

Five School District of New Berlin Educators, One Student Earn Herb Kohl Educational Foundation Awards

New Berlin, Wis. - Five School District of New Berlin educators and one high school senior have been chosen as Herb Kohl Educational Foundation award winners. It is the fourth consecutive year the SDNB has had at least five Kohl award recipients.

Tarah Fedenia, a speech and language pathologist at Poplar Creek Elementary; **Melanie Gearhart**, a physical education teacher at Elmwood Elementary; **Jenna Hoeffert**, a third-grade teacher at Elmwood; **Kyra Seely**, an art teacher at Poplar Creek; and **Cody Smith**, a science teacher at New Berlin West Middle/High School have been awarded Herb Kohl Educational Foundation Fellowship Awards. It is the most SDNB teachers selected for the award in a single year.

Gearhart is in her eighth year with the SDNB, Hoeffert and Seely are in their fifth year, and Fedenia and Smith are in their third year. They are five of 101 Wisconsin teachers to earn this year's \$6,000 award with a matching \$6,000 award given to their respective schools. Fellowship recipients are educators who have been chosen for their superior ability to inspire a love of learning in their students, their ability to motivate others, and their leadership service within and outside the classroom.

Additionally, nearly 200 graduating high school students have been recognized by the foundation with \$10,000 scholarship awards including New Berlin Eisenhower's **Naisha Bepar**. Bepar received an Excellence Scholarship, given to those who have demonstrated excellence in the academic arena and high motivation to achieve, have displayed a broad range of activity and leadership outside the academic setting, and have shown strong promise for succeeding in college and beyond.

Fellowship and Excellence Scholarship recipients are selected by a statewide committee composed of civic leaders and representatives of education-related associations and the program's co-sponsors: The Wisconsin Newspaper Association Foundation, Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, Wisconsin Council of Religious and Independent School, regional Cooperative Educational Service Agencies and the Association of Wisconsin School Administrators.

"The announcement of the Herb Kohl Educational Foundation awards is always an exciting time for our district," Superintendent Joe Garza said. "To have six award winners this year – including the most teachers we've ever had in one year – is a tremendous honor not only for them as individuals, but for their schools, our district and our community. These awards exemplify what I often tell people – we have the best staff and students in the area, and New Berlin should be proud of them."

The Kohl Foundation Scholarship and Fellowship program was established by Herb Kohl, U.S. Senator (Retired), in 1990. To date, the foundation has awarded \$25 million to Wisconsin educators, students, and schools.

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