Outstanding Leadership in Science Education

This prestigious award recognizes and honors an NSELA member, who through professional work, has demonstrated outstanding leadership in science education at the school, county, regional and/or national level. The award is presented at the NSELA luncheon held at the 2020 NSELA Leadership Summit. The award is accompanied by a check for $1,000 and a plaque.

Joyce Baldridge Tugel has a stellar career as an incredible leader in science/STEM education at all levels from school to international spanning 30 years. Her nominator praises Joyce’s collaborative, positive leadership in science education and her selfless efforts to support others as what stands out. Joyce is one of the finest examples of long-standing NSELA leaders who inspire leadership in others while continuously growing her own leadership. She is truly a passionate role model and mentor for other science/STEM education leaders. Her current national consulting work includes professional development in areas of science curriculum, instruction, and formative assessment; teacher leadership; and implementation of NGSS.

Ms. Tugel’s past work from 2005-2017 with the Maine Mathematics and Science Alliance include these examples of different jobs: K-12 STEM Education Specialist, Consulting Coordinator, Project Advisor for ACRES (After School Coaching Program for Rural Educators in STEM), and Project Director for the Maine Governor’s Academy for STEM Education Leadership. When she worked as a professional development specialist for TERC, she effectively developed professional learning communities in underperforming schools to enhance science teaching and learning. A support letter noted that Joyce’s knowledge, expertise and ability to work with and motivate others helped move countless K-12 teachers forward in their understanding of and enthusiasm for science education. Her first career as a scientist involved research in marine sediment biogeochemistry (NASA). This experience bridges the gap into real-world issues and research that educators can incorporate into their instruction.

Joyce is a long-time member of NSELA and is actively engaged with NSELA in many areas. Her contributions include serving as Region A Director, Nominations and Elections Chair, Co-chair of a Summer Leadership Institute (SLI) in Maine, and numerous presentations at Leadership Summits and SLIs. She is actively involved with NSTA and has served as Division II Director, Professional Development Division Director, Chair of the Nominations Committee, Chair of the Professional Development Position Statement Panel, and presenter at many NSTA conferences. Joyce is a co-author on the 2020 Science Curriculum Topic Study: Bridging the Gap Between Three-Dimensional Standards, Research and Practice, 2nd Edition. She received the Milken Foundation National Educator Award and the National Presidential Award for Excellence in Science Teaching.

All Joyce Tugel’s award letters describe her as a natural leader. A quote from a support letter: “She has science education leadership in her heart and soul.” Throughout her career, Joyce builds trust through collaboration, artful facilitation, and listening to the needs of her participants. Joyce states “I prefer to lead alongside not at the helm of the ship.” NSELA is honored to give the 2020 OLISE award to Joyce Tugel.