

# COMMUNITY NEWS

## Rising to the challenge



Seven local teachers were recognized by the Challenger Learning Center in honor of the 36th anniversary of the Space Shuttle Challenger accident that killed seven passengers.

Submitted photo

### *Challenger Learning Center celebrates seven local teachers in honor of the 36th anniversary of the Space Shuttle Challenger disaster*

By Wendy Todd

Seven local teachers were recognized by the Challenger Learning Center in honor of the 36th anniversary of the Space Shuttle Challenger accident that killed seven passengers. The teachers were nominated by current or former students they inspired to pursue careers in STEM.

A virtual ceremony took place on Jan. 27th to acknowledge the following awardees: Dan Easterday, Nokomis High School (retired), Tanjanika Foster, seventh-grade math teacher, Collinsville Middle School, Tifanie Fowlkes-Comninellis, biology teacher, Hazelwood Central High

School, Paul Wallis, physics teacher, Desoto Senior High, Christopher Sellers, physics and computer science teacher, Jennings Senior High, Martha Warren, science teacher, Jennings Senior High, and Cherron White, science teacher, Jennings Senior High. The keynote speaker was James Young, this year's Missouri Teacher of the Year.

The Challenger Learning Center was created by family members of those who were killed in the Challenger space shuttle tragedy in 1986. The centers provide STEM programming which also includes simulated space missions. The mission of the Challenger Learning Center is to "inspire the future generation of innovators through

immersive space mission simulations and other transformational STEM experiences."

The global organization began with its first center in the Houston Museum of Natural Science in 1988. It now has over 40 centers located in the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, and South Korea. The St. Louis Challenger Learning Center started in the early 1990s and is located in Ferguson.

The Challenger Learning Center's Inspiring Teacher Awards aim to honor and appreciate educators who continue the important work of exposing students to the

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**ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH**

# **FOCUS St. Louis Announces the Spring 2022 Class of Emerging Leaders**



FOCUS St. Louis® has selected 32 talented young professionals for the Spring 2022 cohort of Emerging Leaders. This competitive program provides participants with an increased sense of engagement in the region, as well as the tools to take an active role as the next generation of St. Louis regional leaders.

Since its launch in 2012, the FOCUS Emerging Leaders program has trained more than 575 early-career professionals from across the public, private and nonprofit sectors.

“Emerging Leaders is the perfect opportunity for any early-career professional who wants to take on a greater leadership role in our region,” says FOCUS President & CEO Dr. Yemi Akande-Bartsch. “Participants leave the program with a better understanding of themselves and our community and a clearer vision for their future.”

During the four-month program, participants meet with area leaders to gain a better understanding of the inner workings of St. Louis, explore their personal, professional and civic leadership styles and gain a diverse network of peers. Upon graduation, participants become part of the FOCUS network of more than 10,000 leadership program alumni.

**Kelsey Bodie**

**Instructional Coach – Educational Leader**

**Hazelwood School District**

[https://www.stltoday.com/pr/business/focus-st-louis-announces-the-spring-2022-class-of-emerging-leaders/article\\_9f9a8e5e-8911-11ec-b1e3-571889074892.html](https://www.stltoday.com/pr/business/focus-st-louis-announces-the-spring-2022-class-of-emerging-leaders/article_9f9a8e5e-8911-11ec-b1e3-571889074892.html)

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# EdBoard: students shouldn't face prior review

In 1968, the historic court case “Tinker v. Des Moines” laid the foundations for freedom of speech for public school students across the United States. Under this ruling, it became the standard that students “did not shed their constitutional rights to freedom of speech or expression at the schoolhouse gate.” Essentially, this means that students who are on public school property still hold their first amendment rights.

However, the right to freedom of the press for public school students was challenged in 1988 by the “**Hazelwood School District v. Kuhlmeier**” ruling. Before the publication of the **Hazelwood East High** School’s student newspaper, an article recounting students’ experiences with teen pregnancy and divorce was removed due to administrative oversight. In a 5-3 ruling, it was decided that the administration’s move was not in violation of students’ rights. As such, it is now the standard that administrators can censor students for “any reasonable pedagogical purpose.”

This ruling affects the rights of student journalists across the country. The Hazelwood ruling has become the new standard, and as such, the content that is distributed on public school grounds can be reviewed and blocked by the administration before publication.

In an effort to return to the standard established by “Tinker v. Des Moines,” many states have independently passed what is “[New Voices](#)” laws. These laws remove the option for administrators to review student material before publication in states where they are enacted. It is important to note that New Voices laws still allow for censorship, but only if it is libelous or slanderous (and therefore not covered by The First Amendment). There are currently 15 states who have passed New Voices legislation, with New Jersey being the most recent in 2021. Legislation is currently underway in eight states, including Pennsylvania.