Montana State Teachers of the Year

White Paper

For more than 50 years our nation has honored teachers with the **National Teacher of the Year Program**. The National Teacher of the Year Program, sponsored by the **VOYA Foundation**, is a project of the **Council of Chief State School Officers**.

In 1956, Montana selected its first Teacher of the Year. Although at first the process was not held annually, since the mid-1980s Montana has identified an outstanding teacher each year and supported his or her participation in the National Teacher of the Year program.

MEA-MFT, Montana's teachers' union, currently supports the program at the state level through the Montana Professional Teaching Foundation. Nominations are typically due in late spring, applications due in July, finalists identified in September, and the Teacher of the Year announced shortly thereafter. Each year the Teacher of the Year is honored at the MEA-MFT banquet held during the Educators’ Conference in October.

A Montana chapter of NNSTOY aims to extend the State Teacher of the Year (STOY) experience to the state level, bringing home the experiences and lessons learned by the state teachers of the year and finalists in order to broaden the influence of these teacher leaders in our own educational context.

This chapter was organized in 2016 by a team of state Teachers of the Year and finalists including Jessica Anderson (2016), Anna Baldwin (2014), Craig Beals (2015), Anne Keith (2010), and Shelly Stanton (2016 finalist).

**Mission statement:**

The Montana chapter of NNSTOY (MT STOY) aims to promote teacher leadership that will impact student learning by elevating the teaching profession through purposeful, non-partisan engagement in state-wide activities and conversations related to education.

**Goals:**

- Communicating and collaborating with the National Network of State Teachers of the Year
• Providing avenues for Montana Teachers of the Year and finalists to collaborate on a variety of activities
• Providing opportunities for Montana Teachers of the Year and finalists to impact education policy in our state as well as nationally
• Providing leadership opportunities for state Teachers of the Year and finalists
• Developing a list of available speakers and presenters for education conferences
• Participating in community service
• Maintaining a cadre of teacher leaders who impact teacher preparation, educator recruitment, and retention
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• Empowering and elevating the teaching profession through advocacy efforts and engagement in state-wide conversations and activities