

# Onpoint's Prize for Excellence in Education

## Four Local Educators Have Mortgage or Rent Paid for One Year

OnPoint Community Credit Union has announced the four winners of the 2024 OnPoint Prize for Excellence in Education Educator of the Year awards. K-5 Educator of the Year, Rachel Hertz 1st grade teacher at North Star Elementary School in Bend, Ore. Rachel Hertz has spent her 20-year career as a teacher working to give her students a sense of belonging. Her philosophy as an educator is simple: there is always something new to learn, to experience and to better inform how she teaches. When we stop learning, Hertz says, we stop growing. A proud representative of her Bolivian and Mexican heritage, Hertz ensures her classroom celebrates every student's background. She encourages students to share their cultures and traditions and uses culturally relevant materials to enhance their learning experience.



OnPoint Community Credit Union has announced the four winners of the 2024 OnPoint Prize for Excellence in Education Educator of the Year awards.

6-8 Educator of the Year, Sher-

ry Reeder a 6th – 8th grade special education teacher at Molalla River Middle School in Molalla, Ore. Sherry Reeder understands students are more than just recipients of knowledge - they want to be active participants in their educational journey. Her student-centered approach means creating an environment in her classroom

where students feel empowered.

Reeder's impact extends across the school. She worked with the administration to conduct focus groups that helped identify the causes of low satisfaction scores among students. This led to the implementation of "brain breaks" to help reduce student anxiety and stress. She is also helping to make

elective classes accessible for English Language Development students and those with additional needs.

9-12 Educator of the Year, Michelle Colbert, 9th – 12th grade art and career technical education teacher at Fir Ridge Campus in Portland, Ore. For Michelle Colbert, art can be a powerful

tool to empower youth and allow them to amplify their voices, express themselves and do so in a setting where they feel comfortable. Colbert strives for that every day, whether she is teaching art or career and technical education (CTE) at Fir Ridge Campus.

When her students returned to in-person learning after the pandemic, she challenged them to express how they were impacted. The result was mixed media self-portraits that gave Colbert an important glimpse into that period of their lives. In her industrial arts class, Colbert leads students through the process of manufacturing skateboards – from designing to adding graphics, grip tape, trucks and wheels. The end result is not just a skateboard but a boost in confidence and skills.

Gold Star Educator of the Year is Dr. Traniece Brown-Warrens, principal at Markham Elementary School in Portland, Ore. In January 2024, an ice storm left Markham Elementary School inoperable. Principal Traniece Brown-Warrens immediately jumped in to ensure as little disruption as possible. She worked with four other schools to "host" students by

CONTINUED ON PAGE 9

**SUMMER IS SERVED**  
SAVOR THE SEASON

**NEW SEASONS MARKET**

[WWW.NEWSEASONSMARKET.COM](http://WWW.NEWSEASONSMARKET.COM)

CHECKING & SAVINGS • HOME LOANS • AUTO LOANS  
CREDIT CARDS • BUSINESS SERVICES

**OnPoint**  
COMMUNITY CREDIT UNION

**We take pride in this community. After all, we live here too.**

For over 90 years, OnPoint has been a part of the Pacific Northwest. In that time, we have empowered people from all walks of life to achieve their financial goals. Drop by one of our 57 branches. We'd love to introduce you to the financial tools and resources that can help you, your family and your community thrive.

[Visit onpointcu.com/locations](http://Visitonpointcu.com/locations)

Federally insured by NCUA. Equal Housing Opportunity.