

Educators Recognized at Alan Shawn Feinstein Middle School

Faculty and staff were honored at a surprise presentation on Wednesday.

By [Lauren Costa](#)

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On Wednesday afternoon, members of the ASFMS staff stayed after school for their monthly advisory meeting. The meeting differed this month when they were asked to assemble in the school's auditorium for an unexpected presentation.

When everyone was settled, a slideshow began that featured photos of faculty and staff members, accompanied by inspirational quotes about teachers and sound bytes from ASFMS students both past and present that described how their middle school experiences shaped and prepared them for the future. The 11-minute long slideshow was set to music such as Ben E. King's "Stand by Me", "I'll Be There for You" by The Rembrandts, "The Show Goes On" by Lupe Fiasco and Natalie Merchant's "Thank You".

The second part of the presentation featured seventh grader, Joseph Lachance of the Chimera Team, reenacting the motivational speech "Do You Believe In Me?", [originally delivered by 10-year-old Dalton Sherman](#) at the Dallas, TX Independent School District launch of the new school year in 2008. The speech expressed to teachers the importance of what they do each and every day for students, whether it be teaching them academic lessons, listening to their problems or simply lending a smile during a rough day.

To reward Lachance for the time and effort that was put into rehearsing the speech, Principal Dr. Michael Almeida awarded him with a gift card to Game Stop.

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Next, Almeida presented four teachers with plaques honoring them for earning the "Teacher of the Year" title over the past four years:

2007-2008: Cynthia Ballard, 2008-2009: Tao Albrecht, 2009-2010: Laurie Masterson and 2010-2011: Jennifer Pietros.

To wrap up the presentation, Donna Foisy of [Horrace Mann Insurance](#) presented three educators with the Crystal Apple award, an honor that recognizes teachers for contributing to their school communities in unique and important ways.



Counselor Lori LeBrun was recognized for her ability to tirelessly encourage students to work towards their futures. For example, [LeBrun recently took a group of eighth graders to the University of Rhode Island](#) for a day to experience what it is like to go to college and hopefully inspire them to strive to reach that goal.



Mary Lou Bettez, an English Language Arts coordinator was awarded the Crystal Apple for her participation in the School Improvement Team and Literary Action Plan. Bettez's work has been recognized as a national model for schools across the country.



Social Studies teacher Ted Mitchell also earned the honor based on his extensive knowledge of technology and how to incorporate it in the classroom. Mitchell was also praised for his design and use of the [ASFMS website](#) that has become an important tool for the school community.



The Crystal Apple recipients are chosen by the faculty and administration from the participating school. Horace Mann sponsors the program and provides an apple statuette and letter of recognition to the chosen educators. The program can be utilized by any school district in the state by contacting Donna Foisy or Colleen Manuppelli at 401-233-0060.

During his closing remarks at the end of the presentation, Almeida expressed his pride and respect for all of the educators and suggested they do the same for one another. "I ask that you recognize the work of a colleague and thank him or her for their efforts," he said.