School Statewide Mock Trial Competition
(Jennifer Menichini, Esq. and Jonathan Koltash, Esq.)

The Kay Atman PCSS Award for Social Studies Innovation

Methacton High School (Anthony Maida)
and
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President's Awards by PCSS President Nicole Roper

Harcum College (Kathy Smith and Gregg Volz)

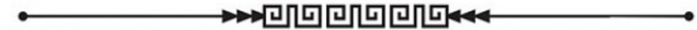
Harcum College is Associate degree granting, independent, residential college located on Philadelphia's Main Line in Bryn Mawr, PA. Harcum College provides its students with an opportunity for outstanding academic, career, and life preparation. Harcum teaches, mentors, and prepares students for success in their chosen profession in an experiential environment. Harcum's core values of excellence, civility, empowerment, integrity, community service, and respect for diversity assure that every student is valued and supported. Nowhere is Harcum's mission more clearly on display than in its youth court initiative which has brought longtime lawyer/educators Kathy Smith and Gregg Volz to the Harcum campus to create a course on youth court that will bring Harcum students into regional schools as resources for schools creating and maintaining youth courts.

Youth courts are student run alternatives to juvenile justice and school disciplinary systems. Students are trained by lawyers, law students, law and justice professionals and teachers to perform all court functions (judge, bailiff, jurors, etc.). Positive peer pressure helps offenders reflect on their behavior, recognize that actions have consequences, and accept responsibility. Neuroscience informs us that the stress and trauma disadvantaged youth experience impairs their decision making and impulse control. Absent nurturing relationships with stable adults, some youth fail to acquire the executive function skills to cope with their environment. Teachers confirm such youth have problems following instructions and socializing. Without effective intervention they fall behind, becoming a danger to themselves and their community. Youth court participation in under-resourced schools improves life outcomes for these youth. Youth court participation in well-resourced schools helps educate the next generation of social justice leaders.

Youth court participants report its transformative impact as they learn coping skills they otherwise fail to acquire, and will use the rest of their lives. Using restorative justice as a participatory tool, youth court students contribute to the well-being of their school and community. The most empowering courts limit the role of adults to trainer and mentor, trusting youth, and empowering them to control the entire process. Youth courts can operate after-school or be integrated within Social Studies classes, the preferred method of the Harcum program.

2017 PCSS Awards

Pennsylvania where he chairs the Program Committee of the board. John is in his 16th and final year as a member of the Middletown Area School District Board of School Directors where he has served as President, Vice President and chair of the Academic Affairs and Personnel committees. In 2016-17, John served as the Delegate Body Chair for the Harrisburg Area Community College and Co-Chair of the Trustee Nominating Committee.



The Leo West PCSS Award for Social Studies Awareness & Promotion

Pennsylvania Bar Association Young Lawyers Division High School Statewide Mock Trial Competition (Jennifer Menichini, Esq., PBA YLD Secretary and Jonathan Koltash, Esq., PBA YLD Chair)

The Pennsylvania Council for the Social Studies honors the Pennsylvania Bar Association Young Lawyers Division Statewide Mock Trial Program with its Leo West PCSS Award for Social Studies Awareness & Promotion. Leo West is a legend at PCSS, a past president now in his seventh decade of promoting social studies education. PCSS can think of no program that better promotes the social studies than the mock trial effort run by the PBA/YLD. One of the largest in the nation, the PBA/YLD Mock Trial Competition gives more than 300 high school student teams from across the state the opportunity to act as lawyers and witnesses in simulated civil and criminal trials before actual judges and panels of juries. Those trials are written by a team of dedicated lawyers which includes numerous alums of the competition. Lawyers volunteer to assist students as team advisors, scorekeepers and regional coordinators. Each year, the winning team goes on to represent Pennsylvania in the national competition. More importantly, each year, mock trial students take the valuable civic lessons they have learned by participating in mock trial to make a difference in their community and beyond.

2017 PCSS Awards

Student Teacher of the Year

Alexander de Arana - Bodine High School

The Pennsylvania Council for the Social Studies honors Alexander de Arana with its Student Teacher of the Year Award for his work at Kensington Health Sciences Academy during the 2016-17 academic year. Nominated by his Principal James Williams, Mr. de Arana distinguished himself in and outside the classroom during his time at Kensington and played a special part in the exchange program that Principal Williams started between KHSA and Methacton High School by being the older brother of one of the Methacton students while teaching the students at KHSA. Now teaching full time at Bodine High School in the School District of Philadelphia, Mr. de Arana is following in his mentor's footsteps, bringing the exchange program that Principal Williams started between KHSA and Methacton High School to Bodine.

Principal Williams had this to say about the awardee: "His commitment to relationship building with both staff and students exemplifies the type of service that I came to expect from this young man. His boy scout approach of always being prepared was constantly displayed in his well thought out and executed lessons. Alex demonstrated an understanding of the art of teaching that many veteran teachers lack. While I am sure that there are others who could be honored with this award, I would dare to say that you will be hard pressed to find someone who will honor this award the way that Alex will. In my 25 years of services as an educator I can say without reservation that Mr. de Arana is special."

Rendell Friend of Social Studies

David S. John, Jr. - Pennsylvania State Alliance of YMCA

The Rendell Friend of the Social Studies Award recognizes a professional from across the Commonwealth who is supportive of social studies education and of the Pennsylvania Council for the Social Studies. David S. John, Jr., fits that description well, serving as the Coordinating Advisor of the East Shore YMCA Youth and Government Program based in Harrisburg, PA. He began his service with the program in October 1988 and is celebrating his 30th year as an adult volunteer. Among his many past honors, in 2013, the State YMCA established the David S. John, Jr Delegation of the Year Award for the Youth and Government club most active in community service.

John is the Executive Director of the Pennsylvania State Alliance of YMCAs, a public policy and advocacy organization representing all 64 YMCA associations and 113 branch locations across the Commonwealth. John also serves on the Board of Directors of the State YMCA of

President's Awards by PCSS President Nicole Roper

Carl Pierce and Path Forward Foundation

Carl Pierce, head of the Path Forward Foundation, is being honored by the Pennsylvania Council for the Social Studies for his work with early elementary educators to create safe communities. The Path Forward Foundation is a registered 501(c) 3, non-profit grassroots collaborative that is goal oriented to leveraging resources and services to address the identified health and wellness needs of communities. Specific identified areas addressed by Path Forward Foundation include: bullying prevention/ harassment and intimidation; physical wellness and the dangers of poor nutrition and obesity; and oral health care.

Mr. Pierce and the Path Forward Foundation work with schools to create school specific anti-bullying learning guides from a model that Mr. Pierce developed. The guide teaches children the Four Anti-Bullying Rules from the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program that is the top research based bullying prevention program in the world and is part of Project-PEACE, a partner program of PCSS.

Georgette Hackman - Cocalico Middle School

Georgette Hackman, a PCSS Board member among her many activities, is being honored with a 2017 PCSS President's Award from PCSS President Nicole Roper for her service to the organization, originating and developing the PCSS social media outreach and spreading the good word about the organization across the state and beyond. Ms. Hackman, a seventh-grade social studies teacher at Cocalico Middle School and self-proclaimed "history geek," was noted in a recent news article as a "Revolutionary War buff and Abraham Lincoln Admirer". The story noted that attached to the back of her yellow Volkswagen Beetle is a license plate emblazoned with the words "LOVE ABE."

Ms. Hackman, a former fifth-grade teacher at Denver Elementary School until being hired at the middle school in 2015, has been honored by PCSS for her teaching skill and she is, along with a myriad array of honors for the work inside and beyond the classroom, a candidate for 2018 Pennsylvania Teacher of the Year. That award will be announced in December at the state Education Department's annual professional development conference in Hershey and everyone at PCSS is rooting for her to win!.

President's Awards by PCSS President Nicole Roper

Paula McAvoy - Center for Ethics and Education at the University of Wisconsin Madison

Paula McAvoy began her career as a high school social studies teacher in California, where she taught for and co-directed the Foothill Middle College Program for ten years. She went on to earn her doctorate in philosophy of education from the department of Educational Policy Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. After completing that degree in 2010, she worked as an assistant professor at Illinois State University and then became an Associate Program Officer at the Spencer Foundation. She is currently the Program Director of the Center for Ethics and Education at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Ms. McAvoy's philosophic work focuses on the aims of schooling in a democratic society, and she has recently used the tools of moral and political philosophy to consider cases of cultural and religious accommodation and the aims of sex education. Some of this work has been published in *Educational Theory* and *Theory and Research in Education*. In 2006, she began working with Diana Hess, Dean of the School of Education at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, on the *Discussing Controversial Issues* study, which provides the evidentiary basis for their groundbreaking 2015 book, *The Political Classroom: Evidence and Ethics in Democratic Education*. During the analysis of this work they noticed that teachers were confronting some common ethical problems in the classroom and that they were making quite different decisions about how best to respond. By bringing philosophy into conversation with the empirical findings, Ms. McAvoy and Dean Hess hope to have made a contribution to democratic education that is more helpful to educators than a strictly empirical study and is more attentive to the complex task of teaching than a strictly philosophical work.



***CONGRATULATIONS to all of the award winners
please visit our website***

***For more information on our award winners, please
visit our website:***

<http://pcssonline.org/>

2017 PCSS Awards

(Secondary) Cheryl Stropko - Athens Area High School

A Social Studies Teacher for Athens Area High School, located in rural Bradford County, Cheryl Stropko teaches AP United States Government and Politics, Sociology, and Civics and Government. Beyond the classroom, she is the advisor for the local chapters of National Honor Society, Rho Kappa National Social Studies Honor Society, and a co-advisor of Future Business Leaders of America. Stropko also serves the district as Act 48 Secondary Coordinator and has presented on multiple topics on In-service Days. She is a member of PCSS (newly elected to the Board) and NCSS and has presented at past PCSS conferences. She participated in the TAH – Teaching of American History- grant and the Foreign Research Institute. On the collegiate level, Stropko works as an Adjunct Instructor for Keystone College teaching political science and history. She holds a Master of Education from Mansfield University and notes that “Supporting my career goals and interests along the way are my wonderful husband and four children.”

Stropko found it a rewarding experience to start a local chapter of Rho Kappa National Social Studies Honor Society at her high school. Athens Area High School has approximately 70 members each year. The local group engages in various civic-related events to support the community as well as to raise awareness of Social Studies in the schools. Some of these opportunities include: Adopt-a-Highway, Mock Elections at AAHS, Support for the Troops – Yellow Ribbon Campaign, and Constitution Day.

In her own words, Stropko shows why she is well deserving to be recognized as PCSS' Outstanding teacher of the year: “As a Social Studies Teacher, I embrace new and engaging methodologies and strategies to make history and government relevant to our students in the hope that each of them will be a productive American citizen. I have implemented creative lessons through the use of blended learning and station learning by offering various opportunities to present information through a multi-modal approach to studying Social Studies. I also provide the students with manipulatives to represent and explain abstract concepts in order to increase their knowledge and understanding. Authentic learning opportunities bring the subject to life and encourage enthusiasm of the students as they apply the knowledge attained in everyday life situations. Stropkville, as the students have named my classroom, seeks to welcome all students to become independent thinkers who seek to understand the impact of how history and government impact our lives.”

2017 PCSS Awards

Outstanding Teacher of the Year

(K-8) Mindy Fisher - Dunbar Elementary School

Mindy Fisher is being honored with the 2017 Pennsylvania Council for the Social Studies Outstanding Teacher of the Year (K-8) Award for her work at Dunbar Elementary School, a K-8 school in the School District of Philadelphia located on the campus of Temple University. Ms. Fisher stands out among her peers for her work with the Rendell Center for Civics and Civic Engagement which showcases her commitment to bringing the real world into her challenging classroom to prepare her students to become active and engaged citizens. She is a creative, dedicated teacher who is willing to take risks to make her classroom a safe and exciting learning environment in which student voice is cultivated and valued.

Ms. Fisher was a participant in one of the Rendell Center's Professional Developments for teachers in the Philadelphia School District. Like many, she expressed an interest in doing a Literature-based Mock Trial with her students. Unlike others, she reached out to the Rendell Center staff after the Professional Development and arranged to bring the program into her classroom as soon as was possible. She carefully chose *The Outsiders* as the book on which her trial would be based because of its relevance to her students. Throughout the entire process, Ms. Fisher was an active participant, highlighting both the basic civic knowledge that her students needed to learn, and modeling the way her students could use their voices to respectfully express their points of view for their side of the trial.

Ms. Fisher's class, working with attorney partners, wrote and argued a masterful mock trial in their classroom before a federal judge, Judge Ted McKee of the Third Circuit Court of Appeals. The presentation was so impressive that Ms. Fisher and her students were invited to come to the Federal Courthouse to argue before Judge Midge Rendell, now a Senior Judge on the Third Circuit and the co-founder, with Governor Ed Rendell, of the Rendell Center. Through Ms. Fisher's strong leadership, the team she created - teacher, lawyer and Rendell Center educator - clearly changed her children's lives. Congratulations to a great teacher, Mindy Fisher!

2017 PCSS Awards

Program of Excellence Award

Norristown Area High School Youth Court (Audrey Dudley)

Norristown Area High School Youth Court, a partnership of the Norristown Area School District, the Montgomery County Public Defender and the Montgomery County Office of the District Attorney, is being honored with the Pennsylvania Council for the Social Studies 2017 Program of Excellence Award.

The Program of Excellence Award celebrates an exemplary, currently implemented Social Studies curricular program of outstanding quality, based on a sound and professional curricular framework which encourages:

- Articulation of creative ideas and thinking
- Balance of content
- Innovative and creative teaching techniques and materials
- Display of thinking skills and processes
- Involvement of students, community, and teacher(s)

Youth Court, as taught by teacher Audrey Dudley at Norristown High School, supported by Superintendent Dr. Janet Samuels, clearly fits this bill. A partnership of the Norristown Area School District, the Montgomery County Public Defender and the Montgomery County Office of the District Attorney, the youth court class allows a restorative disposition for young people who get into trouble at Norristown High School.



2017 PCSS Awards

Outstanding Social Studies Project Award

(Elementary) Athens Area School District Third Grade Civil War Day (Athens Team) -

For the past several years, the third grade classes in the Athens Area School District have had the opportunity to experience the life of a child in the 1800's by attending the Heritage Village and School House, in Corning, NY. The students immerse themselves in the experience, dressing the part, participating in a school house lesson, observing a blacksmith at work, visiting an authentic log cabin, and cooking Johnny Cakes over an open fire.

In conjunction with the annual field trip, Third Graders traveled back in time to the 1860's and the Civil War era, folding Athens Area School District's first annual Civil War Day. Students rotated through stations where they learned about period clothing, children's toys and games, and medicines. They sampled food and heard stories about the Civil War. As a culminating activity, a local history buff taught the boys an army march, while the girls learned about the roles of women during wartime. With the help and support of PCSS President-Elect and Athens Area educator Amy Cheresnowsky and her history club, students were able to enjoy and learn all about children's lives during the Civil War era. The event was supported by a local donation from a couple who does reenactments.

Sharon Silver is a passionate educator who has traveled throughout the world exploring different cultures and philosophies and has a particular interest in justice and peace. She is a retired social studies teacher from Ridley Middle School in Delaware County who worked with her late cousin, Grammy award winning songwriter Daniel Sembello, to produce an incredible CD on heroes, "Revolution of the Spirit", that has inspired historical study, anti-bullying education and social activism among a generation of young people. Silver is working with PCSS to create a social justice curriculum to share across the Commonwealth.

2017 PCSS Awards

(Secondary) Law & Criminal Justice Program at Esperanza Academy Charter High School (Kyle Riley)

Esperanza Academy Charter School in Philadelphia is dedicated to providing a quality education that prepares critically thinking, socially capable, spiritually sensitive, and culturally aware young adults who can use English, Spanish and technology for success in the 21st Century. One way Esperanza Academy Charter School achieves its mission is through the innovative use of internships for its law and criminal justice curriculum. This past summer, students from the school interned in a variety of settings, including working with Third Circuit Court of Appeals Judge L. Felipe Restrepo. The experience of working with a judge in the court a level below the United States Supreme Court was transformative for the students involved, reflecting the value of all such internship efforts. PCSS, always mindful that education takes place both inside and beyond the classroom, honors the Law & Criminal Justice Program at Esperanza Academy Charter High School and its Coordinator, Kyle Riley, with its Outstanding Social Studies Project Award (Secondary).

The award celebrates the third tier of Esperanza's three-tiered Law & Criminal Justice Program offered by the school. The three tiers are as follows:

Tier 1- Introduction to Law: First year students in the major take a course that covers the goals and values of the U.S. legal system, criminal and civil law, court systems, and careers as lawyers. The end of the year project for this class is a mock trial case done in collaboration with Esperanza's Forensics class.

Tier 2- Mock Trial / Police Procedures: This class of students takes part in the Pennsylvania Bar association's Statewide Mock Trial Competition. Preparations and the competition itself usually take from September to February. The remainder of the course focuses on police procedure, covering the definition of a law enforcement officer, myths and realities of police work, issues of social control, factors that shape the police role in society, and alternative forms of policing.

Tier 3- Law & Criminal Justice Internship: Students who remain in the program for the third tier spend 2-3 days of the school week at an internship in order to gain practical experience in the field. They are dismissed from school at 1:40 PM to go to their internships. On the other days of the school week, they are in class completing reading assignments and journals.