

WINTER 2017

# ON THE RHODE

NEWS & UPDATES FROM  
RHODE ISLAND TEACHER OF THE YEAR 2017



## CCSSO National Teacher of the Year Induction Conference 2017

February 8-11th, the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) hosted the 2017 State Teacher of the Year cohort at the Adolphus Hotel in Dallas, Texas. **Their message was clear: Teacher Leaders are made, not born.** The conference program provides the State Teachers of the Year in teacher leadership trainings and workshops in order to **increase understanding of education policy & history, expand our learning network & pedagogical skills, and develop our own journey as State Teachers of the Year.** In addition to networking with fellow State Teachers of the Year and former National Teachers of the Year, our cohort was trained in **Storytelling, Media Relations, and how to build a body of work representative of our platform.** The program gave us each with the tools necessary to achieve our goals as State Teachers of the Year and a built in support network for our efforts. **The entire experience was nothing short of transformative!**



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# 2017 District Teacher of the Year Cohort



The 2017 District Teacher of the Year cohort represents some of the **most hardworking, dedicated, and innovative teachers from Rhode Island's 40+ LEAs**. Hosted in the Rhode Island Foundation's beautiful Union Station, we have been fortunate to provide our cohort opportunities to **learn more about state initiatives and practice developing their own story and voice as Teacher Leaders**. With the support of Commissioner's office, the office of Innovation, the Office of College and Career Readiness, the former State Teachers of the Year, and program coordinator Mary Keenan, we have been able to provide a **meaningful slate of enduring professional development** to our cohort of talented teachers.

## Ongoing Policy & Advocacy Work

This year has afforded me the invaluable experience of being at the table for real, impactful policy discussions surrounding topics that matter deeply to me. I am grateful for these opportunities to be able to advocate for the communities that mean the most to me.

**ESSA Committee of Practitioners**

**Educators in Action**

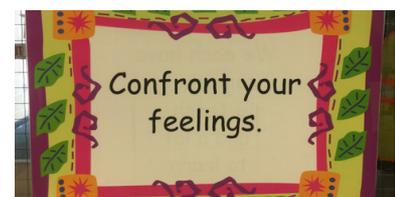
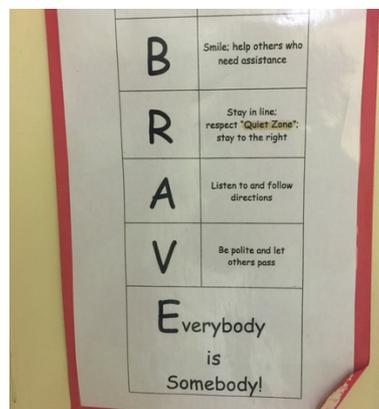
**Social Emotional Work Group**

**Parent Outreach Design Team**

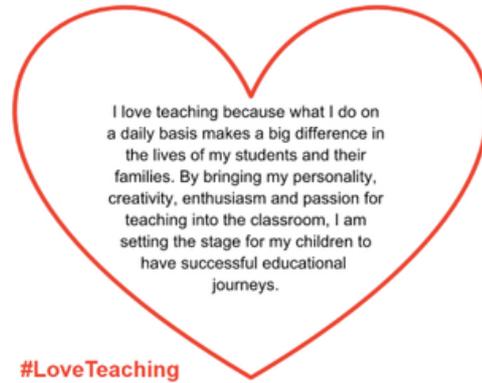
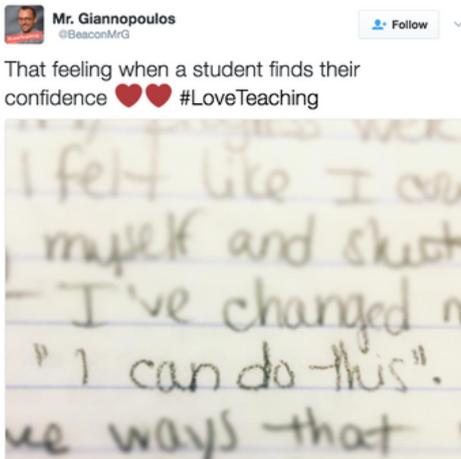
**Student Health Advisory Council**

## The Golden Apple Awards

One of the greatest joys of this role has been working with the Department of Education, NBC 10, and Hasbro on the Golden Apple Awards. These awards do wonders for elevating the profile and prestige of the teaching profession. I am especially inspired to see the **variety of incredible classrooms & talented hardworking teachers** we have all over this state. Each School has its own culture, but at the core - each one encourages kindness and personal growth.



**Click Photos to View Golden Apple Awards Clips**



#LoveTeaching

## ❤️ Love Teaching Week ❤️

Launched by teachers for teachers #LoveTeaching is a campaign to celebrate the positives in the teaching profession and share all there is to love about our vocation. I shared why I #LoveTeaching on Twitter and my blog and I invited the District Teachers of the Year & Beacon faculty to share their stories! Click the images above to read the blog posts!

# Speaking Engagements

One of the most impactful ways to influence the future of the teaching profession is to share your own experience. I have been fortunate to be able to share my journey as an educator with a variety of new audiences this year and model what it means to have a strong co-teaching partnership.

### RI Innovation Powered by Technology Conference

Topic: Quality Time: Leveraging Blended & Personalized Learning to Build Social Emotional Competencies in the Inclusive Classroom.

Presented with co-teacher Rebecca Willner

### Rhode Island Teachers Assistants' Conference: Educators Working Together to Support All Students in Rhode Island

Keynote Speech: Better Together: The Power of a Strong Team

Topic: Safe & Sound: The Trauma Responsive Classroom

### Rhode Island Arts Education Association "re-CONNECT" Conference 2016

Topic: Filmmaking as a Project Based Learning Capstone

Presented with co-teacher Katie Reaves

### RIASCD Educators Conference

Keynote Speech: Being There: Maximizing the Student Teacher Partnership

Topic: The Art of Healing: Self Expression & Student Trauma

### Varsity Athletes Against Substance Abuse (VAASA) Conference

Topic: DIY Public Service Announcement Workshop

Presented with co-teacher Katie Reaves

### Northeast Media Literacy Conference

Topic: Student Film Showcase: Scaffolding the Filmmaking Process

Presented with co-teacher Katie Reaves

[Click to View Student Produced PSA](#)

[Click to View Film Reel!](#)

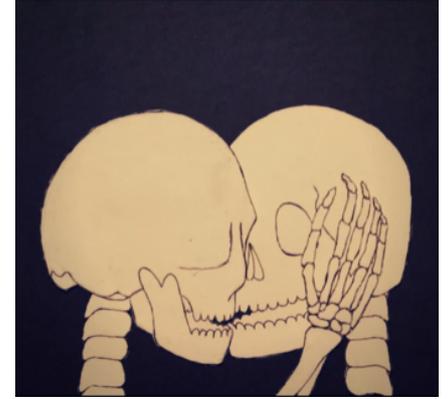


## Back at Beacon

While it has been no small challenge to balance outside work with being in the classroom full time, I am grateful to be able to continue to support & teach my students at Beacon. Check out some of the cool stuff going on in my classroom!

## Beacon Film

As the Spring Semester got started, so too did our Senior Filmmakers. Having completed their scriptwriting, pre-production, and proof of concept films, the Class of 2017 have begun filming their Capstone Film project. Using amateur and professional actors from LDI casting, our students have entered the directorial phase of their process and have begun filming. The first round of student filmmakers will present their Capstone Films March 15, 16, & 17th



**Click the Images  
to view my  
Students' Films**

## Gay Straight Alliance

Now in its Sixth year as an organization, the Beacon Charter Gay Straight Alliance is busier than ever! This winter, under the direction of our president, Liam Fifer, the GSA worked together as a school community to develop our own Local School Climate Survey.

Beacon Charter has earned a reputation for being one of the most LGBTQ friendly schools in the state - but there is always room to grow! The Beacon Charter GSA plans to take the results from this survey to inform student generated professional development for Beacon teachers in order to illuminate areas for potential growth and further educate teachers about the LGBTQ community. The Beacon GSA is encouraging other schools to develop and implement their own Local School Climate Surveys to help improve the climate surrounding LGBTQ students all over Rhode Island.



**Beacon GSA Leaders**



**Click to Learn More About Local School Climate Surveys**

# THE RHODE AHEAD

2017 has only just begun and so has my work as  
Rhode Island Teacher of the Year 2017!

In addition to Teaching full time at Beacon Charter High School for the Arts and continuing my ongoing work with policy and advocacy groups, I look forward to seeking out more projects, organizations, and engagements that align with my platform.

I hope to continue advocating for Special Education Students, the LGBTQ Student Community, and the Arts in order to amplify the voices of those communities that mean the most to me.

## Contact Me!

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**Rhode Island Teacher of the Year 2017**

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

**MARCH 4, 2017**

**NEARI - READ ACROSS  
AMERICA - WARWICK MALL**

**MARCH 8, 2017**

**FINAL DISTRICT TEACHER OF  
THE YEAR COHORT MEETING**

**MARCH 11, 2017**

**NASA STUDENT SHOWCASE -  
RHODE ISLAND COLLEGE -  
STUDENT UNION BALLROOM**

**MARCH 18, 2017**

**GIMME 5 YOUTH FILM LAB -  
UNIVERSITY OF RHODE ISLAND  
- PROVIDENCE CAMPUS**

**MARCH 25, 2017**

**GIMME 5 YOUTH FILM LAB -  
UNIVERSITY OF RHODE ISLAND  
- KINGSTON CAMPUS**

**APRIL 1, 2017**

**RI CEC PRE-SERVICE TEACHER  
CONFERENCE - NORTH  
KINGSTOWN HIGH SCHOOL**

**FOR ADDITIONAL UPDATES FROM THE RHODE ISLAND TEACHER OF THE YEAR 2017**

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**@BEACONMRG**



CHECK OUT MY BLOG:

**RITOTY2017.WORDPRESS.COM**