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For Immediate Release

Illinois Principals Association Announces 2021 John Ourth & Dr. Fred Singleton Professional Development Scholarship Recipients

Springfield, IL – James Robinette, Principal of Congress Park Elementary School, Brookfield, and Julie Lam, Assistant Principal of Curriculum and Instruction at Oswego East High School, Oswego, have received the 2021 John Ourth and Dr. Fred Singleton Professional Development Scholarships sponsored by the Illinois Principals Association. Scholarship grants assist individuals in the pursuit of graduate study, attendance at national conferences, and attendance at other relevant professional development to further the capacities of school administrators to be instructional leaders.

James Robinette has served as principal of Congress Park Elementary School since 2018. Prior to that, he was principal at Barbour Two-Way Language Immersion K-8 for 3 years. Robinette has presented at several Illinois conferences including Kane County ROE Institute Day (2020), ESSA Conference (2019), IPA Conference (2018), as well as the Statewide Conference on Bilingual Education in 2017, 2018 and 2019. He has also worked with CORWIN on Deep Equity within District 102. Robinette is currently completing coursework on a Doctorate in Educational Leadership through Aurora University and shares that his staff knows that he is constantly learning which instills a growth mindset within his building.

As principal, Robinette believes that effective instructional leaders must possess the willingness to learn. “It is impossible to know everything about everything. Principals need to be willing to learn in their deficit areas. This is crucial for professional and leadership growth. Staff members understand that a principal cannot know everything. If staff see the principal learning with them, as well as for them, it will go a very long way in relationship building and leading the school to success.”

Julie Lam has served as Assistant Principal of Curriculum and Instruction at Oswego East High School since 2017. Lam has been a member of the Illinois Principals Association since 2017 and will be co-presenting with the College Board at the 2021 IPA Education Leaders Annual Conference in October. She is currently pursuing a doctoral degree in Educational Administration from Northern Illinois University.

“I committed my life’s work to the field of education because of my personal background. I immigrated to the United States as a refugee with my parents. We settled in Chicago, were English language learners, and were supported on welfare. In addition to the love of my family, the care and support of my educators have made an immense positive impact on my growth and development.” shared Lam. “I am committed to educational leadership so I can provide opportunities for younger generations so they can find success regardless of their background and life experiences.”

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.

Robinette and Lam will be recognized in October at a special ceremony during the IPA Education Leaders Annual Conference in October 2021.

The Illinois Principals Association is a leadership organization which serves over 5,800 educational leaders throughout the state of Illinois and whose mission 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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