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For Immediate Release

Horace Mann/Illinois Principals Association Names 2017 Principals of the Year

Horace Mann and the Illinois Principals Association are pleased to announce the 2017 Principals of the Year. Award winners are:

- **Elementary Principal of the Year** – Dr. Michelle Willis, Gillespie Elementary School, Chicago Public Schools #299
- **Middle School/Junior High Principal of the Year** – Crystal England, Henry W. Cowherd Middle School, East Aurora School District #131
- **High School Principal of the Year** – Jack Baldermann, Westmont High School, CUSD #201
- **Assistant Principal of the Year** – Tim Chipman, Jacksonville High School, Jacksonville SD #117

These awards recognize principals who have demonstrated a positive impact on their students and learning community. Criteria for the awards include:

- Demonstrates a positive impact on education and advocacy for children
- Ensures the school climate is positive and reflects high staff and student morale
- Demonstrates creativity and imagination in bringing about positive change
- Willing to take risks to improve student learning
- Moves actively to implement the goals and objectives of the school
- Works collaboratively with teachers and other staff to improve the educational program and student achievement
- Anticipates emerging problems and acts effectively to resolve them
- Involves the community in the life of the school and uses community resources for students.

“Each of these individuals is to be commended for the leadership they exhibit in their schools every day,” states Jason Leahy, IPA Executive Director. “School building leaders have one of the most demanding jobs anywhere. The learning communities of these outstanding people have much to be proud of.”

Principal of the Year winners are selected from a pool of region nominees provided by the 21 Regions of the Illinois Principals Association and winners will be recognized at the IPA annual Education Leaders Fall Conference in October 2017.

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The Illinois Principals Association is a leadership organization which serves over 5,200 educational leaders throughout the state of Illinois and whose mission is to develop, support, and advocate for innovative educational leaders. Learn more at www.ilprincipals.org. Visit <http://www.ilprincipals.org/about-ipa/awards> for more information about the IPA Principal of the Year Awards Program.