

NEW YORK CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS CHANCELLOR DAVID C. BANKS ANNOUNCES 2023 BIG APPLE AWARD WINNERS

NEW YORK— Today, New York City Public Schools Chancellor David C. Banks announced the winners of the eleventh annual Big Apple Awards, honoring 49 exemplary educators for their leadership, demonstrated dedication to their students, and contributions to their school community. The Big Apple Awards is a citywide recognition program celebrating New York City public school teachers who were selected from more than 1,000 nominations, and vetted by district leaders and principals. This year, for the first time ever, there is a winner under every superintendency.

Chancellor Banks, District leadership, and New York City Public Schools senior leaders took turns surprising the 49 award recipients with in-person visits to honor the incredible work they have done throughout the year, and their tenure as educators. This year's award includes a programmatic expansion that features an ongoing professional learning experience where these highly regarded teachers will have multiple opportunities to share their best teaching practices and resources across our system. This new initiative speaks to the chancellor's second pillar of scaling and sustaining what works by seeking to provide all students with a high-quality academic experience.

"The educators honored as this year's Big Apple Award recipients are exceptional models of the kind of commitment to student achievement that all children should experience," **said Chancellor David C. Banks.** "On behalf of students, families, and staff- thank you for the care and support that you provide to our youngest New Yorkers. We are forever grateful for your service"

"New York City's educators connect with our students and make a lasting difference in their lives," **said Michael Mulgrew, United Federation of Teachers President.** "Our Big Apple winners give us the opportunity to showcase that work and to say 'Thank you' for the passion and professionalism they bring to the classroom each day."

The Big Apple Awards are made possible in part by private support through the Fund for Public Schools – New York City Public Schools' non-profit fundraising partner – responsible for facilitating sponsored awards and ensuring that all recipients receive a classroom grant. The Fund has partnered for an eleventh year with Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts to sponsor the Music Education Award, as part of its role as an artistic and civic cornerstone for New York City. Partnering for the seventh year, the Physical Education Award is made possible with funding from New York Road Runners, a New York City Public Schools partner that provides fitness and wellness programs to over 110,000 Rising New York Road Runners. The Arthur Miller Foundation, Studio in a School, and Jody and John Arnhold together with the Arnhold Foundation have sponsored the Theater Education Award, the Visual Arts Education Award, and the Dance Education Award respectively for the third year in a row. The Fund is also pleased with the generous contribution that the Centerbridge Foundation has made to the Big Apple

Awards, to support the expansion of the program in an effort to support more exceptional teachers.

“The Fund for Public Schools is thrilled to support the Big Apple Awards program as it expands its reach across the entire New York City Public Schools system and cultivates a deep fellowship and professional learning experience for outstanding teachers,” **said Stephen Cockrell, Chief Executive Officer of the Fund for Public Schools.** “We greatly appreciate the support from our private donors, whose generosity has made it possible to provide classroom grants to each award recipient during the upcoming school year. Through this fellowship, each of the distinguished teachers will continue to impact their classroom communities as we showcase their teaching practice and resources across our system.”

“The arts have played a vital role in keeping us connected, both during the pandemic and this period of emergence from it. We are grateful for the commitment and hard work of all New York City educators, but especially those who teach the arts, as their work continues to support the health and well-being of our young people,” **said Lee Bynum, Chief Education Officer at Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts.** “Lincoln Center congratulates Khristine Raymond on the Music Education Award, for her inspiring work, and we’re honored to have been a partner on the Big Apple Awards for the last decade.”

"New York Road Runners extends our biggest congratulations to the winners of the 2023 Big Apple Awards. Educators are the backbone of a healthy, empowered, and strong New York City," **said Marissa Muñoz, Senior Vice President of Community Impact at NYRR.** "Physical literacy is a crucial component of youth education in their development as physically and mentally fit individuals. This year's Physical Education winner Daniel Matos shares a mission with Rising New York Road Runners to help and inspire kids to stay active for life. We thank Daniel and all of New York City’s teachers for helping to change the lives of so many.”

"Arts education is essential for every child Prek-12 in NYC public schools. Dance education is a critical component of a quality, engaging arts education. The Arnhold Foundation is proud to support the Big Apple Teacher Excellence in Dance Award and to recognize and celebrate Sherry Fass. Sherry works tirelessly to meet each student where they are in their own learning,” **said Jody Gottfried Arnold, Dance Educator and Advocate.** “Her thoughtful teaching practice has empowered her students, building their confidence inside and outside the classroom. Sherry’s strong cultural partnerships with Ballet Hispanico and Alvin Ailey are a wonderful example of how schools, students, and communities are strengthened when there is collaboration with cultural institutions. We salute Sherry as a representative of the hundreds of dedicated dance educators working in NYC's public schools Prek-12. She is a hero.”

“The Arthur Miller Foundation believes that arts education is a right, not a privilege. Our mission is to provide equity and access to quality theater education for public school students by supporting theater teachers,” **said Jaime Hastings, Executive Director of the Arthur Miller Foundation.** “We are proud to sponsor this award and honor Brooke Berry-Wolf — a dedicated

theater educator who believes in the power of theater to reach all students. We thank Ms. Berry-Wolf for encouraging exploration through theater, which transforms student work and leads to thoughtful, authentic self-expression.”

“Studio in a School believes that the visual arts empower students to create and share experiences while also providing the much-needed opportunities for social and emotional growth,” **said Alison Scott-Williams, President of Studio in a School.** “We are proud to support the Big Apple Awards in Visual Arts and congratulate Mr. Hanan Harchol the film making teacher at the School of Art and Design. Mr. Harchol embodies the spirit of creativity and determination and inspires his students to create masterful documentaries. We are honored to support his work and inspired by his vision and dedication to the students of New York City.”

Next school year, the 49 recipients will serve as Big Apple Fellows and will have the opportunity to meet with one another, becoming leaders and ambassadors for their profession. Winners will also be invited to serve on the Chancellor's Teacher Advisory Council.

“Congratulations to all the educators receiving the prestigious Big Apple Award,” **said Speaker Carl E. Heastie.** “Teachers are the architects of any thriving community, and acknowledging their contributions is important. As they continue to shape the young minds of future generations, we must continue to illustrate our support in every way we can. On behalf of the New York State Assembly Majority, I extend a heartfelt thank you to all recipients, as well as a reminder, that their impact extends well beyond the four walls of the classroom.”

“Our teachers have done incredible things in the face of incredible challenges this year,” **said Public Advocate Jumaane D. Williams.** “I wouldn’t be where I am without the New York City public school teachers who believed in me and supported me. Educators across the city deserve recognition, celebration, and support for all their hard work, perseverance, and dedication. To this year’s Big Apple winners – thank you for all the exceptional, exemplary work you do each day to support our students and shape young leaders -- not of tomorrow, but of today.”

“Our New York City Public School system stands as the foundation of our city’s success. The recipients of the ‘2023 Big Apple Award’ epitomize the true essence of being educators,” **said Councilmember Rita Joseph.** “Through their unwavering dedication to the holistic development of each student and their commitment to extending education beyond the confines of the classroom, they have created an indelible and transformative educational journey for New York City’s students. By embracing innovative approaches, they empower both students and educators alike to unlock the full potential of meaningful learning experiences. Together, we are shaping a brighter future for our students and fostering a culture of lifelong learning.”

Chair of the Senate Committee on Education, Senator Shelley B. Mayer said,

“Congratulations to the extraordinary educators chosen as recipients of the Big Apple Awards. The role teachers play in the lives of their students is invaluable, and the memories created in the classroom stay with individuals into adulthood, shaping who they are. It is critical that teachers leading the next generation of New Yorkers are committed to excellence and to the expansion of

educational opportunities and are dedicated to lifting each student up to their full potential. We know children of all ages were impacted deeply by COVID-19, and with the rise of prejudice and hate crimes across the country, it is more important than ever that teachers support our students to grow and feel empowered in who they are. Congratulations to these very special educators who we recognize today”

“I am so proud and grateful for the work of three standout Bronx educators named as this year’s Big Apple Award Winners – an award that recognizes teachers citywide for their leadership, dedication to their students, and contributions to their school community,” **said Bronx Borough President Vanessa L. Gibson.** “Congratulations Philip Asaro from P.S. X811, Bilmory Cepeda, from P.S. 150 Charles James Fox who both teach in the Longwood section and Lewis Cabarrouy from Bronx High School for Medical Science in Claremont Village -- for the labor and commitment you bring each day to support our children in becoming the future leaders our communities will one day rely on. I want to thank Chancellor David C. Banks, United Federation of Teachers President Michael Mulgrew and Chief Executive Officer of the Fund for Public Schools, Stephen Cockrell for all the support you provide our teachers that allows them to provide the very best for our children.”

"Congratulations to the exceptional Big Apple Award winners, but especially the Manhattan honorees devoted to shaping our borough’s future leaders: Siriana Abboud, Brooke Berry-Wolf, Andre Clark, Diandra D'Amico, Hanan Harchol, and Luvenia Harris. New York is incredibly fortunate to have educators of this caliber as teachers and role models for our students,” **said Manhattan Borough President Mark Levine.** “The wisdom these awardees share with other teachers in the coming year will be invaluable to advancing innovation and excellence in the classroom.”

“Educators do incredible work for our children and young adults, leaving a lasting impact that carry them through adulthood. I often think back to the educators who impacted me the most, cheering me on even through my achievements as an adult. Recognitions like the Big Apple Awards give these educators their flowers when they most deserve it,” **said Brooklyn Borough President Antonio Reynoso.** “Congratulations to this year's Big Apple Award winners for your impactful work, and to all of our city’s educators. You are the people who encourage students like me, students from poor communities and Black and Brown youth, that we have a shot if we work for it. You encourage your students to give back to their communities and to do good for our city every day. Thank you for making a real difference.”

“It takes a special kind of person to be an educator — someone who is willing to work hard, serve and sacrifice in order to give our children better opportunities at living strong, healthy and impactful lives,” **said Queens Borough President Donovan Richards Jr.** “Congratulations to each of these heroes for being named a Big Apple Award winner and for the immeasurably important work you do to uplift your students, their families and our communities. To all our teachers across the city, you have Queens’ eternal gratitude.”

This year's Big Apple Award recipients come from all five boroughs and teach a range of subjects and grade levels. The recipients are below. Photos of the surprise classroom visits for each winner can be found [here](#).

A full list of recipient bios can be found below:

Siriana Abboud

Early Childhood Recipient

P.S. 059- Beekman Hill International (02M059)

Manhattan

Philip Asaro

P.S.X811 (75X811)

Bronx

Kemeisha Barrett

Ebbets Field Middle School (17K352)

Brooklyn

Naiomi Benn

I.S. 211- John Wilson (18K211)

Brooklyn

Brooke Berry-Wolf

Arts Recipient

Talent Unlimited High School (02M519)

Manhattan

Bianca Bibiloni

P.S. 014 Fairview (24Q014)

Queens

Lewis Cabarrouy

Bronx High School for Medical Science (09X413)

Bronx

Bilmary Cepeda

P.S. 150 Charles James Fox (12X150)

Bronx

Franchesca Chaterpaul

Brighter Choice Community School (16K627)

Brooklyn

Andre Clark
Frederick Douglass Academy (05M499)
Manhattan

Carmen Coward
M.S. 113 Ronald Edmonds Learning Center (13K113)
Brooklyn

Diandra D'Amico
Harvey Milk High School (02M586)
Manhattan

Anastasia Demidova
P.S. K225 - The Eileen E. Zaglin (21K225)
Brooklyn

Linda Eskenazi
The SEEALL Academy (20K180)
Brooklyn

Sherry Fass
Arts Recipient
I.S. 227- Louis Armstrong (30Q227)
Queens

Jazmine Gray
Thomas A. Edison Career and Technical Education High School (28Q620)
Queens

Hanan Harchol
Arts Recipient
Art and Design High School (02M630)
Manhattan

Luvenia Harris
Charter Recipient
KIPP Infinity Charter School (84M336)
Manhattan

Rebecca Hart
Brooklyn Arbor Elementary School (14K414)
Brooklyn

Maha Hasen
Fordham High School for the Arts (10X437)
Bronx

Jessica Heideman
M.S. 224- Manhattan East School for Arts & Academics (04M224)
Manhattan

Karen Heil
P.S. 175- City Island (11X175)
Bronx

Virginia "Tess" Hinchman
Williamsburg Preparatory School (14K561)
Brooklyn

Marsha Joseph
P.S./I.S. 295 (29Q295)
Queens

James Laieta
P.S. 8 Shirlee Solomon (31R008)
Staten Island

Tiearra LeGrand
P.S. 126- Dr Marjorie H Dunbar (09X126)
Bronx

Ashley Martin
P.S. 025 Bilingual School (07X025)
Bronx

Daniel Matos
PE Recipient
The River School (02M281)
Manhattan

Keri McCormick
P.S. 133Q (26Q133)
Queens

Kerry McGarvey
P.S. 024- Andrew Jackson (25Q024)
Queens

Carla McKenzie
I.S. 392 (23K392)
Brooklyn

Ileana Mercado
P.S. 034- Franklin D. Roosevelt (01M034)
Manhattan

Christina Mesk
P.S. 001-The Bergen School (15K001)
Brooklyn

Dr. Linda Noble
Brooklyn College Academy (22K555)
Brooklyn

Chante Orane
West Prep Academy (01M034)
Manhattan

Gabriella Ramaglia
New York City Academy for Discovery (27Q306)
Queens

Janet Ramos
P.S./I.S. 187 Hudson Cliffs (06M187)
Manhattan

Khristine Raymond
Arts Recipient
Legacy School of the Arts (19K907)
Brooklyn

Tiffany Reyes
Urban Institute of Mathematics (08X371)
Bronx

Jennifer Rivera

P.S. /I.S. 384- Frances E. Carter (32K384)
Brooklyn

Marie Russell
P.S. 174- William Sidney Mount (28Q174)
Queens

Shayleen Sanchez
P.S. 109 (22K109)
Brooklyn

Nicole Sancho
Brooklyn West Alternate Learning Center (79R037)
Staten Island

Lydia Santana
Newtown High School (24Q455)
Queens

Sonia Santana
PS 56- Norwood Heights (10X056)
Bronx

Tennysha St. John
Charter Recipient (84M336)
KIPP Infinity Charter School
Manhattan

Diana Stark
Young Women's Leadership School, Astoria (30Q286)
Queens

Hyun Ju Tsoutsouras
Institute for Health Professions at Cambria Heights (29Q243)
Queens

Angela Viguera
Rachel Carson High School for Coastal Studies (21K344)
Brooklyn