

# Montana Professional Teaching Foundation news



## Some people said it couldn't be done.

When we created the Montana Professional Teaching Foundation in 1996, we set the audacious goal of building a \$1 million endowment that could fund the Foundation in perpetuity.

Through generous and generally small donations, along with fundraisers like our annual golf scramble and silent auction, our endowment is currently just short of \$1 million.

Now, a new challenge grant has been issued that gives us a good chance to be knocking on the \$1 million door — a goal some said was never possible.

Well, it is now definitely possible. Please take the challenge! Information at right. Thank you!

## Inside

2018 Montana Teacher of the Year [Page 2](#)

Karen Cox grants [Page 3](#)

Presidential award nominations, National Board Certification [Page 4](#)



**Top right photo:** 2018 Montana Teacher of the Year Melissa Romano and fourth graders. Story on page 2.

## Help us meet the challenge and double your impact!

From now until December 31, 2017, every dollar donated by individuals to the Montana Professional Teaching Foundation will be matched up to \$10,000, thanks to a grant by donors who wish to remain anonymous.

"This generous challenge grant honors Montana's professional public school educators and the work they do every day to teach and nurture Montana's children," said MPTF Chair Eric Feaver.

"Thanks to this grant, as folks consider end-of-the year, tax-deductible charitable giving, they can double the impact of each dollar they donate to the Foundation and know that the professional development and classroom support the Foundation provides help make Montana's public schools exceptional for this and future generations of Montana's school children," Feaver said.

Donations to the Montana Professional Teaching Foundation are investments in the Foundation's endowment. The endowment is safely harbored at the Montana Community Foundation, earning an annual 4.5% distribution. This distribution, along with direct assistance from MEA-MFT, NEA, AFT, and Montana-based corporations and foundations, funds MPTF's programs. (Programs are listed on page 2.)

Not one penny of the endowment itself may be spent.



Building the MPTF endowment means we can support more innovative public school projects like the Evergreen Fitness Team in Kalispell, fighting obesity and teaching healthy habits to students and their families.

All donations to the Montana Professional Teaching Foundation are tax deductible and directly support MPTF's programs.

**PLEASE TAKE THE CHALLENGE!** Make your donation by December 31, 2017 to help us earn \$10,000 for Montana's educators and children! An envelope is enclosed for your convenience. **THANK YOU!**

## TEACHER of the YEAR

# Bringing the world to kids

Melissa Romano dove into teaching after working 10 years as a nanny. Watching children's faces light up as they played and discovered the joy of learning something new inspired her to become a teacher.

Romano's success in creating those experiences every day for her students, along with her leadership in sharing top-quality methods with other teachers on the local, state, national, and international levels, led to Romano's selection as the 2018 Montana Teacher of the Year.

Romano teaches fourth grade at Four Georgians School in Helena.

**"I aim to bring the world to my students by extending learning through field trips and hands-on experiences, using technology as a tool to compare our community and state to other parts of the world, and by emphasizing the act of giving to others,"** Romano says.

This year, Romano was one of 130 teachers nationwide selected to share lessons on the BetterLesson website, creating a year's worth of classroom-ready math lessons.

She has worked as a master teacher in science and math and now serves as an instructional coach, delivering professional development to teachers nationwide.

Romano and other teachers nominated for Montana Teacher of the Year went through an exhaustive application process. Three finalists were chosen for interviews: Melissa Romano; Judy Boyle, k-8 teacher at Divide School in Divide; and



2018 Montana Teacher of the Year Melissa Romano works with "math partners" at Four Georgians School in Helena.

Judy Vincent, first-grade teacher at Shields Valley Elementary School in Wilsall.

**As 2018 Montana Teacher of the Year**, Melissa Romano will serve as an ambassador for public education throughout the year and represent Montana in the National Teacher of the Year program.

**The Montana Professional Teaching Foundation** has been proud to administer the Teacher of the Year program for 22 years. The Montana Office of Public Instruction has announced it will take over the program beginning next year. We are sorry to see it go.



From left: finalist Judy Vincent, Teacher of the Year Melissa Romano, and finalist Judy Boyle all were honored at MPTF's Teacher of the Year celebration in Missoula October 19, 2017.

## Our mission & programs at MPTF

The Montana Professional Teaching Foundation (MPTF) was created by MEA-MFT in 1996 to promote excellence and innovation in teaching and learning in Montana. We do this through the following programs:

- National Board Certification Assistance
- Karen Cox Memorial Grants
- Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics & Science Teaching
- Jim McGarvey Scholarship for Union Leadership in Public Education & Service
- Professional Leadership Scholarship

The foundation is a 501(c)(3) organization. Donations are tax deductible.



# A little goes a long way

From great books in Great Falls to Hokki stools in Helena, from therapy dogs in Billings to hand chimes in Bonner, the Montana Professional Teaching Foundation’s Karen Cox Memorial Grants help teachers across Montana bring enrichment and basic classroom supplies to their students.

Named for the late Billings teacher Karen Cox, the grants help educators who reach into their own pockets to pay for supplies and other instructional needs.

Grant funds are not intended to replace school funding, but to open doors for students — doors that would stay closed without a little financial help. The grants are small (\$500 maximum), but they pack a big impact. In many cases, the grants purchase materials that schools can use for years.

You can see recent grant projects at [mea-mft.org/our\\_foundation](http://mea-mft.org/our_foundation).

**Interested in a grant?** Download grant information and application form at [bit.ly/karencox](http://bit.ly/karencox) or contact Donna Graveley for application information: [dgraveley@mea-mft.org](mailto:dgraveley@mea-mft.org).

**Grant deadline:** December 2 of each year.

## MPTF Board

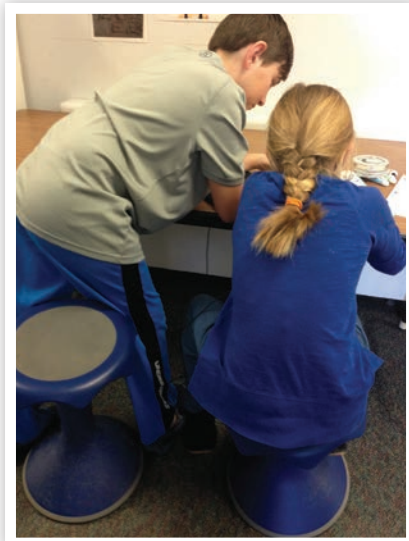
Chair: Eric Feaver  
 MEA-MFT President, Helena

Melanie Charlson  
 MEA-MFT Vice President, Missoula

Kirk Miller, Executive Director  
 School Administrators of Montana  
 Helena

Lance Melton, Executive Director  
 Montana School Boards Association  
 Helena

Anne Keith  
 Classroom Teacher, Bozeman  
 National Board Certified Teacher  
 2010 Montana Teacher of the Year



Scenes from a few of the 2016 Karen Cox Memorial grant projects, clockwise from above left: New hand chimes help Potomac School students in Bonner learn to read music. Hokki stools at Broadwater School in Helena help antsy kids focus. The Evergreen School Fitness Team program in Kalispell teaches healthy habits. Hunter the therapy dog reports for duty at the Billings Senior High library, while teacher-librarians Rachel Schillreff (left) and Brittany Alberson demo the comfy seating in the library’s new relaxation nook, all part of their project to help stressed-out students.



## Presidential math & science teachers

The Montana Professional Teaching Foundation sponsors and administers the Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching (PAEMST) in Montana.

PAEMST is the nation's highest honor for U.S. mathematics and science teachers.

**Nominate now for the next PAEMST awards!** The next awards will honor math and science teachers working in grades K-6. Nominations close April 1, 2018. To nominate or apply, visit [paemst.org](http://paemst.org).

Montana's two PAEMST awardees will each receive a \$10,000 grant from the National Science Foundation and a paid trip to Washington, DC to attend special recognition and professional development events. For more information, contact Marco Ferro, [mferro@mea-mft.org](mailto:mferro@mea-mft.org).

## National Board Certification

The Montana Professional Teaching Foundation continues to champion excellent teaching by helping teachers achieve National Board Certification (NBC), the highest level of certification a U.S. teacher can earn. MPTF helps teachers navigate the complex NBC process. Students all across Montana reap the benefits when teachers achieve NBC.

We launched **Jump Start** in 2014 to help NBC candidates explore all four components of the NBC process. With our cadre of trained facilitators, we give teachers information on how to be a successful

candidate for each component. **Jump Start training sessions** will take place in Billings June 27-29, 2018, and in Missoula August 6-8, 2018. These sessions are open to any Montana teacher who is a registered NBC candidate.

Through our **NBC Teachers Ambassador** program, current NBC teachers do outreach and recruitment for potential NBC candidates. We have trained 14 ambassadors across Montana to do this outreach with individuals and groups of teachers in their areas.

**Want to know more about NBC?** Contact Marco Ferro: [mferro@mea-mft.org](mailto:mferro@mea-mft.org).



Climbing the walls at Evergreen School in Kalispell: a fitness and health program for kids and their parents, funded in part by a Karen Cox Memorial Grant. More about the grants on page 3.

# Don't forget the \$10,000 challenge!

Every dollar you contribute to the Montana Professional Teaching Foundation by December 31, 2017, will be matched dollar for dollar up to \$10,000, through the generosity of anonymous donors.

Donation form & envelope are enclosed. All donations are tax deductible. THANK YOU!

**Another way to give:** As you think about special gifts for family and friends, please remember the Montana Professional Teaching Foundation. Montana

taxpayers who make a qualifying planned gift to the MPTF endowment may be able to take a 40 percent credit against their Montana income tax liability. Businesses can make an outright gift (as opposed to a planned gift) and may be eligible for a 20 percent credit on their Montana taxes. For more information on planned gifts, call Cathy Novak at the MPTF office (406.447.1479).

