

# EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION AWARDS 2018



## SPEF EDUCATOR AWARD FORM

All nominations should be **submitted to SPEF at [info@spefct.org](mailto:info@spefct.org)**, no later than **Friday, February 2, 2018**. For questions please contact SPEF at 203-965-7733.

Name of Educator being nominated: Michael Argenio

Position title of Educator being nominated: Individuals and Societies Teacher – 6<sup>th</sup> grade

School: Rogers International School

School Point of Contact: Jill Luciani

Point of Contact Phone Number: 203-517-6974

Point of Contact Email: Jill\_luciani@yahoo.com

Nominations can be submitted by **one** of the following two formats.

- 1- Attach a written response of 250 words or less describing how your school's nominee exhibits the following:
  - Enhances student learning with enrichment
  - Embraces community collaboration by bringing outside resources in the classroom
  - Demonstrates a commitment to continuous professional development of self & others
  - Exemplifies a commitment to supporting the greater Stamford community
  
- 2- Complete the questionnaire on the follow page.





# Michael Argenio

"Mike Argenio can spot someone's state of being from hundreds of feet away and will then generously share a pat on the back, smile, some personalized kind words to push away any clouds that were hanging overhead – it doesn't make a difference if it is a current student, past student, future student, other teacher or even parent. I've been lucky enough to experience it in all those ways with him as a mother of 4 students who had him and as a teacher in the district."

- *Monica Lahiri Hoherchak, parent and colleague*

"My daughter says he makes learning so fun that if she has to go to the bathroom during his class, she chooses to hold it in order not to miss anything!"

- *Elena Chernysh, parent*

"Our son has worked hard since coming to RIS to overcome some challenges - social anxiety and a mild learning disability. As you can appreciate, middle school can be tough. Mr. Argenio immediately recognized that our son sometimes needed that "extra" boost and took an interest in him. He encourages him to do well, makes sure that he gets redirected if he needs to refocus, and even has sent me pictures during the day to reassure ME that my child is happy (something we sometimes angst about when we send our children to school each morning)."

- *Parents of a Rogers middle schooler*

"Mike Argenio and I have worked together for 12 years. My first memory of Mike was when I interviewed for the job at the old Rogers. Summer school was in session and as I walked through the hallways, I noticed a teacher and some students laughing and just having a good time while working. He seemed to have developed a genuine relationship with the kids. It was something different than what I was used to seeing. After I was hired, I was pleasantly surprised to learn that I would be working alongside of Mike. 12 years later, Mike is still establishing strong bonds with his students. He truly cares for each one of them, and they often come back to visit with him well after graduation. He's that teacher-the one that all students want to have when they get to sixth grade. I couldn't imagine not having Mike on my grade level. He brings creativity, enthusiasm, a tremendous work ethic, and a sense of family to the grade level. Because of that, he brings out the best in all students, families, and co-workers. If anyone deserves to be recognized for their dedication to a profession, then it should be Mike Argenio because he embodies the definition of "Teacher of the Year".

- *Gina Wilson, colleague*

"Mr. Argenio is unique because he teaches you a ton of material but in a fun and entertaining way. He encourages participation from all the students in the class because he really knows everyone and how to get them involved. With Mr. Argenio, there's no "busy work." Instead, there's interesting conversation that makes you look at things from different perspectives."

- *Alison Bouchard, Rogers student*

"Mr. Argenio has the ability to engage the kids. The kids look forward to his class, and kids who've graduated think fondly of the days they had with him. His love of working with kids is evident in a fun class he holds on Fridays before school– it is a trivia game he made up called Outer Ring of Consciousness. However, it's not only his ability to engage the student that is exceptional, it's also his ability to work extremely well with other teachers in the grade level. For example, there are many times when the English & Individual and Society's projects cross paths in great collaboration, and personally as a parent, I think my children have grown and learned the most from this technique."

- *Suzanne Zaleski, parent*

Michael Argenio has had a positive and long lasting impact on the lives of students, parents, colleagues and the community for over 19 years. In his role as 6th grade Individuals and Societies (history) teacher at Rogers International School, he inspires students to want to do well in school and motivates them to discover what they're passionate about.

What makes Mr. Argenio so special is that he cares deeply about the whole student. He's 100% dedicated not only to his students' academic development but their social and emotional well-being as well. Mr. Argenio has a gift for recognizing what each child needs to flourish. Whether that's an encouraging word, extra help, or something else, he notices and then acts in the best interests of the child. His classroom is open to all – current, past and future students alike. Students think of his classroom as a home away from home and come there when they need help, academic or otherwise.

Mr. Argenio is well known for his engaging teaching style and positive attitude and is often referred to as "my favorite teacher" by students who have had him and even those who have not! This is due to the fact that he is omnipresent at Rogers: out in the hall between classes speaking with students, volunteering at after school events, and being an active cheerleader for our student athletes and artists. He is the teacher that high school students come back to visit because his positive impact on them was that significant.

Mr. Argenio personifies the ideal of cooperation between home and school. Whether it's an in-person conference or phone/email conversation, he goes out of his way to make himself available to students and parents. He proactively communicates with parents, keeping them informed of their child's progress and sometimes just reassuring them that their child is happy during the school day. Notes from Mr. Argenio often include photos, giving parents a welcome glimpse into the sometimes mysterious world of the middle schooler.

Mr. Argenio has made significant positive contributions to the curriculum at both the school and city level. He created the "Fantasy Island" and "GRAPES" projects that incorporate the curriculum in an engaging and comprehensive way. He also has served on the Curriculum Committee and Data Team for Stamford Public Schools. Mr. Argenio also takes an active role in peer development and mentoring, often welcoming student teachers into his classroom. His reach extends outside the classroom as a girls soccer coach, LINKS instructor and frequent host of extra help sessions before or after school.

Mr. Argenio's dedication to the whole student exemplifies the Stamford Public Schools commitment to cultivating productive habits of mind, body and heart in every student and we at Rogers feel so lucky to have him.





