



## P R E S S   R E L E A S E

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### **Kate Hofherr Named 2009 Annie Sullivan Award Winner**

*Learning support teacher honored for her “unmatched” commitment to students with disabilities*

READING, PA – Kate Hofherr, learning support teacher at Twin Valley Middle School, has been named the winner of the Berks County Intermediate Unit’s 2009 Annie Sullivan Award. She was honored, along with nine other nominees, during an award reception April 2.

The BCIU gives the Annie Sullivan Award in recognition of an individual who has worked to encourage the understanding and promotion of students with disabilities in his or her school or community. Annie Sullivan was Helen Keller’s devoted teacher and mentor who was nearly blind herself. After treatment, she regained her sight and committed herself to teaching the blind and deaf. This year marks the 23<sup>rd</sup> annual presentation of the award in Berks County.

Hofherr’s supervisor, Dr. Cathy Taschner, nominated her for the award.

“Kate is an exceptional educator who sees students for their ‘abilities’ rather than their ‘disabilities,’” Dr. Taschner said. “Her commitment to ensuring that all students make progress is unmatched and extremely contagious to her colleagues and those around her.”

As an example, Hofherr worked tirelessly one year to make sure that several students with severe disabilities would be included in general education classes for the entire school day, according to Dr. Taschner.

In addition, Hofherr “went to great lengths for a child using a wheelchair to ensure that he was included in all of his classes,” Dr. Taschner said. “The student participated in marching band, jazz band, dances, and more.

“Our students have been blessed and our school has been changed forever because of the dedication of this outstanding teacher.”

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The other 2009 Annie Sullivan Award nominees were:

**Donna Capriotti**, Daniel Boone Area and Exeter Township school districts

**Patrick Carl**, Antietam School District

**Margaret Carter**, Hamburg Area School District

**Daniel Crigler and Robert Boland**, Wilson School District

**Lori Gavalla**, Tulpehocken Area School District

**Kimberly Myers**, Daniel Boone Area School District

**Jared Sparks**, Oley Valley School District

**Brady Stauffer**, Governor Mifflin School District

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