

NewsRelease

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BCPS Presents 2nd Annual Career and Technical Education Teacher of the Year Awards CTE Teacher of the Year Finalists Announced

Broward County Public Schools (BCPS) is pleased to announce the 2nd Annual Career and Technical Education Teacher of the Year Awards, recognizing individuals who have made extraordinary contributions within the field of Career and Technical Education (CTE). The event, honoring the dedication of 46 outstanding nominees and eight extraordinary finalists for their exemplary dedication to excellence, takes place on **Thursday, February 29, 2024, at 7 p.m., at the DoubleTree Hotel Sunrise – Sawgrass Mills.**

This year's CTE Teacher of the Year Awards promises to be a celebration of both seasoned educators and rising stars. The event, honoring superior educators across the District, will recognize one remarkable Rookie Teacher of the Year along with the coveted Middle/High School Teacher of the Year.

"CTE teachers are crucial in shaping the future workforce. Their dedication to fostering skills and nurturing talent directly impacts student success and our community's overall economic prosperity," BCPS Superintendent Dr. Peter B. Licata said. "Recognizing and celebrating their achievements serves as a powerful inspiration for educators and aspiring professionals."

The CTE Teacher of the Year candidates were selected through a juried process at their school sites. To be eligible for the Middle/High School Teacher award, nominees must have three or more years of CTE experience as a full-time instructor and implementation of a full CTE pathway. Rookie of the Year eligibility includes one to three years of CTE experience as a full-time instructor. Applications for the CTE Teacher of the Year were scored by a committee composed of business partners.

Congratulations to all the incredible educators chosen as CTE Teacher of the Year and Rookie Teacher of the Year finalists.

Middle/High School CTE Teacher of the Year Finalists

Mitchell Albert, Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School

Mitchell Albert is a hospitality instructor and DECA advisor at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School with 18 years of experience at BCPS. An enthusiastic CTE hospitality teacher, Albert is excited to guide students towards fulfilling futures in this ever-evolving field.

"The hospitality industry is constantly innovating and expanding, creating new jobs and career paths for every interest," Albert said. "My focus is on project-based learning, creating a fun and engaging environment where students learn by doing. This method fosters critical thinking, analytical skills and problem-solving, all essential for success in the 21st century."

Christopher Bayus, Everglades High School

Christopher Bayus is a business and entrepreneurship instructor at Everglades High School with 20 years of experience at BCPS. With the business world constantly evolving, Bayus ensures his curriculum stays ahead of the curve.

"Drawing from my own experience as a small business owner, I am able to bring a unique perspective to the classroom," Bayus said. "When students ask me questions about the difficulties of running a business, I can speak from experience, not just from a textbook. This helps them develop a deeper understanding of the challenges and rewards of entrepreneurship."

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Marlon DeMoya, Whiddon Rogers Education Center

Marlon DeMoya is a criminal justice instructor at Whiddon Rogers Education Center with four years of experience in BCPS. Growing up in foster care, DeMoya found solace and escape at school, a haven from the challenges he faced outside. Now, as a criminal justice teacher at Whiddon Rogers Education Center, he uses his own experiences to inspire and empower vulnerable youth, reminding them that success is possible despite adversity.

"Despite the difficulties I faced, I was fortunate to have teachers and mentors who believed in me," DeMoya said. "Now, I strive to be that same source of support for my students, especially those who remind me of my younger self. The criminal justice program provides at-risk youth with invaluable life and career skills."

Howard Kimelstein, Coral Glades High School

Howard Kimelstein teaches engineering at Coral Glades High School, with 28 years of teaching experience at BCPS. The impact of Kimelstein's dedication is evident in the numerous students who have earned industry certifications in his classes and are now thriving in their chosen fields.

"CTE attracts students who are passionate about the field. They are eager to learn and motivated to succeed," Kimelstein said. "They see the direct connection between what they are studying and potential future careers, which fuels their enthusiasm. Their passion translates into real-world results. The most rewarding moments are when former students tell me how CTE helped them to achieve their life goals."

Jeffrey Silverman, Monarch High School

Jeffrey Silverman is an entrepreneurship and business instructor at Monarch High School with 17 years of experience at BCPS. Fueled by the practical skills gained through work experience, Silverman has dedicated his career to passing that torch of knowledge and empowerment to students, igniting their passion and equipping them for life after high school.

"Ever since I graduated, I knew I wanted to share the invaluable lessons learned from my own work experience," Silverman said. "CTE provides the perfect platform to do that, equipping students with life skills that pave the way for their success."

CTE Rookie Teacher of the Year Finalists

Darin Diaz, Plantation High School

Darin Diaz is a building trades and construction instructor at Plantation High School with a year and a half of experience at BCPS. With 30 years of experience in the construction field and a passion for creative woodworking, Diaz is uniquely qualified to guide students toward fulfilling careers in the construction industry.

"I am thrilled to share not just the technical skills, but also the industry connections I've built over the years," Diaz said. "It's incredibly rewarding to see students transition directly into fulfilling careers because of the skills learned in my class."

Adell Farquharson, Cooper City High School

Adell Farquharson teaches both marketing and, hospitality and tourism management at Cooper City High School with three years of experience at BCPS. As an experienced business owner and real estate agent, Farquharson recognized the vast difference between academic theories and real-world business practices.

"I saw an opportunity to leverage my industry insights to enrich the educational experience of students," Farquharson said. "My goal was to bridge the gap between textbook learning and practical application, ensuring that the next generation of professionals is well-equipped with not just knowledge, but also the skills needed to thrive in the real world."

Rikki Francois, South Broward High School

Rikki Francois is a marketing instructor at South Broward High School with two years of experience at BCPS. From a high school spark ignited by an inspiring teacher, Francois has cultivated a thriving career as a marketing teacher and DECA advisor.

"My own marketing teacher and DECA advisor had a profound impact on me. Witnessing their dedication and the opportunities students gained through CTE programs sparked a passion I knew I wanted to share," Francois said. "I believe every student deserves the chance to discover their unique strengths and build a successful future. Expanding access to CTE programs across the county will create more opportunities for students to engage and thrive."

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ABOUT BCPS CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

The Career and Technical Education programs prepare students for the workforce by embedding relevant and in demand subject matter into middle and high school courses. Currently, BCPS offers over 50 Career and Technical Education pathways and more than 200 individual pathways with opportunities to earn industry certifications, the same certifications used by working professionals.

In addition to targeted industry-based proficiency, Career and Technical Education programs embed a variety of tangible communication and interpersonal skills as part of the curriculum. Whether students choose to enter the workforce or pursue post-secondary education after graduation, the skills they learn will benefit them throughout their lives.

ABOUT BROWARD COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

“Educating all students to reach their highest potential.”

Broward County Public Schools (BCPS) is the sixth-largest school district in the nation and the second largest in the state of Florida. BCPS is Florida’s first fully accredited school system since 1962, serving more than 251,000 students and approximately 110,000 adult learners in 239 schools, centers and technical colleges, and 87 charter schools. BCPS supports a diverse student population representing 177 different countries and speaking 153 languages. To connect with BCPS, visit browardschools.com, follow us on Twitter [@browardschools](https://twitter.com/browardschools), on Facebook at facebook.com/browardschools, on Instagram [@browardschoolsofficial](https://instagram.com/browardschoolsofficial), on YouTube at youtube.com/browardschoolsvideos and download the free BCPS mobile app at browardschools.com/MobileApp.

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