



FREIRE FOUNDATION HONORS OUTSTANDING TEACHERS WITH \$10,000 DISTINGUISHED TEACHER AWARD

[Philadelphia, PA] – [August 13, 2024] – Freire Foundation is proud to announce the recipients of their inaugural Freire Distinguished Teacher Award, a \$10,000 honor that recognizes outstanding educators who demonstrate instructional excellence and have made significant contributions to their students' academic achievement.

This award was launched shortly after Freire Schools announced plans to increase teacher starting salaries for the 2024-25 school year. It comes at a pivotal moment in education, amid a teacher shortage and national discussions surrounding fair compensation and treatment of teachers. The Distinguished Teacher Award exemplifies Freire Schools' commitment to bridging the gap between educators and other professionals, highlighting the value and critical importance of teachers in our society.

"This award has been a long time coming," said Freire Schools CEO Kelly Davenport. "We wanted to do something that not only recognizes our teachers for their unwavering commitment to our kids but also serves as another step in our efforts to acknowledge the importance of our teachers and reward them for their excellence and hard work. These five teachers are the best of the best. They inspire, infuse humor into their classrooms, and connect with their kids on a personal level. At Freire, this is the norm. Our teachers' dedication and passion drive student success across our campuses, and we are proud to honor their incredible impact."

Award Recipients:

Brian Brecher has been an integral part of Freire Charter High School's social studies department and 10th-grade team for nearly two decades. Brian's students consistently praise his compassion, his choice to center empathy in the study of history, and his ability to make history relevant, truly embodying the school's college prep mission.

Kate Jordan, a longtime middle school English Language Arts (ELA) teacher at Freire Charter Middle School, has played many roles over the years, including ELA and social studies teacher, reading specialist, and director of an after-school tutoring center. Kate's belief in the power of high-quality curriculum has driven her to champion the school's ELA curriculum, resulting in significant student growth in 7th grade ELA this year.

Tim Straub, the 10th grade Biology and AP Biology teacher at Freire Wilmington since 2020, is a champion of the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). Tim's passion for science and strong relationships with students engage them in challenging content, and his students frequently celebrate his ability to make science exciting and relevant.

Charlotte Porter has made a tremendous impact on her students' growth in her 10th grade ELA class since joining TECH Freire in 2022. In Charlotte's classroom, college is the goal. Students do not shy away from a challenge because Charlotte expects them to read, write about, and discuss complex texts every day.

Honorable Mention:

Meg O'Doherty, an 8th grade English Language Arts (ELA) teacher at Freire Middle, doesn't just teach students ELA; she teaches them how to be better people. As the 8th grade team leader, she guides students through a QUEST project, where they design a non-profit to address a community issue. Meg provides individualized support to help all her students meet high ELA standards, resulting in over 50% of 8th graders achieving proficient or advanced scores on the 2024 ELA PSSA.

Each year, up to four educators across the Freire Schools network will be selected as Distinguished Teacher Award recipients. They receive an honorarium, external professional development opportunities, and the chance to mentor early career teachers by welcoming them into their classrooms for observations and collaboration.

About Freire Foundation and Freire Schools: Founded in 2010, the Freire Foundation works to advance the Freire Schools network's promising ideas and partnerships, bring creativity to the classroom, and engage the community in public education. The Freire Schools family is a high achieving network of three urban public charter schools (4 campuses) serving approximately 2,000 students in grades 5-12 in Philadelphia, PA and Wilmington, DE. Committed to ensuring every student can succeed and grow, Freire Schools was recognized in 2023 by the [Center for Research on Education Outcomes \(CREDO\)](#) as a "gap-busting" charter network for closing the achievement gap. As the philanthropic arm of Freire Schools, the Freire Foundation's primary responsibility is to ensure that Freire Schools have the resources they need to execute their missions and sustain their innovative programming. By investing in the Freire Foundation, our donors and partners help to empower young people, prepare them for college and careers, and make the world a more creative and inclusive place. Freire Foundation is a registered 501(c)(3) non-profit organization (EIN# 27-2568814).

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