

NOMINATE A TEACHER IN YOUR LIFE

Penguin
Random
House

Teacher Awards *for* Literacy

Recognizing Innovative Projects in Support of Cultivating Literacy & Lifelong Readers

We are proud to announce our 2017 Teacher Award Recipients



JARRED AMATO

First Place
\$10,000 Grant Recipient

English 1,3 Teacher
MAPLEWOOD HIGH SCHOOL
Nashville, TN

High School Teacher Jarred Amato works relentlessly to connect kids to the text that will get them hooked on reading. He created **Project LIT Community**, a grassroots movement that strives to eradicate book deserts, provide meaningful community-wide book clubs, and champion a passion for reading in and out of the schools—not only in Nashville, but all over the United States. This ambitious program has earned him the **First Place** 2017 Penguin Random House Teacher Awards for Literacy.



ALEX CORBITT

Second Place
\$5,000 Grant Recipient

7th Grade English Teacher
THE BRONX SCHOOL
OF YOUNG LEADERS
Bronx, NY

High School Teacher Alex Corbitt empowers his students to research community issues. He founded the **Mirrors Project** which is an after school book club that focuses on black/Latino literature and includes students, parents and faculty. The initiative aims to reflect students' identities and allow them a unique voice in the school community. Addressing important diversity issues relevant in today's society, this program earned him the **Second Place** 2017 Penguin Random House Teacher Awards for Literacy.



JONNA KUSKEY

Third Place
\$2,500 Grant Recipient

Teacher of English
JOHN MARSHALL HIGH SCHOOL
Glen Dale, WV

Jonna Kuskey's creativity in the classroom, dedication to her students, and ability to inspire leaders and her newly created project **Putting the "Unity" in Community through Literacy** earned her the **Third Place** 2017 Penguin Random House Teacher Awards for Literacy. This project aims to bring all stakeholders to the table including the community, business leaders, students, parents, and school career and technical programs. Her extraordinary leadership in the classroom guides student to develop skills that will give them the independence and confidence needed for leadership inside and outside the school.



VERNAE COFFEE

Maya Angelou Award
\$10,000 Grant Recipient

**Paraprofessional/
School Psychologist**
JACK T. FARRAR ELEMENTARY
Tullohoma, TN

Elementary School Paraprofessional Vernae Coffee earned the First Place-winning **Maya Angelou Teacher Award** for Poetry. Her successful program, Poetry Live Camps, works with four elementary schools and takes place during spring and summer vacations fully immersing the students in various forms of poetry. Through her love and excitement for poetry, Vernae engages the community, parents and students—inspiring a passion for reading, writing and performing poetry. She proudly refers to Maya Angelou as her "foremost role model for writing poetry that inspires and challenges the human heart."

\$1,000 Honorable Mention Award: VASHANNA R FRASER WASHINGTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL *Roselle, NJ*

Runner-Ups will each receive a \$250 grant award for their program and Penguin Random House Book Donation:

CONNIE BAGLEY, Crockett Elementary, San Marcos, TX
DR. AIMEE BERGONIA, Pocomoke High School, Pocomoke, MD
MARY BETH BLEIFUSS, Maercker School, Westmont, IL
ANGELA BYERS JOHNSON & DEBBIE AKERS,
Portsmouth Elementary Schools, Portsmouth, OH
MELISSA CORRY, H.W. Byers Elementary, Holly Springs, MS

LAUREN DEAL, First Flight High School, Kill Devil Hills, NC
NICHOLE FOLKMAN, Hartsburg-Emden High School, Hartsburg, IL
MARCIA KOCHER, Druid Hills Middle Schools, Decatur, GA
TERRI RHINE, J.L. Mudd Elementary, O'Fallon, MO
BETHANY YOUNKERS, Boys Latin of Philadelphia, Philadelphia, PA
ANDREW WORTHINGTON & ALEX DRIVER, PACE High School, New York, NY