

Coventry High School Teacher Wins ‘Oscar of Teaching’



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COVENTRY, R.I. — Lauren Hopkins, an English teacher at [Coventry High School](#), is among 45 teachers nationwide to receive a Milken Educator Award, the only award winner from Rhode Island this year.

In a surprise announcement Thursday, Jane Foley, senior vice president of the [Milken Educator Awards](#), gave Hopkins the award, which comes with a \$25,000 bonus.

Rhode Island’s Commissioner of Education Ken Wagner and Coventry Public Schools Supt. Craig Levis praised the more than 1,600 people in attendance before introducing Foley.

The Milken Educator Awards has been called the “Oscars of Teaching” by Teacher magazine. The initiative aims not only to reward great teachers, but to celebrate those innovators in the classroom who are guiding the next generation of leaders.

As a National Board Certified English teacher, Hopkins is credited with developing curriculum, implementing rigorous lessons and designing activities that support and motivate students. Collaborating with colleagues to incorporate reading and writing into their coursework, Hopkins makes interdisciplinary connections while reinforcing the importance of English skills across all subject areas, according to Milken.

<http://www.providencejournal.com/news/20171026/coventry-high-english-teacher-wins-oscar-of-teaching>

“From at-risk to gifted students, Lauren Hopkins always ensures her learners are intellectually challenged and instructed in the complex discipline of English Language Arts,” Foley said. “... Her passion for literature comes alive for these students and it has benefited the whole school environment.”

“When I look at some of the top priorities we set for this school year — strong literacy instruction, developing career pathways through more personalized learning, shared school leadership — Lauren Hopkins is working to support these initiatives and more every single day at Coventry High School,” state education commissioner Ken Wagner said. “Great learning requires great teaching, and Lauren is an example of the type of committed, compassionate educator it takes to bring out the best in our students. Congratulations to Lauren and to Coventry High School on this well-deserved recognition.”

“While there are many educators in Rhode Island who were considered for this recognition and honor, I cannot think of a teacher who is more deserving,” Coventry Supt. Craig Levis said. “To all new teachers out there, I would say watch and listen to Lauren. See how she engages, prompts and challenges her students ... feel her passion and commitment. This is the art of teaching.”

Hopkins, who is also a literacy specialist, has a knack for getting recalcitrant readers to love books, according to Milken.

Hopkins earned a bachelor’s degree in secondary and middle English education from the University of Rhode Island in 2001.

Milken educators are selected in early to mid-career for what they have achieved and for the promise of what they will accomplish. In addition to the \$25,000 prize and public recognition, Hopkins’ honor includes membership in the National Milken Educator Network, a group of more than 2,700 top teachers, principals and specialists dedicated to strengthening education.

In addition to participation in the Milken Educator Network, 2017-18 recipients will attend a Milken Educator Forum in Washington, D.C., March 20-23, 2018. Educators will have the opportunity to network with their new colleagues and hear from state and federal officials about maximizing their leadership roles.

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