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## **Hart Magnet Elementary School Teacher Wendy Tang Receives SPEF Educator Award at the 2023 Excellence in Education Awards**

*Additionally, Stamford Public Schools' Amy Beldotti, Ferguson Library's Alice Knapp, and non-profit Reading is Fundamental all received the SPEF Leadership in Literacy Award for their commitment to public education in the greater Stamford community.*

**STAMFORD, CT – May 3rd, 2023** – The Stamford Public Education Foundation (SPEF) brought together 275 guests at its 16th annual ***Excellence in Education Awards*** on Thursday, April 27<sup>th</sup>, at the Stamford Marriott Hotel & Spa on Tresser Boulevard. It was an evening filled with joy and celebration as the Stamford community came together to honor those who make a difference in the lives of Stamford students.

Attendees were welcomed to the event by SPEF's blue carpet for a photo opportunity! After capturing the moment, attendees stepped into the lively ballroom for a vibrant networking reception and exciting silent auction. Guests enjoyed light hors d'oeuvres, wine donated from Domaine Bousquet, and Grade A beer donated from Cingari Family Markets as they bid on items donated by the New York Yankees, NBCUniversal, Culinary Works, and more!

At 7:00p.m., the awards ceremony began with Stamford High School's Madrigal Singers, filling the room with an acapella performance of the National Anthem. SPEF CEO Lindsay Wyman and Stamford High School graduate Selma Fuseni, the evening's MCs, followed the performance by announcing the highly anticipated **SPEF Educator Award** winner, Hart Magnet Elementary School's Wendy Tang! Wendy, one of 22 educators nominated, was recognized for her hard work and commitment to Stamford Public Schools' students.

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SPEF mentees Ty Candio and Julian Stephenson (7<sup>th</sup> grade students at Rippowam Middle School) came to the stage and shared thoughtful remarks with their mentor Damien Green, discussing how SPEF's Stamford Mentoring Program has positively impacted their educational experience.

Next, Dr. Tamu Lucero, Superintendent of Stamford Public Schools, presented the first **SPEF Leadership in Literacy Award** to Amy Beldotti for her tireless work as Associate Superintendent of Teaching and Learning at Stamford Public Schools. Then, SPEF Board of Directors member Barbara Aronica-Buck presented the second **SPEF Leadership in Literacy Award** to Alice Knapp, CEO of the Ferguson Library, who has dedicated herself to enhancing literacy in the Stamford community. Finally, Elizabeth McKay, Youth Services Supervisor at the Ferguson Library, presented the last **SPEF Leadership in Literacy Award** to Reading is Fundamental (RIF), honoring its long-time partnership with SPEF and its commitment to ensuring all students have access to books and literacy resources. Kristin Shaffer, RIF's Senior Director of Development, accepted the award on RIF's behalf.

Closing out the ceremony, a beautiful rendition of "May a Rainbow Run Beside You" was performed by the Stamford High School Madrigal Singers. After the ceremony, attendees made their way back to the ballroom for light dessert and coffee, and to make their final auction bids.

SPEF is incredibly grateful to the 2023 Excellence in Education Awards sponsors for their support for public education, including:

**Presenting Sponsor:** NatWest

**Magna Cum Laude:** Deloitte; Nellie Mae Education Foundation; Pitney Bowes; SpringWorks

**Cum Laude:** EXL; Garden Homes; Lucky8; M&T Bank; Stamford Health

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**Special Thanks To:** Cingari Family Markets, Domaine Bousquet Wine, Mofly Media, and Jeffrey Wirz Photography.

**About SPEF:** Founded in 1996, the mission of the Stamford Public Education Foundation is to elevate student success by delivering educational programs and solutions that promote equitable access to quality public education in Stamford. For further information, visit [www.spefct.org](http://www.spefct.org).

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