

March 5, 2024

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For Immediate Release

Illinois Principals Association Announces 2024 John Ourth & Dr. Fred Singleton Professional Development Scholarship Recipients

Springfield, IL – Kate Hertz, Assistant Principal of Teacher and Learning at Sycamore High School, Sycamore, and Katherine Wyman, Principal of Jefferson Elementary School, Morton, have received the 2024 John Ourth and Dr. Fred Singleton Professional Development Scholarships sponsored by the Illinois Principals Association. Scholarship grants help individuals pursue graduate study, attend national conferences, and attend other relevant professional development to further the capacities of school administrators to be instructional leaders.

Kate Hertz is Assistant Principal of Teaching and Learning at her high school alma mater, Sycamore High School. She began her career in education as an English teacher in Community Unit School District 304 in Geneva. Hertz's leadership experiences include European Student Tour Leader, Student Teacher Cooperating Teacher/Mentor, High School Speech & Forensics Coach, Equity Team member, and Instructional Coach, all at Geneva High School. She also served on the District 304 Teacher Evaluation Committee and as a facilitator for District 304 Technology and Curriculum Initiatives. A graduate of Illinois Wesleyan University with a Bachelor of Arts in English and a minor in Education, Hertz has continued her professional education by completing a master's degree in teaching and educational leadership, both from Aurora University.

Hertz believes that excellent educational leaders form connections with their coworkers by asking engaging, earnest questions about professional endeavors and personal interests. "My definition of an effective instructional leader is someone who is able to form strong connections with other people." Hertz noted that her growth mindset means being someone who always strives to reflect, learn, apply and repeat that process throughout life. "The Educational Leadership program whet my growing desire for leadership in new ways that I could never dream for myself. Out of that experience, I began to get excited about trying out new technology-driven instructional strategies to personalize learning for students in my classroom. As a result of that passion to reach students, I was invited to participate in an Instructional Coaching program, which broadened my perspective on whole-school thinking. Over 24 years in education I am continually seeking new challenges and growing as an educator, but even more importantly as a person."

Katherine Wyman has served as Principal at Jefferson Elementary School in Morton since 2016. She began her educational career as a Health Educator through the Tazewell County Health Department and First Grade teacher in Morton CUSD 709. A graduate of Illinois State University with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Elementary Education, Wyman continued her education by completing a Master of Science in Curriculum and Instruction from Illinois State University. Wyman is pursuing a Doctoral degree in Educational Leadership at Western Illinois University.

"Principals must possess the ability to build relationships, to listen, to think critically and creatively, to model and support collaboration among staff, and to provide ongoing feedback to be an effective instructional leader. Though there are many attributes that a principal may possess, I believe these are the most critical," shared Wyman.

Wyman added, "There is one constant in education - change. Change requires individuals to grow, adapt, rethink, be challenged, take risks, overcome obstacles, and believe that through the process, learning has

occurred. This learning will forever change the individual, as it can be applied to this experience but to all future experiences. As a leader, my goal is to be current with trends and be able to promote best practices with my staff if I have relevant knowledge to share with them. I continuously learn by reading, attending professional development, and collaborating with colleagues.”

The John Ourth & Dr. Fred Singleton Professional Development Scholarships were established in 2007 to recognize the contributions of John Ourth and Dr. Fred Singleton, former Field Directors for the Illinois Principals Association. Two \$1,000 scholarships are awarded each year. Mr. Ourth passed away shortly after the creation of the scholarship on December 10, 2007. Dr. Singleton retired in 2014 after 50 years of service in education.

Hertz and Wyman will be recognized in October at a special ceremony during the IPA Education Leaders Annual Conference in October 2024.

The Illinois Principals Association is a leadership organization serving over 6,500 educational leaders throughout Illinois whose mission is to develop, support, and advocate for innovative educational leaders. The John Ourth & Dr. Fred Singleton Professional Development Scholarship is supported by funds provided by the Illinois Principals Association Foundation. For more information about the IPA, please visit www.ilprincipals.org.

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