

Aberdeen Public Schools Foundation Presents Golden Apple Awards

January 4, 2016, Aberdeen, SD – The Aberdeen Public Schools Foundation announced the first annual Golden Apple Awards to recognize individuals that are dedicated, inspiring, and making a difference in the Aberdeen School District. This year's honorees were Jerry Letcher, Lynn Hanson and Jason Sperle. Each received \$500 and a golden apple.



Jerry Letcher, Central High School band director, truly goes above and beyond when it comes to any and all of his students. The strength of the program comes from his tremendous leadership and dedication. With persistence, patience, and dedication, the outcome of his program consistently meets success. He is the force and drive behind this successful program by dedicating years of experience and knowledge which have helped achieve many accomplishments.

Letcher has been employed with the District for 32 years. During this time, the Symphonic Band has received either a Superior rating or Superior Plus rating every year. The marching band has won the Overall Best Band in NSU's Gypsy Day Parade for many years running, and the Jazz Bands have been some of the best in the state. Aberdeen Central is one of two schools that have had at least one student qualify for All-State Band since its inception in 1951. Letcher was the 2008 SD Bandmaster of the Year and served as the past president of the SD Bandmasters Association and Phi Beta Mu Bandmaster Fraternity.

Lynn Hanson, Aberdeen Public Schools Foundation volunteer, has served fifteen years on the Aberdeen School Board and continues to be involved as a volunteer in the workings of the Aberdeen Public Schools Foundation, serving many years on the Foundation Board. She was instrumental in organizing and founding the CHS Hall of Fame Banquet in 2006, and each year she is an integral part of the planning and success of this event. Hanson also chairs the Alumni Room group which meets most weeks of the year to organize and preserve a variety of

memorabilia donated by CHS alumni. Hanson is an avid fan and supporter of CHS athletics, attending all home games and matches. She is a champion for our community for education and our students. She continually seeks out opportunities to help with the work of the Foundation to fill the needs of students and staff.

Hanson began her commitment to the District as a PTA member during her children's school years and worked on the passage of bond issues for Lincoln and CHS. She helped establish the Athletic Boosters in the mid 1970's and was elected and served on the SDHSAA from 1989-1994. In 1995, she received the SDHSAA Distinguished Service Award and in 2011 she was selected for the Elite 15 SD Female Athletics Award.

Jason Sperle, Holgate Middle School custodian, has a positive spirit and pride in the school. He truly goes above and beyond what is expected of him at his job, exuding positivity and happiness to all those he encounters. He is so quick to do things you ask him that you don't expect to be done right away. He takes on extra work without complaining. He is pleasant with the students and will ask them about their activities. He is like the ever-ready bunny!

Sperle has dedicated 28 years of service to the District and when asked to describe his daily tasks he includes: Electrician-find blown breakers; Mailman-move heavy boxes to classrooms; Plumber-plunge drains and snake toilets, Event coordinator-set up for conferences, programs, volleyball, and basketball; Warehouse clerk-order custodial supplies; School nurse-clean up in stall #9; Grounds man-shovel entry ways, pick up leaves; Garbage man-Dump 800 pounds of trash per day; Carpenter-Fix desks and chairs; Locksmith-pull teachers' broken or stuck keys out of locks; Exterminator-get rid of mice, rats, bees, and bugs; Service tech-jump start and fill teachers' tires with air; Carpet layer-cut carpet strings and glue seams;

The Golden Apple Awards are a special project of the Aberdeen Public Schools Foundation. For more information, contact the Aberdeen Public Schools Foundation at (605) 725-7118, Gretchen.Sharp@k12.sd.us, or visit the foundation website at <https://www-aberdeen.k12.sd.us/foundation>. The Aberdeen Public Schools Foundation is a non-profit organization that promotes excellence in education by forging partnerships among the schools, community and alumni.