

CAS Celebration of Distinguished Administrators
Saint Clements Castle, Portland, CT | October 20, 2016

PRESIDENT'S REMARKS

By Dr. RoseAnne O'Brien Vojtek

Good evening everyone! What a beautiful venue! You all look so great, so happy, so excited, and to our five honorees, so deserving! I stand before you in awe!

On behalf of all of us at CAS, it is my honor as president to welcome you to one of our favorite events of the year!

I know from talking to many of you that you are excited to be here tonight for a number of reasons - great food, great company, and a great celebration of excellence and leadership. But, if you are like me, you are probably just as thankful to be able to escape the television and the constant political election drama and trauma, even if it is just for a couple of hours. It's like just when you think it can't get any worse, something else happens. It's unbelievable!

I have to tell you. . . One of my teachers came up to me today and asked me, "If Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton were stranded on an island, who would survive?" America!

You get the picture! Enough about politics. Fortunately for all of us, we have a great evening planned. We are going to put politics out of our minds

for the rest of the night and focus on the awesome and talented leadership and outstanding contributions of our five honorees.

Each year, as you know, our jobs and responsibilities become more and more complex and challenging due to social, political, and economic issues. Yet, the five school leaders we are honoring tonight graciously accept the challenges that come their way and work diligently and relentlessly to meet the individual and collective needs of their faculties and students as they hold themselves and each other accountable for achieving high standards and optimal levels of performance. As you will learn tonight from their stories, they do this by building and creating positive, safe, interdependent collegial learning communities. They do it by building relationships and empowering others through collaboration, innovation, honest and open communication, and by sharing their expertise as teachers, coaches, mentors, colleagues and friends. Most of all they do it because of their strong belief that when everyone works together, every child, every student succeeds.

When my first principal began talking to me about becoming a principal, he told me, “It’s lonely at the top” and “you may never know who, or how, or what you have done that touched the lives of others.” And, he was right. We always hear when things go wrong, but seldom do we get to hear the good things or see the fruits of our labor.

But that is what tonight is for. There are many school leaders who work tirelessly in the trenches every day doing amazing and extraordinary things. We are here today to shine a light on five of Connecticut’s best and most

outstanding and deserving school principals by highlighting their stories and sharing their successes as we recognize each of them for the important work they do.

We are here to prove that because of CAS it doesn't have to be "lonely at the top" and that it is important to recognize our principals for the differences they are making in their own school communities. Our CAS mission includes helping others and ourselves understand and celebrate the high quality, outstanding, and successful work school leaders do across Connecticut.

So, sit back, relax, and expect to be "WOWED" and "AWED" as we honor, celebrate, and congratulate our 2016 First Year, Assistant, and Elementary, Middle, and High School Principals of the Year. Welcome and let's bask in the joy of the night!