

2021 Education Award Ceremony Motivates More Educators to Contribute Enthusiastically

(Courtesy of Shu-Wei Chang at the Office of the Secretary)



To encourage enthusiastic, unsung educators for their contributions, the Ministry of Education held the 2021 Education Award Ceremony in the Zhongxing New Village, Nantou, on November 30, 2020, at which a total of 66 educators and nine education groups received the awards. Fu-Yuan Peng, Director-General of the K-12 Education Administration, Ministry of Education, expressed his sincere gratitude to the education bureaus at the city and county levels and schools for their active participation in the recommendation of candidates for this award. Every candidate has his or her extraordinary story, and being recommended is a token of recognition, regardless of whether they eventually won an award. It is also hoped that this award will motivate more educators to devote their efforts and create a better educational environment.

The award ceremony, held in the Zhongxing New Village, Nantou, was presided over by Director-General Peng, to which Cheng-Wei Lu, Head of Department of Education, Nantou County, among other guests, were invited to express congratulations to the winners. Students from the National Changhua Senior High School, the Nantou Shiuhkuang Senior High School,

the Nantou Puli Junior High School, the Yingpei Junior High School, and the National Nantou Special School were invited to stage performances at this event. The atmosphere on the spot was heartwarming.

A total of 156 applications for the Education Award at this time were received, including 26 for the senior high school group, 24 for the vocational high school group, 29 for the junior high school group, 48 for the elementary school group, and 29 for the combined group (four for the kindergarten group, seven for the special education group, and 18 for the non-individual group). After the preliminary and the final review rounds, a total of 75 applications, namely 12 from the senior high school group, 12 from the vocational high school group, 14 from the junior high school group, 23 from the elementary school group, and 14 from the combined group (two from the kindergarten group, three from the special education group, and nine from the non-individual group) were selected as winners.

The winners of this year's awards are from diverse backgrounds and their stories are touching and inspirational. For example, even though Ching-Sen Lu, a technician at the National Chung-Hsing Senior High School, has limited mobility due to polio infection, he is fully committed to his work at the school. He manages the sports complex and equipment, while actively assisting with the maintenance of electric appliances and resource sorting and recycling for decades. His motto: "If I can do it, I will do it." He always mocks himself as a busybody as he offers to help other people even when off duty. Taking others' needs as one's own responsibility is the most beautiful spirit in the education field.

Chien-Chih Chen, a teacher at the National Erhlin Industrial and Commercial Vocational High School, has been engaged in vocational education for nearly 30 years. As a skills competitor in the past, he has adopted vocational education as his professional aspiration as a teacher. He has trained three national skills competitors for international competitions and instructed students to participate in national skills competitions and vocational skills competitions, helping them to secure numerous awards. In 2018, he pursued practical skill by engaging in intensive learning in

the industry for one year, with the aim of creating a new paradigm for education. He not only trains national skills competitors but encourages students to "focus on where they aim to achieve", to enable them to be confident about their own skills.

Chien-Tung Su, Director of Counseling, New Taipei Municipal Xi Kun Junior High School, has included skills courses in the curriculum to enable students to grow and shine in national skills competitions during his tenure. He has striven to retain middle way classes to ignite hope for dropouts and students who are in need of great attention. Furthermore, he focuses much on special education to enable children to feel a sense of warmth and, in turn, to serve as a beacon of hope for others. Moreover, he was responsible for organizing skills competitions at the city level and a dream realization fund, to fully capitalize on the administrative function and values as a role model in the education field.

The San Hao School Volunteer Team, a group award winner, was established by the XinSheng Elementary School located in a remote rural area. The school has only one class per grade level, and up to 60% of its students are from disadvantaged backgrounds, such as single-parent families, children who were raised up by their grand-parents, and low-income households; most of such students fall behind, as is often the case. However, the volunteers are convinced that "saving a child is saving a family", they actively sought educational opportunities for children to learn independently and build self-confidence, while motivating their parents, the community, and the public to care for the children and assist the school in jointly creating a high-quality learning environment.

According to the K-12 Education Administration, Ministry of Education, there are many unsung heroes in every corner of the society. To increase the visibility of the touching stories in education to people in society, it has held the award ceremony to encourage and recognize the winners with passion for education and increase their enthusiasm for their work. It is hoped that with the support of many outstanding educators, the educational environment in Taiwan will continue to improve.