

Educator of the Year Nominee:

Christina Segó





Christina Segó

One-Paragraph Summary

Christina Segó is a veteran teacher with 30 years of experience, 18 years with the Sullivan School District teaching Social Studies in grades 6, 7, and 8 and is currently teaching an At-Risk Program for students in grades 6-8. She was born and raised in Sullivan and has spent the majority of her life here. She raised her son, Jordan, in this community because she felt this was a wonderful place for him to reach his full potential. During her teaching career, she was selected as a presenter at the National History Conference in Niagara Falls, New York in 2016, an opportunity to display her expertise as a social studies teacher. A few awards that she has received over the years include VFW Post 3987 Social Studies Teacher of the Year in 2020, 2014 Chamber of Commerce Educator of the Year, and Wal-Mart Teacher of the Year in 2002. She is passionate about her job and always puts her students first. She believes in the importance of giving back to her community and has participated in and provided opportunities for her students to share this value. There are several motivating factors as to why she wanted to teach in her hometown. She wanted to see her students as they progress through life, meet their goals, accomplish their dreams, and to realize they have a major role in our world. Sometimes, a teacher is the only person they have, and she believes it is her job to be that person for all students.

Christina Sego

1. Major achievements through professional projects with which you or your organization have been involved, including dates and positions held.

- **2010 - Present - Missouri State Teachers Association Building Representative for Sullivan Middle School**
- **2010 - Present - Sullivan Teachers Association Building Representative for Sullivan Middle School**
- **2016 - Presenter at the National History Conference in Niagara Falls, New York**
- **2014 - 2023 - Co-Chair of the Renaissance Committee**
- **2008 - 2012 - Student Council Sponsor**

2. Community and civic affiliations, accomplishments, and leadership positions held.

- **Sullivan Relay for Life Team Captain for 2 years and an active participant for 6 years**
- **Member of the Church of Christ**
- **Mentor for At-Risk Students**
- **Coordinated the Vereran's Day Breakfast at SMS for local Veterans**
- **Organized the annual Food Drive at SMS**
- **Organized/Implemented Christmas Toy Drive at SMS**

3. Awards, recognition, or honors received.

- **2020 VFW Post 3987 Social Studies Teacher of the Year**
- **2016 St. Louis Cardinals Honorary Bat Girl**
- **2014 Chamber of Commerce Educator of the Year**
- **2005 Bourbon Boosters Teacher of the Year**
- **2002 Wal-Mart Teacher of the Year**

4. Please describe your feelings about the importance of making Sullivan a beautiful place to live, work, and visit, citing any role models and motivating factors.

I was born and raised in Sullivan and have spent the majority of my life here. I raised my son, Jordan, in this community because this was a wonderful place for him to reach his full potential. I believe in the importance of giving back to your community and I have participated in and provided opportunities for my son and my students to share this value. Over the years, we have participated with the Salvation Army's Red Kettle Campaign and my students learned the importance of helping others when we crafted homemade Christmas ornaments for a local nursing home. Sullivan has always been good to me, my family, and my students. It is an active community that reaches out to help those most in need. Our town models and expects leadership and strong character from its youth. It has been an honor to be involved in this community. There are several motivating factors as to why I wanted to teach in my hometown. I wanted to see my students as they progress through life, meet their goals, accomplish their dreams, and to realize they have a major role in our world. Sometimes, a teacher is the only person they have, and I believe it is my job to be that person for all students. As educators, we must be role models that students can rely on for good morals and strong principles.

Educator of the Year Nominee:

Tona Burke





One Paragraph Summary

Tona Burke

Tona Burke has been a member of the Sullivan School District for the past 14 years. She has served as a Sullivan High School counselor for students in grades 9-10 for 10 years prior to transitioning into the High School Assistant Principal position in 2020. Tona plays an active role in student needs and services through her work in programs such as the A+ Coordinator, Freshman Transition Team, and Summer School Administrator, to name a few. Tona has had the privilege of working with thousands of students over her 25 year career. Tona feels that being an educator has been an incredibly rewarding career. "I have had the pleasure of working with so many incredible students and families over the past several years. Thank you to all of the parents for sharing your children with all of us at SHS. I am truly blessed!"

Chamber of Commerce Award Accomplishments and Contributions

1. Major Achievements through professional projects with which you or your organization have been involved, including dates and positions held.

Taking this role in 2020 put our administrative team in a very unique position as leaders. Being charged with the task of revisioning educational platforms as we lived in a world never seen before. I played a big role in training staff on how to deliver lessons to students who are home for long periods of time, as well as supporting staff and students through the emotional toll of the pandemic.

As the school environment gradually returned to a semblance of normalcy, it became evident that the needs of students and staff were changing. Our team needed to explore options aimed to address the emotional and mental well-being of all stakeholders. One big change we began looking at in 2022-2023 was a concept we now call "Flight Time". This venture of discovery began in September 2022 after our administrative team had heard of an idea called Power Lunch. We knew students needed time to enhance social-emotional development, and to strengthen relationships between students/students and students/teachers. The day is designed to increase equity and access to extracurricular and academic opportunities within the scheduled school day with 50 minutes of protected time in the middle of day: We take pride in this time as it:

- Strengthen Relationships
- Engages students in relevant real-life skills
- Increases opportunities to participate in school activities
- Increases academic support and intervention.
- Decompress time and reduces student fatigue
- Time built into the day to accomplish school related business

Flight time has become something that students and staff look forward to each and every day. We see an increase in classroom engagement, social growth amongst students, and academic success for students who struggled in years past.

I am blessed to have been given the opportunity to visualize a program for our students and staff that has been wonderful for everyone here. Students' needs go beyond the classroom and Flight Time is meeting some of those needs each and every day.

2. Community and civic affiliations, accomplishment, and leadership positions held.

- Member of the Sullivan School District, 14 years
 - 4 years High School Assistant Principal
 - 10 years High School Counselor
- Missouri State Teachers Association, 21 years
- Missouri School Counselors Association, 18 years.
 - Governing Board Member for the State of Missouri, 7 years
- Missouri Secondary School Principals Association, 4 years

3. Awards, recognition, or honors received

- South Central Elementary School Counselor of the Year 2010
- Chamber of Commerce, Educator of the Year Nominee 2020
- Honorary Thespian, May 2023

4. Please describe your feelings about the importance of making Sullivan a beautiful place to live, work, and visit, citing any role models and motivating factors.

It is an honor to be able to prepare the next generation of young people to be successful, independent members of this community. What we do each and every day from life lessons to educational progress plays an important role in student growth. Our students are the key to success for the future of Sullivan. Teaching students to love and appreciate their community is an investment to the future of this great town. We strive to build a culture of kindness and pride in not only our school but also Sullivan. I hope my words and actions leave a lasting impression on the students that pass through these halls. What we do today will shape the future of this great community.