

## FRONT PAGE STORY

# Eight excellent awardees

Salute to Excellence in Education is Saturday, September 29

By Melinda Oliver and Jordan Wade

*They are an assistant high school principal, a middle and high school science teacher, a high school band director, a high school English teacher, an advisor at a university, an elementary school principal, a secondary English Language Arts Curriculum coach, and a high school special education teacher who also chairs the Science Department. They are the 2018 Salute to Excellence in Education awardees.*



**Chauncey Granger** has made his way up the education system through working as an assistant principal at Beaumont High School in St. Louis



to principal at Hazelwood East High School. A lifelong learner himself, Granger has earned his doctorate degree in educational leadership at University of Missouri and a master's degree in special education at Saint Xavier University, and a bachelor's degree in speech communication from Eastern Illinois University.

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In order to contribute to the academic success of students Granger makes sure to engage parents, family members, and community members.

"We serve a population of disenfranchised families that feel as if when they come in they're talked at or over their heads, and that trust is tough to gain with families that have always had things that haven't been working in their favor," Granger said. "We have to make sure that the families know that we're here for them; we're here for the students."

**Tamara Wells** has spent the entirety of her 18-year teaching career working with students in the Hazelwood School District. As a secondary English Language Arts Curriculum coach, she oversees the educational programming of six middle schools and three high schools. After noticing students' desire to talk through subjects they were encountering in and outside of the classroom, Wells developed the CHAT (Children Having Academic Talks about



languages, identity, dialect and culture) Academy. Through the use of literature and a focus on current

events, Wells empowers African-American students to take an active role in their own learning. She also teaches English courses at UMSL and serves on the board of Educators for Social Justice.

"We are training students to become social justice advocates who are in tune with modern political and social issues," Wells said. "The teens take the lead and initiate programming and conversations about subjects they believe need to be addressed."

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## ***Hazelwood Community Learns to Respond to Active Intruder Scenario***

Evade. Escape. Engage. That was the message during the Community Active Intruder workshop held by the Hazelwood School District (HSD) and Tier One Tactical Solutions on Aug. 27.

Students, teachers, staff, and the community were taught lifesaving techniques to handle the threat of an aggressive intruder more proactively. "It's beneficial that our students and district staff learn these life saving techniques, at the same time it is also invaluable training for the entire community," said Vershaun

Howze, director of safety and security.

In 2013, The Hazelwood School District was the first St. Louis County school district to take part in an option based response program provided by the St. Louis County Police Tactical Operations Unit, in collaboration with the Hazelwood and Florissant Police departments. As the first of its kind, Hazelwood was the trailblazer in teaching staff and students how to respond to a dangerous intruder in school or in any other public setting.

## **Hazelwood School District Partners with Little Caesars Pizza**

The Hazelwood School District and Little Caesars Pizza are partnering in support of a new program at Russell Elementary School, "Principal's Prize Patrol."

The new incentive program is for students in grades K-5. The program was developed by Russell Elementary Principal, Lisa Strauther. Once a month, students with perfect attendance and exceptional behavior are entered into a drawing. Two students' names will be selected

from the pool of qualified entrants. Strauther and Russell's staff will then surprise students and his/her family by delivering two pizzas and a certificate to their home in time for dinner.

"The Principal's Prize Patrol is designed to create a culture of high expectations and excellence within our school while acknowledging the efforts of the family, who ultimately are the child's first and most important teacher."

## **Hazelwood District to Hold Kindergarten Information Night**

The Hazelwood School District (HSD) will hold a kindergarten information night on Tuesday, Oct. 2, from 5:45-7:30 p.m. at the Hazelwood Central Early Childhood Center, 15955 New Halls Ferry Road.

Parents are invited to learn more about HSD's full-day kindergarten program. Attendees can view learning materials, ask questions about the kindergarten curriculum, discuss parenting topics with our "Parents as Teachers" educators, and receive learning activities to use at home.

Registration for this event is required and should be made by Sept. 21. Please call 314-953-7650 to RSVP. A light dinner will be served, and free childcare is provided for children 3-11 years old. The first 100 families that register will receive a free book.