

## Education Minnesota

# Albany administrative assistant named Education Support Professional of the Year

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ST. PAUL, Minn., Nov. 15, 2017 – Education Minnesota is celebrating American Education Week by honoring Diane Noll, an administrative assistant at Albany Elementary School, as the 2017 Education Minnesota Education Support Professional (ESP) of the Year.

Noll has worked in the district since 2003. Noll does daily announcements, attendance, lunch counts and assists other staff, educators and students with everything from fixing the copier to talking through an issue with a student sent to the office.



“My main concern for our building is keeping a positive, fun attitude in the office,” she said. “Our staff knows they are always welcome to visit, and our students are always met with a smile.”

Supporting the 600 students and 90 staff at Albany Elementary School with an ever-changing set of needs keeps Noll very busy.

“Every staff member has their needs that they come and ask me questions about,” she said. “They ask about the copier, needing more construction paper, why a kid is sick or just coming down to vent about something.”

Noll has also been a fierce advocate for her fellow ESPs, previously serving as president of the local support staff union. With her statewide honor, she wants to make sure the work of ESPs is recognized and valued.

“All of the things the support staff group does can go unnoticed,” she said. “Having ESPs is important for our teachers to succeed and our students to succeed.”

As the new Minnesota ESP of the Year, Noll will receive a new Apple iPad and a \$1,000 honorarium. She will also be nominated for the National Education Association’s ESP of the Year and will receive an all-expenses paid trip to Florida for the awards ceremony in March.

“Our students cannot succeed if they don’t feel welcomed in their school environment,” said Denise Specht, president of Education Minnesota, the award’s sponsor. “Diane understands that better than anyone. Every student walking in the door knows her and knows she cares about them.”

American Education Week, a national celebration of public education, runs from Nov. 13 through Nov. 17.

Wednesday had been designated as Education Support Professionals Day to honor the women and men who keep schools running and students safe, healthy and ready to learn.

The winner of the Education Support Professional of the Year award is selected by a five-member selection committee that includes three leaders of Education Minnesota, the winner in the previous year and a representative of an external organization, which was United Educators Credit Union this year.

### **About Education Minnesota**

Education Minnesota is the voice for professional educators and students. Education Minnesota's members include teachers and education support professionals in Minnesota's public school districts, faculty members at Minnesota's community and technical colleges and University of Minnesota campuses in Duluth and Crookston, retired educators and student teachers. Education Minnesota is affiliated with the American Federation of Teachers, National Education Association and AFL-CIO.

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