
Kentucky guardsman protects U.S. Capitol while teaching high school back home remotely



Kentucky high school teacher and Army National Guard Lieutenant Sam Whitehead is on assignment in Washington D.C. Since the January attack on the U.S. Capitol, he has been on duty nearly round the clock.

With the permission of his commanders, Sam, a platoon leader, said he periodically steps away from protecting “lives and property” to remotely teach his math students at Morehead’s Rowan County High School.

Sam is the only public school educator in the state teaching virtually while on active duty in the National Guard in Washington. He is available 24-7 for both, taking late emails from students or getting calls from soldiers or his chain of command.

Sam said Rowan County Schools recognizes the importance of the Guard’s mission in Washington and is supportive of it, and the National Guard and his chain of command know what he does back home is important, too.

Sam teaches a dual credit class virtually and said it shows how we all can continue to work together to put students first.

Lieutenant Governor Jacqueline Coleman said Sam “is a wonderful example of the impact teachers can have on the lives of their students, even beyond the classroom walls. Our kids are lucky to have a real-life example of what it means to serve.”

OET's STLP Completes Full Year of Events 100% Digitally



The week of April 26th – 29th marked the 2021 Student Technology Leadership Program (STLP) State Championship. K-12 students from across the commonwealth spent months preparing for the all-digital competition, which is now in its second year.

The STLP State Championship consisted of three main events: online project presentations, digital product displays and “live” challenges where students demonstrated skills in various technology fields.

Teams submitted digital presentations of their technology projects that were completed over the course of the school year. Each illustrated how the team addressed the new Kentucky Academic Standards for Technology. The Best Project in Kentucky was selected for each grade division, along with the Best Technical Project in Kentucky.

Projects were submitted as individual or team entries and included displays of STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math)-related competencies. Categories included: Media Literacy Awareness, Original Photo Essay, Augmented Reality, Screen Capture Tutorials, Digital Storytelling and Documentary.

We would like to congratulate all the state champions. The winners were:

- **Best K-5 Project:** SES Trail Cam Team, Simpson Elementary School, Simpson County
- **Best 6-8 Project:** Share Your Arts Vlog, SCAPA at Bluegrass, Fayette County
- **Best 9-12 Project:** TCHS MC, Trimble Co. Jr. and Sr. High School
- **Best Technical Project (Dave Sigler Award):** VR:Ed, Russel High School, Russell Independent

Everyone is invited to learn more about the Student Technology Leadership Program and check out the amazing work of these students by visiting stlp.education.ky.gov.



Kentucky School for the Blind, Kentucky School for the Deaf graduate class of 2021

We would like to give big congratulations to the 2021 graduating classes of the Kentucky School for the Blind and the Kentucky School for the Deaf. Both classes graduated last week on Wednesday, May 26.

Seven students graduated from the Kentucky School for the Blind in Louisville. They are:

- Logan Wayne Armstrong
- Elizabeth Danielle Hardiman
- Tyera Nicole Bouwens
- Audrey Nicole Griffith
- Joseph Michael Mowery
- Alexander Rosalino Salgado
- Theodore Bernhardt Tibke

The Kentucky School for the Deaf held a drive-in graduation at the school in Danville. Their graduating class included:

- Kaelan Anthony Barrett
- Corbin Allen Bishop
- Dakota James Buck
- Mi'Keyla Aniya Crumble
- Priscilla Angelina Godfrey
- Tracy Michelle Henson
- Elizabeth Ann Holcomb
- Haylie Renee Kircher
- Kaitlyn Lihua Moffett
- Tia Su Moors
- Lucas Kai Oberloh

Two Kentucky high school students named 2021 U.S. Presidential Scholars



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We are excited to note that two Kentucky high school students have been named 2021 U.S. Presidential Scholars. Their selection was announced by U.S. Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona on May 13.

Sarah Belcher of Pikeville High School (Pikeville Independent) and Justin Michael Burch of St. Xavier High School in Louisville are two of 161 high school seniors across the nation recognized for their accomplishments in academics, the arts and career and technical education.

As Education Commissioner Jason E. Glass said, “The work of these two students reflects highly on their dedication and commitment to excellence, and also on the outstanding work being done in Kentucky’s schools.”

The White House Commission on Presidential Scholars selects scholars annually based on their academic success, artistic and technical excellence, essays, school evaluations and transcripts, as well as evidence of community service, leadership and demonstrated commitment to high ideals.

The Presidential Scholars Class of 2021 will be recognized for its outstanding achievement this summer. The U.S. Presidential Scholars Program has honored over 7,600 of the nation’s top-performing students since its inception in 1964.

Kenton County educator named 2021 Kentucky Education Association’s Teacher of the Year



We would like to congratulate Leann Lewis, a 9th-grade English teacher at Simon Kenton High School (Kenton County). Leann has been named the 2021 Kentucky Education Association (KEA) Teacher of the Year.



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Leann was inspired by her experiences with her teachers as well as at home. Her mother Sally was a long-time preschool teacher at church and a kindergarten instructional assistant.

Lewis works with a diverse population of students with a variety of values and needs. Some students read grades below their reading level and struggle with food insecurity and emotional issues that make learning more difficult. Leann has developed a reading curriculum that presents her students with an opportunity to explore social justice issues and improved a program to enhance freshman success and college readiness. She also has provided students with the social and emotional skills to succeed.

The award is presented annually to a KEA educator who exhibits excellence in five critical areas of teaching – professional practice, advocacy for the profession, attention to diversity, community engagement and leadership in professional development.

In addition to receiving this year's KEA award as teacher of the year, Lewis was awarded the 2021 Kenton county school's "Be Like Mr. Rogers" Award, named a top twenty educator in Cincinnati Magazine in 2019, and received the Northern Kentucky Education Association's 2016 Teacher of the Year award.

During the pandemic year especially, Lewis believes her role as an educator is to be part of the community as well as her school, and to never stop learning.

Congratulations, Leann!