

Garden City Public Schools
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:



GCPS Coordinator of Public Information Named NYSPRA Communicator of the Year
By Monica Lester, Communications Coordinator, NYSPRA
Photo by Bill Cameron, Vice President, NYSPRA

The New York School Public Relations Association (NYSPRA) is pleased to announce that Dr. Catherine Knight, coordinator of public information for the Garden City Public Schools, has been named the 2016 Communicator of the Year. Dr. Knight is pictured with Garden City Public Schools Board of Education President Mrs. Angela Heineman and Superintendent of Schools Dr. Robert Feirsen at the Annual NYSPRA Awards Ceremony where she gave the

keynote address. The luncheon was held during the 97th Annual New York State School Boards Association in Buffalo, NY, at which Heineman, Feirsen and Knight also presented a session workshop.

NYSPPRA's Communicator of the Year award, which is in its first year of existence, is meant to recognize school communications professionals who demonstrate a commitment to strengthening relationships between public schools and the students, families and communities they serve. The award honors those who recognize that communication and public relations are a critical component of school leadership.

Knight has worked in public education since 1987. She first served as a teacher and then, in 2006, moved into her current communications role. She received her Doctor of Education degree from Fordham University in 2013. Her dissertation, "Statewide School Public Relations Personnel: Roles, Responsibilities, Relationships and Implications for Budget Vote Outcomes," was the first at Fordham to quantify the value of school public relations.

"As the award's first recipient, I am genuinely humbled," Knight said. "It takes tremendous knowledge of the issues surrounding public education, the continuum that forms an individual school district's ethos, vision, and mission, and a passion and dogged determination for what we do to pull down the hours and decorum needed for effective communication in today's public schools."

"NYSPPRA is committed to recognizing the achievements of our school communicators and we are so proud to present our first-ever Communicator of the Year Award to Catherine Knight," said Angela Marshall, public information officer at Nassau BOCES and NYSPPRA president. "I've worked with Dr. Knight and the dedication she shows to her students and her community is exceptional."

Knight was nominated by Dr. Robert Feirsen, Superintendent of the Garden City Public Schools, who wrote, "Dr. Knight's straightforward style and understanding of the issues of the day add to her credibility: she is seen not just as the district's public relations spokesperson, but as a knowledgeable observer of the education scene."

NYSPPRA is a non-profit membership organization that serves school communications professionals and administrators in New York State. For more information, visit www.nysppra.org.