

EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION AWARD

Each month, the Milwaukee Board of School Directors recognizes an outstanding school, student, staff member, parent, or community member for a display of excellence, achievement, and innovation that may serve as an example to our school district and the entire Milwaukee community.

This month, the Milwaukee Board of School Directors is pleased to present the "Excellence in Education Award" to:

DEBRA J. JUPKA
FORMER MPS ADMINISTRATOR

Debra J. Jupka dedicated 34 years of service to Milwaukee Public Schools before retiring in 2008. Since that time, she has continued to support the district's core beliefs that children come first and the classroom is the most important place in the district.

During her tenure in the district, Ms. Jupka was a music teacher for 14 years, a principal for 17 years and held various other district leadership positions including assistant principal, assistant principal in charge, generalist, supervisor and interim math curriculum specialist. As a music teacher, she geared her teaching to foster a lifelong love of music within her students. As a principal, she exhibited great leadership in unifying staff on behalf of realizing increased academic achievement for all students.

Ms. Jupka's devotion to the students enrolled in Milwaukee Public Schools has continued since her retirement. For the last several years, she has worked closely with Interfaith to implement the RSVP Tutoring Program in MPS schools. This connection came about when she began tutoring on her own at Maple Tree Elementary School, and realized the potential benefit for students throughout the district if a larger scale tutoring program staffed with volunteer tutors was implemented. She worked with Interfaith and RSVP and ultimately led efforts to bring the formalized tutoring services to the district and implement in 16 schools. There are currently 50 schools, and we are on track to add 20 additional schools this academic year. Last year we had just over 200 tutors and this year we have just passed the 200 tutor mark, with a goal of placing 300 tutors. Much of this is thanks to Ms. Jupka's initial efforts working with Interfaith and RSVP and her continued support of the volunteers.

Ms. Jupka continues her connection with Interfaith, and in addition to serving as a tutor, she has developed, organized and presented training sessions to new tutors and served as Interfaith's school support coordinator. She also serves on the RSVP Advisory Board - Tutoring Component.

In addition to her career in MPS and her extensive involvement with Interfaith, Ms. Jupka and her immediate family have upheld a tradition of generosity and support to current and past MPS graduates. The Michael Jupka Scholarship was created in 1995 to memorialize Ms. Jupka's father, a 1936 Boys Tech graduate. It became the Michael and Helen M. Jupka Scholarship upon the passing of Ms. Jupka's mother. The fully endowed scholarship awards three \$2,000 college scholarships each year to Bradley Tech seniors, and grants four \$250 stipends to pay for college fees to scholarship semi-finalists.

Ms. Jupka, a product of MPS and a proud Hamilton High School graduate, has established the Debra J. Jupka Scholarship. Rufus King International High School Students complete an extensive application and go through a rigorous interview process. Each year the four finalists receive \$1,500 scholarships, and seven semi-finalists are awarded \$250 stipends to pay for their college fees. Plans are in place to fully endow the scholarship. The Rufus King International Baccalaureate Scholarship will also be fully endowed. Currently, \$1,000 is awarded to the school to offset student exam fees using a need-based approach. Her giving to King does not stop there. She recently assisted the school by issuing a "challenge grant" of \$2,500 to be used to repair the school's auditorium sound system.

A 1975 Alverno College graduate, Ms. Jupka has earned the privilege from the school of awarding one \$500 Alverno College Alum Scholarship each year. She augments this by granting a \$1,000 stipend to be awarded by Alverno each year based on need to students in the education program who are MPS graduates. This award will also be fully endowed.

In addition to her work with schools, Ms. Jupka has remained involved in the community. She serves on the Northwestern University Alumni Board, the MICAH Education Task Force, the Alverno College Alumnae Engagement Committee, and is a past member of the Alverno College Alumnae Advisory Board. She also serves on the Seifert School Governance Council.



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