

news



3106 Joseph Howe Drive
Halifax, Nova Scotia B3L 4L7
www.nstu.ca • pr@nstu.ca
Tel 902.477.5621
Fax 902.477.3517

N O V A S C O T I A T E A C H E R S U N I O N

Date: June 9, 2014 For Release: Immediately Contact: Angela Murray

Cape Breton teacher wins 2014 Lieutenant Governor's Teaching Award

Margot O'Leary, a school guidance counsellor at Glace Bay High School, is the 2014 recipient of the Lieutenant Governor's Teaching Award. In a ceremony held today at Government House, Lt.-Gov. J.J. Grant presented O'Leary with her award, a specially designed Nova Scotian Crystal sculpture and a framed certificate to recognize this achievement.

"Teachers have a profound influence on the lives of young people and the wider community," said Lt.-Gov. Grant. "It is my privilege to recognize Ms. O'Leary's extraordinary commitment to the youth of our province and to the teaching profession as a whole."

O'Leary has been a guidance counsellor at Glace Bay High School since 2009, where she has provided leadership for the school's Gay Straight Alliance (GSA) and education against drugs Group (LEAD) and is a liaison for Free2BU program that works with at risk youth to promote self-esteem and good decision making skills.

"Teachers can and do make a difference," said O'Leary. "We identify situations where we can help and provide guidance and support. We make students feel like they belong, that they are worthy, that they are important, and that they have great potential. Simple acts of kindness go a long way. Saying hello in the hallway, calling the student by name, showing an interest, or taking a moment with a student after class makes a difference. To paraphrase the late Maya Angelou, 'A person may forget what you taught them but they will never forget how you made them feel.'"

O'Leary's passion is creating a safe, supportive and welcoming environment for all students to learn and grow. In her role as one of Glace Bay High's guidance counsellors, she has developed programs and networks that promote mental health. Through support from the Cape Breton District Health Authority she has helped to create a youth advisory committee that identifies needs in the school community and a mental health awareness group that hosted a day-long event promoting better understanding of mental health issues. O'Leary has also worked on developing anti-violence and anti-bullying programs for the school and one of her student leaders, was recently honoured with a Lieutenant Governor's Respectful Citizenship Award.

MORE

“I am so pleased to be presenting this award to Margot,” said NSTU president Shelley Morse. “She exemplifies the positive impact teachers have on students, schools and communities. Her dedication to the profession and to the well-being of her students is an inspiration to all. She truly reflects the outstanding work done by our teachers each day.”

A Glace Bay native, O’Leary began her teaching career in Halifax County in 1980 as a French teacher. Since 1990, excluding one year at Breton Education Centre, she has been a part of the Glace Bay High School community, where over the years she taught history, global geography and French courses and served as the school’s French Department Head. O’Leary has a Master’s Degree in Counselling from Acadia University. Her first degree is from Université Sainte Anne, where she also earned a specialty diploma in teaching French as a second language. She also completed diplomas in Curriculum and Family Life Studies from Cape Breton University.

Former Lieutenant Governor Myra A. Freeman, CM, ONS, MSM in partnership with the Nova Scotia Teachers Union instituted the Lieutenant Governor’s Teaching Award in 2005. His Honour, Brigadier-General the Honourable J.J. Grant, CMM, ONS, CD (Ret’d), Lieutenant Governor of Nova Scotia re-established this award in 2013. Each year a teacher is selected to represent the teaching profession in Nova Scotia. To be eligible, the teacher representative must be a member of the NSTU and be a currently active teacher or administrator in the public school or Community College system.

-30-

For more information contact:

Angela Murray
NSTU Public Relations Coordinator
479-4708 cell: 497-0194
amurray@staff.nstu.ca
@NSTeachersUnion