

In 1991, the OSPA Executive Committee voted to establish the School Psychologist of the Year Award – an award that would honor a member of OSPA for current excellence in service delivery. It was required, therefore, that at least seventy-five percent of a candidate's time be spent providing school psychological services to students, teachers, and parents, typically in a school setting.

Nominations are made by the OSPA regional associations with each region submitting one nomination. This year three regions have chosen to nominate one of their members for this award. It is an honor to be nominated by a region, and OSPA would like to take a few minutes to recognize each of the nominees. After each introduction, would the nominee please come forward to accept a certificate from OSPA President Rob Kubick.

The nominee of the Cleveland Association of School Psychologists is Denise DiMaria-Lopardo. She is employed by the Cleveland Municipal School District and was nominated because of her contributions as a practicing school psychologist and her involvement in her regional association. Denise served as Membership Chair for CASP and increased the number of members and instituted printed membership cards. She is an active member of the Psychological Services in Cleveland Municipal Schools and serves on the Union Conference Committee. Her colleagues state she has a special talent for connecting with high school students and that her skills with social-emotional assessment and counseling with teens are envied by many. Denise is known for her efforts in facilitating IBA team, assisting with intervention planning and data collection at the high school level, and her ability to effectively respond to crises. In addition to her responsibilities in Cleveland, Denise is an adjunct faculty member at Notre Dame College where she teaches two graduate level courses and one undergraduate course. Please join OSPA in applauding the achievements of Denise DiMaria-Lopardo.

The nominee of the School Psychologists of Central Ohio is Michael Markowitz. He is employed by Southwestern City Schools. Mike has worked within his district to develop the Flight Team which is a group of professionals consisting primarily of school psychologists, guidance counselors, and nurses formally trained in crisis intervention. Mike has also collaborated on the development of a Traumatic Crisis Intervention Plan which outlines procedures and paperwork to be used at the building level should a crisis occur. His colleagues state that he is known for his leadership, commitment, and knowledge. Mike is respected by his peers and works well with families to identify specific ways in order to help their child be successful. Please join OSPA in recognizing the achievements of Mike Markowitz.

The nominee of the Kent Akron Association of School Psychologists is Don Saracusa. He is employed by the Akron Public Schools and was nominated because of his dedication to data-based decision making. Don is in his fifth year of compiling curriculum-based measurement data for two elementary schools in Akron. These extensive databases are used to identify students in need of intervention and to monitor student progress. Don worked with intervention staff to identify and implement interventions with students. He coordinates tutoring programs, directs group and individual service delivery, and sometimes provides individual services himself. Using

this data, Don is able to predict the probability of students passing the Reading and Math Achievement Tests in the first grade. Using this model of intervention, the percent proficient on the Reading Achievement Test has increased from 38% to 82% in four years. Please join us in recognizing the achievements of Don Saracusa.

The three individuals demonstrate the variety and the quality of skills that are the hallmark of our profession. Their energy and dedication to our profession calls upon us to take advantage of the opportunities presented to us everyday.

The selection committee was faced with the very difficult task of choosing one of these individuals as this year's award recipient. It is with pride that OSPA presents the School Psychologist of the Year Award for 2006 to Don Saracusa.