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**Area Early Childhood Education Teachers Honored
Fifth annual Celebrate Teachers & Teaching awards program recognizes
outstanding educators**

MILWAUKEE, WI (October 27, 2017) – Three Milwaukee-area early childhood education teachers were honored last night for their exemplary work as part of the fifth annual Celebrate Teachers & Teaching awards ceremony, held this year at Milwaukee Area Technical College.

Jacqueline Herd-Barber received the 2017 Champion of Education Award. April Gagliano, a teacher at the Academy of Accelerated Learning, received the Advanced Career Teaching Award, and Alyssa Mussa, a teacher at Victory K8 and Milwaukee Italian Immersion School, received the Early Career Teaching Award. Fifteen teachers were nominated for the 2017 awards. The top three award recipients received a \$1,000 cash award, and nominees in the Early Career and Advanced Career categories received a \$100 cash award. They, along with their fellow nominees, were honored in front of an audience of over 200 people celebrating teachers at Thursday night's event.

Herd-Barber, a graduate of Milwaukee School of Engineering, serves on a number of committees including Milwaukee Succeeds and the Greater Milwaukee Committee's Education Committee. A long-time volunteer at Metcalfe Elementary School, she spends countless hours tutoring and mentoring students. She and her husband, Michael Barber, set up a college scholarship fund for students at Metcalfe. "Jackie is a pillar to our community, providing funding, leadership and advocacy to dozens of community and civic organizations," says Alan Shoho, dean of the School of Education at the University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee. "She is the glue that holds us together and the engine that keeps us moving forward."

Gagliano, a graduate of University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee, has 12 years of experience teaching. A kindergarten teacher who believes it's her "job as an educator to help young children learn and grow in a safe, positive atmosphere," she has created a warm, friendly classroom environment that allows students to feel comfortable taking risks. She also celebrates their successes daily. "April is an exceptional educator who strives to create, implement and monitor a classroom environment that leads to successful educational outcomes for all students," says Eric Rian, principal of Academy of Accelerated Learning.

Mussa, a graduate of University of Wisconsin – La Crosse, has been teaching at Victory K8 and Milwaukee Italian Immersion School since the fall of 2016. She is a Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) committee leader, and is described as a respected leader who consistently volunteers her time to meet the needs of her students. Mussa also continually seeks out professional development opportunities based on best practices in order to hone her teaching skills. "Ms. Mussa has developed a

classroom environment that is calm, loving and nurturing where every child feels welcome,” says Janine Cano Graber, principal of Victory K8 and Milwaukee Italian Immersion School.

The Celebrate Teachers and Teaching Steering Committee members will begin accepting nominations in the spring for the 2018 CT&T event. The theme for next year’s awards program is special education.

Sponsors of the 2017 Celebrate Teachers & Teaching event include The Faye McBeath Foundation, The Herzfield Foundation, The Kelben Foundation, Milwaukee Succeeds, and Next Door.

For more information, visit www.marquette.edu/education/education-deans/event or contact Angel Hessel, Steering Committee Co-Chair, at ahessel@uwm.edu or 414-229-4179, or Lamonte Blades, Steering Committee Co-Chair, at bladesl@matc.edu or 414-297-8060.

Celebrate Teachers and Teaching is an initiative of the Education Deans of Greater Milwaukee (EDGM). The group is comprised of leadership from nine area institutions of higher education, including Alverno College, Cardinal Stritch University, Carroll University, Concordia University Wisconsin, Milwaukee Area Technical College, Wisconsin Lutheran College, Marquette University, Mt. Mary University and the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. EDGM aims to leverage the assets of all institutions involved to support the continuous improvement of PK-21 education in the region, and serve the greater good, especially students in the Milwaukee Metro Area and learners of all types and ages. The awards program is just one of the ways EDGM seeks to uplift the outstanding work of some of Wisconsin’s teachers.

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High-resolution photos from Celebrate Teachers and Teaching 2017 are available upon request.