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U-46 Gifted Coordinator April Wells to be Honored for Achievement

Board's 'Accent on Achievement' to recognize national honor

ELGIN - April Wells, the Gifted Coordinator for School District U-46, will be recognized by the Board of Education Monday with an "Accent on Achievement" in honor of her recent award from the National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC).

Wells is one of two national recipients of this year's "Gifted Coordinator Award" from NAGC, which aims to support those who enhance the growth and development of gifted and talented children through education, advocacy, community building, and research. Wells will receive the award at the association's annual convention in November.

"The awards program shines a light on those who are making a difference in supporting gifted children as they reach to achieve their personal best," said M. René Islas, NAGC's executive director. "April is a leader who is changing practices by creating and delivering professional development opportunities for teachers in her district."

Wells, who was named to her current role overseeing gifted education in August 2015, began her career in U-46 in 2002. She also spent five years in Barrington School District 220 before returning to U-46 and serving as a gifted specialist and the assistant principal at Otter Creek Elementary School.

In a letter in support of Wells' nomination, Dr. Ushma Shah, Assistant Superintendent of Elementary Schools, Instruction and Equity, said that Wells brings strengths in systems thinking, instructional vision and innovative mindset to U-46. As an example of innovation, Dr. Shah detailed



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how Wells developed and implemented a partnership with Northwestern University to offer weekend gifted programming to students in the District.

“Throughout her efforts to support gifted education, April’s work is marked with her explicit attention to equity and to increasing access for all students,” Dr. Shah wrote. “April is a deeply knowledgeable professional who uses the leadership space that she has to advocate for the way that things should work for all children.”

Wells said she is honored to receive the award from NACG for work with high-potential students, work that she considers both “timely and timeless,” and is grateful for her role in U-46. Wells is an alumni of U-46, having graduated from Larkin High School and attended Century Oaks Elementary School and Kimball Middle School.

“I appreciate the opportunity to significantly shape and impact gifted education through the creation of sustainable, equitable and meaningful program development, professional development and rich partnerships, as well as through legislative advocacy that directly influenced and improved gifted education in Illinois for the children I serve,” she said.

The Board of Education will recognize Wells on Monday, Oct. 15 with an “Accent on Achievement” certificate during the Board’s public session, which reopens at 7 p.m. in room 140 at the Educational Services Center. Another Accent will be delivered to the U-46 Department of Transportation in honor of National School Bus Safety Week.

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School District U-46 serves families in 11 communities: Bartlett, Elgin, Hanover Park, South Elgin, Streamwood and Wayne, as well as portions of Carol Stream, Hoffman Estates, St. Charles, Schaumburg, and West Chicago. In total, the District encompasses 90 square miles within the Fox River Valley, approximately 45 minutes west of downtown Chicago, and includes communities within Cook, DuPage and Kane counties. More than 39,000 pre-K through twelfth graders attend the 57 District schools and



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