



**PRESS RELEASE  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Stamford Public Education Foundation's Excellence in Education Celebration  
brings the community together**

**STAMFORD, CT – June 7, 2021** – There was music in the air at Mill River Park this Sunday as Stamford Public Education Foundation (SPEF) brought the community together for its first-ever Excellence in Education Celebration. The event, which took place from noon until 3:00 p.m., acted as the in-person ceremony for the Excellence in Education Awards, hosted virtually on March 25, 2021.

The day commenced with a warm welcome from SPEF's CEO, **Matthew Quinones**, and a musical performance by **Project Music**, a nonprofit organization that delivers tuition-free music education to Stamford's youth. Following this performance, the event's Title Sponsor, **NatWest**, introduced Stamford High School's **Strawberry Hill Players**, who performed acts from their spring musical, "Put on a Happy Face." Stamford Public Schools' superintendent, **Dr. Tamu Lucero** joined the stage to highlight this year's five *SPEF Educator Award* winners, Katie Welsh, Luciana Lira, Betsy DeSantis, Ryan Carey and Fred Kelley, all of whom were in attendance with their families. Stamford Public Schools *Teacher of the Year*, **Donna Kaiser**, was also recognized. Dr. Tamu then introduced the **Westhill High School Jazz Ensemble**. The Stamford High School **Madrigal Singers** continued the musical entertainment. In between acts, Rippowam Middle School's Sid Watson, the event's DJ, pleased the crowd with his energetic playlist. The **Hoop Girls** of Stamford added to the variety of talent with fun dance routines. To conclude the day, the Strawberry Hill Players returned to the stage to grace the audience with a reprise. Food and libations were enjoyed by Reddi Rooster and Bumski's Mobile Beer & Wine Bar.

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The Sunday in the park brought together families from all over Stamford to celebrate the individuals who have significantly impacted Stamford Public Schools' students throughout the year. SPEF looks forward to honoring more critical influencers in our children's education.

**About SPEF:** Founded in 1996, the mission of the Stamford Public Education Foundation (SPEF) is to deliver educational programs and resources that elevate student, educator, and parent success by bridging the gap between needs in the Stamford Public Schools and resources in our community. The Foundation strives to enable each and every student in the Stamford Public Schools to graduate high school and enter college, career training, or fulltime employment ready to succeed. For further information, visit [www.spefct.org](http://www.spefct.org).

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