

National Dropout Prevention Center's

# Crystal Star Awards of Excellence

Tuesday, October 30, 2018 11:30 a.m.

## Program Award of Excellence

### **EC Cares**

Mr. John Hernandez, East Central Independent School District, San Antonio, TX

Mr. John Hernandez formed the EC Cares Committee after involvement in a conference presented by the National Dropout Prevention Center and Hope 4 The Wounded. The EC Cares Committee created a system to identify, track and support students dealing with traumatic events. The team established an initial responder reporting system and training for all campus staff, so that empowered every member to report a student who may be in need. The process included slight changes in the use of the school's student information system that allowed tracking and follow up across administrative, counselor, and staff levels. The committee's work initially focused on student attendance and soon expanded to home situations and the struggles of life. In line with national trends regarding depression and anxiety, EC Cares aims to identify 25% of students at each campus to get them the support they need and track them through graduation.

EC Cares developed systems of professional development, collaboration among counselors, staff, and administration, and a local resource guide to connect families and staff to services and support. The EC Cares program has received numerous accolades from local, regional, and national media. John Hernandez consistently shares this significant work with attendees at National Dropout Prevention Center conferences and media. Following their example, many local schools are developing similar committees with similar goals. EC Cares has been successful. As of September 2018, students identified as beyond at-risk have a higher attendance rate than the district average.

## Program Award of Excellence

### **City Year Columbus**

Ms. Tasha Booker, Columbus, OH

City Year is contributing to a clearer and bolder vision of what public schools can and should be for all children: places of learning, exploration and risk-taking, where every student feels safe and connected to the school community; where data is used continuously to help promote student growth and achievement; and where all students have access to positive, caring relationships and personalized learning environments that encourage them to persevere through challenges, build on their strengths and thrive.

During the 2017-2018 Academic City Year, AmeriCorps members served more than 12,700 hours tutoring Columbus City School students in Attendance, Behavior, and English Language Arts and Math Coursework. Seventy percent of students enrolled in Behavior interventions showed improvement from October to May. Well over half of students in English Language Arts and Math Academic Interventions showed at least one year's growth according to the NWEA Measures of Academic Progress Assessment.

Since 1994, City Year AmeriCorps members have positively impacted Columbus' schools through more than one million hours of service, more than 10,000 community volunteers, and more than 600 corps members.

Nominations for the National Dropout Prevention Center Crystal Star Award of Excellence in Dropout Recovery, Intervention, and Prevention are now being accepted. **We need your help in identifying and honoring outstanding programs and individuals in the field of dropout prevention.** Nomination forms are located on the National Dropout Prevention Center website (under the link entitled Awards) at [www.dropoutprevention.org](http://www.dropoutprevention.org). The nomination process is done electronically.

# 2019 NOMINATIONS

**Nomination Deadline: June 29, 2019**

Questions and comments should be directed to John Gailer at [jgailer@dropoutprevention.org](mailto:jgailer@dropoutprevention.org)