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WKU honors 10 'Distinguished Educators'

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Gary Ransdell Hall at Western Kentucky University, home of WKU's College of Education and Behavioral Sciences and the Louie B. Nunn Kentucky Teacher Hall of Fame.

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Western Kentucky University's College of Education and Behavioral Sciences last week announced its fifth cohort of Distinguished Educator Awards.

The college honored 10 Kentucky educators among 104 nominations submitted by students, colleagues and community members.

Director of Professional Educator Services Stephanie Martin said the awards are a chance both to highlight exemplary work and help up-and-coming educators “see model teachers that are being celebrated.”

“We get letters from lots of different people nominating these teacher candidates,” Martin said. “The themes that come across the most is that they’re very student centered, caring, very passionate about their jobs and they always are those teachers that everybody remembers years later.”

This year’s award recipients by category were:

- **Elementary:** Melinda Bush – North Jackson Elementary, Barren County Schools
- **Middle:** Jacqueline Brangers – West Hardin Middle, Hardin County Schools
- **High School:** Kelley Bauer – Barren County High, Barren County Schools
- **Special Education:** Mike Mantooth – Adair County Elementary, Adair County Schools
- **PE/Health:** Cynthia Wells – Green County Intermediate, Green County Schools
- **Visual/Performing Arts:** Kathy Austin – Alvaton Elementary, Warren County Schools
- **Innovation:** Renee Hale – Drakes Creek Middle, Warren County Schools
- **Diversity:** Amy Schallert – Natcher Elementary, Warren County S
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 - **Teacher Mentor:** Robin Crawford – Meece Middle, Somerset Independent Schools
 - **Literacy:** Briana Pulliam – South Hancock Elementary, Hancock County Schools

CEBS Dean Corinne Murphy, alongside Martin and others with the college, surprised each winner at their respective schools.

Martin said as a former educator and principal herself, seeing recipients honored has been “the best part of my job in the five years that I’ve had it (at WKU), and I love what I do.”

Each educator will be commemorated on a plaque housed in the Louie B. Nunn Kentucky Teacher Hall of Fame in Gary Ransdell Hall on WKU’s campus.



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