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**Norfolk Public Schools Announces Grade-level Teachers of the Year, and 2021
Division-wide Teacher of the Year**

NORFOLK, VA – **Sabrina Wahid**, a first-grade teacher at Richard Bowling Elementary School, has been named the 2021 Elementary Teacher of the Year and Norfolk Public Schools' 2021 Division-wide Teacher of the Year. Wahid was notified of her selection Monday, May 24, 2021, by Superintendent Dr. Sharon I. Byrdsong. Accompanying Dr. Byrdsong for the surprise announcement were Dr. James Pohl, Chief Academic Officer, and Dr. Lynnell Gibson, Chief Schools Officer. Dr. Byrdsong and her team also made visits to two other schools to recognize the teachers of the year for the high school and middle school levels. NPS' High School Teacher of the Year is **Don Lyons**, a Health and Physical Education teacher at NET (Norfolk Educational Transition) Academy, and **Samary Breshears**, an ESL (English as a Second Language) teacher at Northside Middle School.

Wahid is a 14-year veteran teacher and has served at Richard Bowling for two years. Wahid's positive influence on her students' lives does not stop in the classroom. From attending a former student's grandmother's funeral to being a regular fan on the sidelines of soccer, basketball, and baseball games, she chooses to stay involved and support her students in many different ways. During this challenging year, Wahid was able to raise more than \$20,000 through Donorschoose.org projects and put the donations towards her students' academic achievement. She created an exercise classroom and put hands-on materials in the homes of her students. Wahid is currently in the Regent University Doctoral Program.

Lyons, a 38-year teaching veteran at NPS, has served at NET Academy as a Health and Physical Education teacher for the last six years. Lyons takes pride in his role at NET because of its unique educational environment within the division. Students attending NET Academy are incarcerated and Lyons must exercise a multitude of comprehensive teaching techniques that provide a dependable routine while also contributing to a culture rooted in safety and emotional self-worth. This is crucial to establish before students can begin to apply the lessons they receive from Lyons in the classroom. Through the decades with NPS, Lyons has coached basketball, soccer, and golf. He is professionally connected with numerous athletics programs around the world and has been responsible for training students, staff, referees, and coaches as it relates to basketball.

Breshears is a 17-year veteran teacher and has served at Northside Middle for five years. She is involved in various community service initiatives to include the English Learner (EL) Family Academy and routinely serves as an interpreter for Spanish-speaking families. Breshears partnered with members of the NPS ESL community to create parent engagement virtual chats. The events provide information on how to utilize and navigate the numerous resources within the school division as well as give students and families overall support. Breshears also works with NPS' ESL Department to translate important information that is disseminated to families. She has made home visits and hosted drive-through events in which EL families were given school supplies during the height of the pandemic closure. Breshears' efforts in providing these ongoing supports has contributed to much needed relief to many NPS EL families.

“This is the time of year when we get to celebrate what is truly one of the most important professions in the world,” said Dr. Byrdsong. “I am privileged and humbled to recognize this year’s teachers of the year and their positive influences on our students during what has been a year like no other in our lifetime. What Sabrina Wahid, Don Lyons, and Samary Breshears have accomplished to achieve this recognition is awe-inspiring, and Norfolk Public Schools is fortunate to have them in the classroom.”

These three educators were selected from 53 teachers of the year representing all NPS schools, centers, and programs. Teachers complete an application demonstrating their successes and are initially selected by their school, center, or program. Completed applications are then forwarded to a central committee that reviews all applications and subsequently selects the Teacher of the Year and two other school-level finalists.

To find out more about the Teacher of the Year Program and to see all of this year’s teachers of the year, visit npsk12.com.

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Norfolk Public Schools (NPS) is on a mission to ensure that all students maximize their academic potential, develop skills for lifelong learning, and become successful contributors to a global society. We believe Norfolk Public Schools is the cornerstone of a proudly diverse community with highly qualified teachers and staff dedicated to providing diverse teaching and learning opportunities for all students.