



Lillian M. Lowery, Ed.D.
State Superintendent of Schools

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TO: Members of the State Board of Education
FROM: Lillian M. Lowery, Ed.D. *lmlowery*
DATE: April 22, 2014
SUBJECT: Recognition of Maryland's 2013-2014 Milken National Educator

BACKGROUND:

On February 27, 2014, Dr. Lillian Lowery, Lt. Governor Anthony Brown, Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake, Tisha Edwards, and State Board Members Linda Eberhart, Guffie Smith and Christian Hodges and other dignitaries joined Mike Milken, Founder of the Milken Family Foundation, in announcing to a surprised teacher at Baltimore City College in Baltimore City, that he had been selected as a winner of the prestigious Milken National Educator Award. The announcement took place at an assembly of the student body.

Maryland has had a partnership with the Milken Family Foundation for twenty-one years, and has successfully identified fifty-eight Maryland educators who have won the Milken prize, a non-restricted cash award of \$25,000. With this year's honoree, the Milken Foundation will have contributed \$1,450,000 to Maryland's Milken National Educators.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This year's Milken National Educator recipient is **Mark Miazga**, an English teacher at Baltimore City College in Baltimore City. He will be accompanied by his principal – Cindy Harcum and his English Dept. Chair – Amy Sampson.

The recipient will be introduced and a brief video will be shown capturing the excitement of the surprise announcement made in February. Mr. Miazga will speak briefly about the personal and professional significance of this recognition.

ACTION:

Our new Milken National Educator will be presented the Milken National Educator crystal obelisk and an MSDE/State Board Citation. Commemorative photos will be taken. State Board members will have an opportunity to congratulate Mr. Miazga.

Attachment

Mark A. Miazga
English Teacher, Grades 9-12
Baltimore City College
Baltimore City Public Schools
Baltimore, MD

Mark Miazga's English classroom has been described as a place where "students come to understand what being smart and thinking for oneself is about." Miazga, in his 13th year of teaching at Baltimore City College, a college prep high school made up largely of minority students, goes above and beyond to cultivate meaningful relationships with his kids. Lessons challenge students to think beneath the surface meaning in texts and conduct high-level discussions. He gives specific feedback on students' writing, with room to revise.

A believer in the power of independent reading, Miazga created a free-books library in his classroom that he replenishes by frequenting a local charity. To make sure students benefit from their reading, he devises a quiz for each book. A National Board Certified Teacher, Miazga takes a special interest in kids who have low skills or are underperforming and, as varsity baseball coach, he also works to help all players succeed academically. In addition to his other roles, including English I chair and Outward Bound coordinator, Miazga's Drama I freshmen staged a successful production of "Death of a Salesman"; he even prepared them to rehearse on their own when he was away coaching baseball games. Last year Miazga and his English I class were featured in the documentary "Experiencing Shakespeare," produced by the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington, D.C.

Miazga's instructional practices, including seminars, debates and writing workshops, provide students with the skills needed to pass difficult assessments such as the International Baccalaureate English A1 exams. Results have been stellar: In 2010-11, all 55 students who took the IB English exam passed, with three scoring a perfect 7 and an average score of 4.8; the world average is about 4.7. Over Miazga's three years of teaching IB English IV, 94.5% of his students have received a score of 4 or above.

Miazga's leadership extends beyond the classroom and stage as he mentors new teachers and shares literacy developments with colleagues. He writes curriculum for the district and has been a presenter at the National Council of Teachers of English conferences. He is a recipient of grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities, including one last summer at the John Steinbeck Institute in Monterey, Calif. In his multifaceted ability to spark a lifelong love of literature and learning, Mark Miazga is a role model.

Tweet: #teacher #English #Baltimore MARK MIAZGA at Baltimore City College named Milken Educator for MD #MEA13 (106 characters/spaces)