



Reading Recovery® Council
of North America

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

National Literacy Leadership Award Honors Excellence

COLUMBUS, OH – Two individuals will be recognized with the 2019 Excellence in Literacy Leadership Award presented by the Reading Recovery teacher leaders. They are Mary Grassi, Title I Director for Cambridge Public School District in Massachusetts; and Dr. Karen J. Scott, Executive Director of Elementary Learning at Ozark School District in Missouri.

Each year, Reading Recovery teacher leaders from across the country nominate individuals to receive this prestigious award. Recipients, who are not trained in Reading Recovery, have displayed a strong commitment to expand and maintain its high standards and made significant contributions to implementation beyond the local level. Awards will be presented on Sunday, February 10, during the 2019 National Reading Recovery & K-6 Literacy Conference opening session at the Greater Columbus Convention Center.

Mary Grassi, Title I Director for Cambridge Public School District in Massachusetts

During her 40 year-career in Cambridge, Mary Grassi has worked as a substitute teacher, classroom teacher, Title I reading specialist, and Title I curriculum coordinator. She has been integral to the development and growth of Reading Recovery in the Cambridge area for the past 25 years. As site coordinator for five school districts, her efforts have helped create a strong model that allows for layers of intervention in response to literacy needs of all children.

Mary connects with other Title I directors across the state, working to ensure financing is available to support training and ongoing professional development for Reading Recovery teaching and implementation. She is a founding member of the Reading Recovery Council of Massachusetts and serves in a variety of roles at the district and state level, receiving numerous awards in her tenure.

“Mary Grassi is a tireless advocate for Reading Recovery,” said Teacher Leader Karen Tlili who, along with Teacher Leader Maureen Bobbin, nominated Mary. “She knows that having access to Reading Recovery is essential for the children who need it most, and she works to maintain and extend implementation. She sits on the networking committee of the state council, focusing on recruiting new districts and increasing awareness across the state.”

Cambridge Public School District serves about 7,100 students who speak more than 70 languages; about 28 percent speak a first language other than English.

Dr. Karen J. Scott, Executive Director of Elementary Learning at Ozark School District in Missouri

Completing her 43rd year as an educator, Dr. Karen J. Scott has provided progressive leadership to Missouri school districts and shared her passion for Reading Recovery with literacy professionals across the country. As a classroom teacher, college professor, elementary language arts coordinator, federal programs director, site coordinator, and in other roles, her focus has been on literacy instruction.

Dr. Scott has worked to expand the implementation and strengthen the literacy programs in districts across southwest Missouri — first introducing Reading Recovery in Springfield in 1991. Since becoming site coordinator in 2009, she has guided the Ozark School District to become a model of comprehensive literacy, with Reading Recovery-trained professionals sharing their knowledge to benefit the whole school. Her impact is evidenced through mentoring, coaching, conference presentations, advocacy, recognition by her peers, and more — at the local, state, and national levels. Dr. Scott currently serves on the board of directors and is president-elect of the Reading Recovery Council of North America.

“I cannot think of a person who has a greater love for literacy learning than Karen Scott. Her passion for and support of Reading Recovery is evident to anyone she meets,” said Teacher Leader Linda Fugate who nominated Dr. Scott. “Her tireless efforts at the local, state, and national level have made a tremendous impact on student learning.”

Ozark School District serves about 5,800 K-12 students. With a focus on individual paths of instruction, the district annually reviews and revises a Comprehensive School Improvement Plan comprised of six student-driven goals.

About Reading Recovery

More than 2.3 million struggling first graders in the United States have benefitted from the one-to-one teaching expertise of Reading Recovery professionals. The intervention, introduced to North America in 1984 by educators at The Ohio State University, has more research proving its effectiveness than any other beginning reading program.

About the Reading Recovery Council of North America

The Reading Recovery Council of North America (RRCNA) is a not-for-profit association of Reading Recovery professionals and partners. The Council provides a network of professional development opportunities, including the National Reading Recovery & K-6 Literacy Conference, where literacy leaders share their expertise with more than 2,300 attendees from around the world.

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