

CLIFTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 20, 2019

Clifton's Judith Bassford Named Board Member of the Year by New Jersey School Boards Association

CLIFTON, New Jersey - The New Jersey School Boards Association named Judith Bassford, Clifton Board of Education Vice President, 2019-2020 School Board Member of the Year. Mrs. Bassford has served on the Clifton Board of Education nine years and is the president of the Passaic County School Boards Association.

Mrs. Bassford is an active volunteer throughout the Clifton community. As the vice president of CASA (Clifton Against Substance Abuse), Mrs. Bassford earned the Governor's Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Passaic County Volunteer of the Year award in 2018. Mrs. Bassford is a founding member of PRAISE, Parents Requiring Assistance in Special Education. An advocate for special needs children, Mrs. Bassford informs parents of their rights and how to obtain services and accommodations for their children.

An independent, out of state panel selected Mrs. Bassford as Board Member of the Year. The committee reviewed the nominees, selected Mrs. Bassford as the winner, and honored her in Atlantic City on October 22, 2019.

NJSBA President Mike McClure and Executive Director Dr. Lawrence S. Feinsod both said of Mrs. Bassford, "Judy exemplifies the spirit of public service and dedication to the health and well-being of public-school students. She was a founding member of Clifton PRAISE, and she has worked tirelessly to fight drug abuse and increase graduation rates."

Danny A. Robertozzi, Ed. D., Superintendent of Clifton Public Schools, commented, "Without a doubt, Mrs. Bassford deserves this honor. When I first came on board, I immediately knew that I would be working side-by-side with individuals who poured their hearts and souls into this community. I was astonished by all of the work that Mrs. Bassford, in particular, does for the Clifton community," said Dr. Robertozzi. "Judy's passion and dedication to this community represent the essence of Clifton. I know that we can do great work when people like Judy are in our corner."

Bruce Young, of the Carlstadt-East Rutherford Board of Education and NJBSA Vice-President of County Activities, nominated Mrs. Bassford for the honor. Young noted that Bassford had been an advocate for children with special needs since she was 12-years.

Mr. Young explained that Mrs. Bassford's most significant accomplishment was her mission to keep Clifton's children safe through her work with CASA and Project Graduation.

Young's letter continued, "She is shy when it comes to praise. Judy's love for volunteering is a complete labor of love. Her current project is writing a program about drug awareness named after a local young Clifton man that lost his battle with addiction last year; "Kyle's Story."

Bassford's volunteer work is extensive. In addition to CASA, Praise, and Project Graduation, Mrs. Bassford coordinates Clifton's 9/11 Memorial Event, volunteers with as a Red Hat Member on Relay for Life, Clifton Health Department volunteer, and Clifton Recreation Department volunteer. In the past, Mrs. Bassford was a member of Clifton Residents on Call Service, the Vice President of the Clifton High School PTSA, Elementary Home and School President, Treasurer of the Clifton Service Unit Girl Scouts of America, Girl Scout & Brownie Leader, and volunteer for the Secaucus First Aid Squad.

Young concluded, "You will never find a more compassionate, dedicated board member that leads by example. She is the epitome of service and continuously contributes to the betterment and advancement of education."

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