

WEF HONORS COMMUNITY MEMBERS

Wakefield Educational Foundation recently held their 19th annual Celebration of Learning at the Galvin Middle School. Wakefield Superintendent Dr. Stephen Zrike had the honor of presenting Andrew Bray, Donna Cushman and Scott Hartman. His words truly praise these individuals and their dedication to supporting excellence in education for the Wakefield Public School System!

It is my honor to present the few awards- The Wakefield Community Awards. These awards are presented to members of the community of Wakefield for their tireless work in charitable causes that impact families and students in Wakefield in a positive fashion. Individuals who receive this award, are nominated by other members of our community, and are typically unsung heroes and heroines who make it their mission to better the lives of those in need.



Pictured: Andrew Bray, Dr. Stephen Zrike, Scott Hartman.

Andrew Bray

From the moment I arrived in Wakefield, I started to notice that the guy with the shaggy haircut was at every meeting I attended. He always seemed to be listening intently to the discussion, made a few thoughtful comments and appeared to jot down a few notes. As a superintendent, I have to say I didn't know what to make of him- you always have to be wary of someone that is actually listening to everything you say.

After meetings, he would approach me and very calmly share his perspective with me- a perspective that I quickly learned was insightful, student focused and progressive. I remember distinctly during one of my walks around the lake that we engaged in a rich conversation about the intersection of curriculum and technology. With his always affable, respectful and pensive disposition, he encouraged us to examine the viability of digital curriculum.

What I quickly learned is that Mr. Bray is a quiet and important force in our educational community. He was a strong and active voice around the Galvinize movement. More recently, this energy has been dedicated to our technology efforts and supporting the District's budget requests. I asked him to co-lead our District Technology Council with our IT Director and under his leadership they have introduced the 1 to 1 initiative at the

Galvin, Bring Your Own Device at the HS and advocated for additional technology spending. He has also served as a champion for our school budgets, speaking passionately about the staffing and resource requests that are critical to our strategic improvements efforts. It is an honor to recognize Mr. Bray this evening.

Donna Cushman (who unfortunately cannot be with us tonight)

Donna Cushman is silent but incredibly effective. She has been with the school district since December of 1998 in the roles of computer technician, network manager and data manager for the Wakefield Public Schools. In all of these roles, she has distinguished herself as a loyal, dedicated employee who calmly (and always with a smile) provides excellent customer service to our staff.

Our staff has come to depend on Donna for her ability to troubleshoot an issue and to model/coach them with their technology needs. She truly relishes and embraces a challenge and will persist until she solves the problem. Further, her motor never stops running and she is always willing to go above and beyond whatever she is asked to do whether it is in her job description or not.

She is the key player when it comes to preparing report cards, finalizing school schedules and maintaining our data systems. She works tirelessly with our guidance office, assistant principals and the central office to ensure that this is done seamlessly. In the last few months she has done yeoman's work leading our PARCC implementation efforts- scheduling sessions, preparing teachers and configuring our technology. We thank Ms. Cushman for her dedication and service to the Wakefield Schools

Scott Hartman

This next individual has been dodging me for months now as I have tried to recognize him at school committee meetings this winter. Nothing delights me more than having the opportunity to embarrass him at a bigger event and in front of more people.

As a parent of two students in the Wakefield Public Schools, Scott has volunteered countless hours in support of our technology initiatives as a member of the District's Technology Council and as a regular advisor to our Technology Director. Mr. Hartman actively participated in the planning phase of the Galvin Middle School Building project working with the District IT department, the Town IT Department and the project technology consultant to ensure technology solutions were "right-sized" and optimally configured.

Most recently, Mr. Hartman played an instrumental role in addressing and rectifying the congestion/traffic issues that impeded our technology integration efforts across WPS. I distinctly remember calling him one night this Fall to ask him for his expertise and express frustration with our Network issues. Without hesitation, he offered his time and his "beautiful" mind and responded with urgency. As a result of his efforts along with school and town IT Departments, we have seen a significant impact in the viability of the WPS network over the last four months. We are all grateful to Mr. Hartman for sharing his expertise, time and passion for digital learning with us. On behalf of the students and staff in the Wakefield Public Schools we thank you.