



THE VOICE FOR PROFESSIONAL
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ISSUES



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Rural Educators Awarded

The Minnesota Rural Education Association announced its fourth annual Educator of Excellence Award honorees. The award was created to recognize, reward and promote excellence in education that achieves the highest outcomes for greater Minnesota students.

Four awards are given out each year, one to each of MREA's membership zones—north, south, north central and south central.

The four honorees were selected earlier this year and honored at a banquet in November. They include:

- ◆ Jessica Strom, math teacher, Win-E-Mac Schools.
- ◆ Ryan Larson, Dragon Academy instructor, Pine City Public Schools.
- ◆ **Tony McGee**, science teacher, Plainview-Elgin-Millville Schools.

- ◆ Patrick Merrick, science teacher, Westbrook -Walnut Grove Schools.

Read more about the honorees and why they were selected, as well how to nominate an educator for the 2020 award at

www.mreavoice.org/awards/#educators-of-excellence.



MREA Educator of Excellence
Award winners

(From left) Patrick Merrick, Education Commissioner Mary Cathryn Ricker, Ryan Larson, Tony McGee and Jessica Strom.

Cultural Competency Training Opportunities

February 14 & 15, 2020

March 7 & 21, 2020

April 4 & 18, 2020

May 2 & 16, 2020

All training will be held in Rochester, MN.

Please watch for training and registration information from your local president!

HVTU Holiday Banquet

Deanna Capelle, HVTU Secretary & Communications & Newsletter

The annual holiday banquet was held this year at Riverview Greens Golf and Banquet Center in Stewartville on December 4, 2019. This festive event was attended by 29 people including members and their guests, retirees and their guests, Denise Specht, our field rep Curt, and field office assistant Cherie. Joe welcomed all of us and then we headed for a delicious buffet with cheesecake for dessert.

I was lucky enough to be seated at a table for the evening with Denise which was fun and interesting. She later gave a little talk to everyone about various things going on in EdMN and in the country as a whole. She just flowed with great information and no written speech at all. We are very fortunate to have her working so hard and representing all of us. Also on the fortunate side were all who attended as door prizes were numerous and so perfect for the holidays. Everyone seemed to have a very pleasant evening. I hope more of you can make it next year.

How Can I Be More Involved In My Union??

Curt Rock, Field Staff

There are many ways you as a member of your local can be involved with your Union. You can do things locally, regionally, statewide, and nationally. Below are some upcoming events you can choose from to be more involved with your Union for your local and yourself.

1 – Attend the HVTU Lobby Day on Wednesday, March 11. We will start at Education Minnesota headquarters at 9:30 a.m. with a briefing and then head over to the capitol to meet with our area legislators. We will emphasize our educational issues and try to have a conversation with them regarding any upcoming bills or issues that are facing us at our locals and statewide. Details will be sent to your president soon.

2 – Participate in the HVTU Spring Professional Conference on Wednesday, April 1. We have a wonderful evening of professional development planned for you at the Dover-Eyota High School in Eyota. Registration and Dinner will start at 4:30 p.m. with a selection of sessions for teachers and ESPs. See details and registration information on the flyer enclosed.

3 – Be a local delegate to the Education Minnesota Representative Convention on April 24 & 25.

The RC gives direction to the Governing Board regarding issues that are important to all of our members. The RC

will start Friday evening and go until the end of business on Saturday. This is a great way for you to be part of the organizational decision-making body. Education Minnesota is a member-driven organization not a top-down directed organization. Check with your local president to see how you can be a delegate.

4 – Experience your Union at work at the national level by attending the NEA Representative Assembly July 2-6 in Atlanta, GA or the AFT Conference July 27-30 in Houston, TX. Both are excellent ways to be part of the bigger picture of our Union at the national level. Watch for information coming to you from your local president.

5 – Attend the Summer Seminar August 3-5 at the College of St. Benedict's in St. Joseph.

This is a great way to enjoy a summer getaway and receive some excellent professional development. Education Minnesota staff offer a multitude of sessions for you to choose from to prepare you to be a better teacher, a better support staff, a better local leader, and a better professional. The Summer Seminar provides a great opportunity to meet other colleagues from across the state. Registration information will be coming later this spring.

Emerging Leaders 2020

We are pleased to announce that registration for Emerging Leaders 2020 is now open! The training will take place at the University of St. Benedict in St. Joseph, Minnesota, on June 16-18, 2020. We are asking you to encourage members in your local to participate in this valuable training. Prospective candidates will need to complete the 2020 Emerging Leaders Registration (see the link below) to be considered for the program. Members who have been selected to participate in the program will be notified of their acceptance into the program. Education Minnesota will fund the registration, housing, and meal costs for selected participants.

To register go to: <https://www.educationminnesota.org/advocacy/Union-U/emerging-leaders-program>

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Marie Fernholz, at marie.fernholz@edmn.org or you may call her at 952-831-7799.

~ 2019-2020 HVTU Governance Board ~

Joe Cerar, President (Plainview-Elgin-Millville EM) ; **Matthew Wilmes**, Vice President (Lewiston-Altura EM); **Kiel Koehler**, Treasurer/Negotiations (Houston RVEA); **Deanna Capelle**, Secretary & Communications & Newsletter (Kingsland EM); **Jean Klinski**, Elections/Membership (Caledonia ESP); **Alicia Katka**, Webmaster (Houston RVEA); **Angela Forland**, Professional Issues (Kingsland EM) **Thomas Whalen**, Government Relations Co-Coordinator (Byron); **Justin Blom**, Government Relations Co-Coordinator (Byron)

Join Us for Lobby Days

Each year educators from across our area have a great opportunity to influence legislators and policy-makers in St. Paul. HVTU's Lobby Day is Wednesday, March 11th. Training is provided and no one has to go talk with a senator or representative alone. It is a great opportunity to share what is happening in education at your school.

Members are encouraged to carpool. Those who wish to carpool should meet at the Education Minnesota Rochester Office promptly by 7:00 a.m. Mileage is reimbursed.

Registration

Please register by 12:00 p.m., Thursday, Feb. 27th

email Cherie Weller at cherie.weller@edmn.org or phone:

Office: 507-288-5409

Toll Free: 800-642-3250

Budget Surplus Offers Opportunity for Minnesota Students Doug Dooher, Public Affairs, Education Minnesota

Better-than-expected revenue forecast offers opportunity

The 2020 Minnesota Legislature will start its budget deliberations with a better-than-expected projected surplus of \$1.332 billion, state officials announced Thursday, December 5, 2019.

Education Minnesota President Denise Specht released the following statement in response:

One of the best investments of this surplus is in a place Minnesotans clearly support— our public schools. We know that once again, Minnesota citizens turned out in record numbers this fall to support local levies. They clearly understand the need to fund our schools. This surplus represents an opportunity for the state to invest in key initiatives that will improve learning conditions for our students.

Read my full statement and press release on the Education Minnesota website: www.educationminnesota.org

2020 Candidates for the HVTU Officers



For the Office of HVTU Treasurer
Kiel Koehler, HVTU Treasurer

It has been my honor and privilege to serve as HVTU Treasurer since 2014. I take a lot of pride in managing the finances of this great organization. This role has given me the opportunity to make sure our dues dollars are accounted for and used to help HVTU members receive valuable and relevant staff

development and promote education initiatives. I have served on the HVTU Governance Board for 16 years and I am very proud of how our organization has retained and grown our membership.

I am asking for your vote to serve as your treasurer for another term. I look forward to continuing to serve teachers and paraprofessionals as we do the important work of advocating and protecting our profession.



For the Office of HVTU Secretary
Deanna Capelle, HVTU Secretary

Hi. My name is Deanna Capelle and I am a candidate for the position of Secretary for the HVTU. I am a third grade teacher at Kingsland Elementary and am currently in my first year of this particular HVTU position. I have been involved in my local union and have held the offices of secretary/treasurer, vice-president, and presi-

dent during the course of my long career. I have also been quite active in HVTU during the past 15 years or so. I believe in education and what our union can do for us as educators as well as the benefits our students receive because of our involvement in the schools, in our communities, and our union. I am learning the ropes of the secretarial position this year and am hoping you will allow me to hold this position for next year as well. Thanks for your consideration.

NEA Representative Assembly

July 2 - July 6 in Atlanta, GA

Consider running as a delegate from HVTU!

HVTU Funding is available.

Names need to be submitted by Friday, February 21, 2020 to Jean Klinski at: jean_klinski@cps.k12.mn.us

Member Rights Training

MRA I - Saturday, March 14, 2020

MRA II - Saturday, April 4, 2020

MRA III - Saturday, May 9, 2020

9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. (lunch provided)

Education Minnesota

2778 Commerce Dr. NW, Suite A, Rochester, MN

Register at kathy.erie@edmn.org or phone: 800-642-3250

Registration is open!



Navigating Your Financial Future

Qualified Charitable Distributions

When you reach age 70½, they can be a new way of giving.

As the owner of a traditional IRA, you are likely aware that you are obligated to make required minimum distributions (RMDs) once you reach age 70½. However, you may not have been aware that the RMD can be taken in the form of a qualified charitable distribution, where a qualified charity receives all or part of your RMD, satisfying your obligation and offering a potential tax advantage. (Withdrawals from traditional IRAs are taxed as ordinary income, and if taken before age 59½, may be subject to a 10% federal income tax penalty.)¹

Keep in mind, this article is for informational purposes only and is not a replacement for real-life advice, so make sure to consult your tax or legal professionals before modifying your charitable giving strategy.

There are a few rules, naturally. First, you can only make a qualified charitable contribution after you reach age 70½. So, if your 70th birthday takes place January 17, you're not going to be able to make the qualified charitable distribution until July 17, six months later.¹

There is a cap of \$100,000 of qualified charitable distribution per individual; you can donate more, if you want, but the overage may not have any tax benefits.¹

To qualify, the charity must be a qualified 501(c)3 organization. You must also make your distribution check payable directly to the charity in question, as opposed to a director or another individual in the organization. Were you to do that (write a check to an affiliated individual who would then use those funds to write another check directly to the organization) that would be a taxable distribution.¹

Would you be able to split your qualified charitable contribution in half, giving half or part to the qualified charity and the remainder as a regular RMD? Yes, you can. You would perform them as separate actions, but so long as they add up to the necessary RMD, you should be fine. Consult with a tax or legal professional before making any changes to your strategy.²

How do you report it on your taxes? There is a section on Form 1040 for reporting IRA distributions. Regular RMDs are taxable events, but for qualified charitable contributions, you would enter 0 (zero) for the taxable amount (assuming that the full amount qualified) and enter "QCD" next to the line.²

If you are interested in supporting a charity, a qualified charitable contribution may be a good option for you to consider. Talk with your tax or financial professional about your options.

EFS Advisors- Financial Advisors: Tony Schutte & Brady Husbyn

Address: 2778 Commerce Dr NW Suite B, Rochester, MN 55901 Phone: (507) 285-1594

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Citations. 1 - investopedia.com/articles/financial-advisors/032116/how-use-qcd-rule-reduce-your-taxes.asp/ [12/10/18]
2 - irs.gov/retirement-plans/retirement-plans-faqs-regarding-iras-distributions-withdrawals [5/30/18]

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HVTU Newsletter Scavenger Hunt

Thank you to the 31 members representing 16 locals who responded to the December newsletter "bell" scavenger hunt. Congratulations to Gerri Nielsen from Fillmore Central, her name was drawn and won the \$25 gas gift card. We are doing the Newsletter Scavenger Hunt again for this February Newsletter. Let's see if we can beat the number of entries from December and have 100% local representation for the February Newsletter Scavenger Hunt!

In this edition look for the hidden Cupcake 🧁

Send a picture or explain the location of the cupcake to Curt Rock @ curt.rock@edmn.org. Entries must be received by 4:00 p.m., Friday, February 14, 2020. A drawing will be held from those who located the cupcake and submitted an entry.