



NEWS RELEASE

For Release:
Feb. 11, 2019

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Fargo South EL educator Leah Juelke receives prestigious national award

BISMARCK, N.D. – Leah Juelke, a language arts educator for English learner (EL) students at Fargo South High School and the 2018 North Dakota Teacher of the Year, has received another prestigious award of recognition for her service in education. On Friday, Feb. 8, Juelke was presented the Horace Mann Award for Teaching Excellence and \$10,000 at the NEA Foundation’s Salute to Excellence in Education Gala in Washington, D.C. She was among only five educators to receive the Horace Mann Award nationally.

In her time as an EL instructor at Fargo South, she has implemented many innovative projects and practices, including helping to coordinate the EL curriculum across disciplines, so that the students can fast-track their English skills. Additionally, Juelke has helped to encourage her students to tell the stories of how they came to live in Fargo in their “Journey to America” narrative writing project. Her students don’t just write their stories, they also host public readings in their community and across the state, to share their stories, in very raw and emotional terms.

“Leah Juelke has touched the lives of her students in ways that make them more confident, more effective and more likely to enhance our American culture by sharing their stories and experiences,” said Nick Archuleta, President of North Dakota United. “Like educators across North Dakota, Ms. Juelke lifts students up and puts them at the center of their education.”

Juelke is a member of North Dakota United, and her local affiliate, the Fargo Education Association. ND United chose Juelke as their state nominee for the Horace Mann Award.

The NEA Foundation Gala was emceed this year by TV star Malcolm-Jamal Warner and TV news anchor Soledad O’Brien. An estimated 930 guests were in attendance, and the event was livestreamed to a global audience on the NEA Foundation website at www.neafoundation.org.

(more)

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“These five educators kindle ideas, open minds, nurture confidence, and build community. They keep the promise of public education by growing the hearts and minds of their students, preparing them for the challenges and opportunities of tomorrow,” said Harriet Sanford, President and CEO of the NEA Foundation. “So many teachers go above and beyond to serve the needs of their students, and these five educators are great examples of what it takes to excel in the classroom,” said Marita Zuraitis, President and CEO of Horace Mann. “As a company serving educators’ financial needs for more than 70 years, Horace Mann is pleased to honor these educators for playing an instrumental role in educating the children of our future.”

Video stories were produced for each of the five Horace Mann Award winners and debuted at the award ceremony. Juelke’s video can be viewed online at <https://youtu.be/QImdI6qxEh4>

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North Dakota United is the largest professional union of public educators and employees in the state, representing more than 11,500 public school teachers, school staff, university faculty and staff, and city, county and state employees. Our association represents members in the state Capitol, the Legislature, in schools, on college campuses and at worksites across the state, and in our communities, promoting the great public education and great public services that the citizens of North Dakota deserve.

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