

February 21, 2020

Contact: Jason E. Leahy, Executive Director, Illinois Principals Association

Phone: 217-525-1383

Email: jason@ilprincipals.org

For Immediate Release

Horace Mann and Illinois Principals Association Announce 2020 Illinois Middle School Principal of the Year

Horace Mann and the Illinois Principals Association are pleased to announce that Dr. Tron Young, principal of Joseph Arthur Middle School, O'Fallon, has been named the 2020 Illinois Elementary School Principal of the Year. The award recognizes elementary school principals who have demonstrated a positive impact on their students and learning community. Criteria for the award include:

- Demonstrates a positive impact on education and advocacy for children
- Ensures the school climate is positive and reflects high staff and student morale
- 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
- Involves the community in the life of the school and uses community resources for students.

Dr. Tron Young has served as principal at Joseph Arthur Middle School for the last 3 years. He previously served as principal at Centralia Junior High and Schiller Elementary Schools in Centralia, and taught math and social studies at Centralia Jr. High School. Dr. Young has also been an active member of the Illinois Principals Association and currently serves as Diversity Chair and Member-At-Large for the Southwestern Region. He has also been active within the IPA as a contributor to "The Principal's Calendar" project, IPA representative to the ISBE Evidence-Based Funding Professional Review Panel, Education Leaders Conference planning committee, and IPA conference speaker.

"An effective principal understands that the school is a professional learning community that will follow a building principal that understands how to lead by example and with purpose," said Dr. Young. During his time at Joseph Arthur Middle School, Young has created a Principal's Advisory Council of students from all grade levels to give feedback on school-wide data and culture. He has also made teacher interactions a priority through daily classroom walkthroughs to give meaningful and timely feedback to teachers or ask probing questions that allow teachers to reflect and grow.

Dr. Young has also fostered a sense of community among families and students by creating the district wide "Get on the Bus Tour." Prior to the first day of school, teachers and staff ride school buses around the community to meet with incoming students and families. He also seeks to inform and connect with students and families throughout the year using his weekly vlog, the "Friday Five," and through student-led Parent-Teacher conferences.

"Dr. Young focuses on building relationships as the foundation for his school's success and has transformed the culture and climate of Joseph Arthur Middle School to be a positive learning environment for both students and staff," said Jayson Baker, Principal at Central Elementary School, Centralia. "Dr. Young lives up to our district's vision, 'Imagine. Inspire. Achieve,' and sees that his staff and students embody what it means to imagine, inspire and achieve in school."

The Elementary School Principal of the Year winner was selected from a pool of region nominees provided by the 21 Regions of the Illinois Principals Association. Dr. Young will be recognized at the IPA's annual Education Leaders Annual Conference in October 2020.

Horace Mann -- the largest national multiline insurance company focusing on educators' financial needs -- provides auto and homeowners insurance, retirement annuities, life insurance and other financial solutions. "Founded by Educators for Educators" in 1945, the company is headquartered in Springfield, Ill. Visit www.horacemann.com for more information.

The Illinois Principals Association is a leadership organization which serves over 5,800 educational leaders throughout the state of Illinois. You can find out more about the IPA at www.ilprincipals.org. Visit <http://www.ilprincipals.org/about-ipa/awards> for more information about the IPA Principal of the Year Awards Program.

###