**Better Beginnings**

**Nomination Packet 2015**

**Deadline for application is:**

**Friday, April 3, 2015**

THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK

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**HELEN BACH MOSS MEMORIAL FUND**

The New York State Board of Regents is pleased to announce the Better Beginnings Award in honor of Helen Bach Moss, a local educator, who passed away in 1988. The award, which is sponsored by the Board of Regents, celebrates the life and career of Helen Bach Moss by recognizing elementary teachers who are gifted in finding and nurturing the strengths of each individual student.

Mrs. Moss touched the lives of many people, and her career was distinguished by a genuine respect for and love of children. She was ever caring toward students and their parents and acted as a worthy role model in all of her endeavors. Her family and friends petitioned the Board of Regents to establish a memorial fund and provided an endowment to fund a cash stipend of $1,000 for the winning elementary teacher.

For the 2015 Award cycle, awards of $250 will be provided to two finalists**.** This award program recognizes early childhood education as the most effective investment for long-term educational success.

**The simple nomination process for the Better Beginnings Award involves the preparation of statements of support from students, parents, other educators, and the local community. Nominees should be current teachers who are skilled at engaging young minds and developing nurturing relationships with elementary school students.**

**GENERAL GUIDELINES**

**Purpose**  
The purpose of the award, which celebrates the life and career of Helen Bach Moss, is to recognize elementary teachers who are gifted in finding and nurturing the strengths of each student and fostering trusting relationships among pupils, parents, teachers, and administrators.

**Eligibility**  
The nominee must be currently teaching at the elementary level (PreK-6) at a public or private school, and be appropriately credentialed in New York State.

**Nomination Procedure**  
The application for the award is **anecdotal in nature** and has **two** parts:

**Part 1:**

**Completion of the attached “Basic Data Sheet,”** which must include the signatures of both the teacher being nominated and the president of the local board of education.

**Part 2:**

**The Statements of Nomination**: Inclusion of at least one, and no more than two, statement(s) of nomination from each of the following categories:

* Pupils
* Parents
* Administrators
* Teachers
* Community members (persons active in the school community, such as volunteers, business persons, social services workers, etc.)

The Statements of Nomination from pupils may take the form of letters, drawings, or a combination of the two. Other statements should take the form of letters, and each statement should be limited to two pages. Materials that exceed these limits will not be considered.

**Selection Process:**

Nominations are read by a selection committee of five persons representing different facets of the educational spectrum. The winner and two finalists are selected based upon the nominations and a personal interview. The winner is honored at a school-based ceremony, with Dr. Michael Moss, the fund's principal benefactor, and representatives from the State Education Department.

**Nominees will be assessed and must demonstrate the following criteria:**

* The individual's ability to find and nurture the strengths and individual talents of each student by documenting innovative techniques used and citing instances of accomplishment and achievement in the lives of students;
* The individual's exceptional character by referencing a specific circumstance which provides students opportunities to experience success; and
* The individual's ability to foster mutually respectful relationships among pupils, parents, other teachers, and administrators.

**Nomination Packet Deadline: Friday, April 3, 2015 at 5:00 p.m.**

**Please return the nomination packet to:**

**NYS Education Department**

**Office of Higher Education**

**Nancy DeKorp**

**89 Washington Avenue - Room 977 EBA**

**Albany, NY 12234**

**OR**

**Email the completed nomination packet to**

[Nancy.DeKorp@nysed.gov](mailto:Nancy.DeKorp@nysed.gov)

**Questions may be directed to: (518) 473-8076**

**2015 BETTER BEGINNINGS AWARD**

**BASIC DATA SHEET**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Name: | | Birthdate: | Last 4 digits of SS# | Telephone #: (School) | | |
| Home Address: | | | Telephone #: (Residence) | | | |
| City: | | | E-mail Address: | | | |
| State: Zip Code: | | | Name of School District: | | | |
| Name of School: | | | Years in Present Position: | | | Total Years of Teaching Experience: |
| Subject(s) and Grade Level(s) Taught: | | | | | | |
| Name and Office Address of School Principal: | | | | | Telephone #: | |
| Name and Office Address of School Superintendent: | | | | | Telephone #: | |
| County: | Senate District No: | Assembly District No: | How did you and your supporters hear about the Better Beginnings Award?  Website Brochure Professional Organizations  Colleagues Other (Specify): | | | |
| PREVIOUS TEACHING EXPERIENCE: (Please include Dates, School, School District, Location and Position) | | | | | | |
| CERTIFICATIONS: (Please include Areas and Dates) | | | | | | |
| ***I agree that any or all of the enclosed materials (except my home address, telephone number, and email address) may be shared with persons interested in promoting the Better Beginnings Award.***  Signature of Candidate: Date: | | | | | | |
| Signature of School Principal: Date: | | | | | | |
| Signature of Local School Board President: Date: | | | | | | |

**Anyone can nominate a teacher!**

**Please return nominating packets by: 5:00 p.m., Friday, April 3, 2015.**

**This application must be submitted to:**

NYS Education Department

Office of Higher Education

Nancy DeKorp

89 Washington Avenue - Room 977 EBA

Albany, NY 12234

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