

**2020 Excellent Special Educator Award Ceremony: Director-General Peng
applauds special educators for developing students' individual talents
through personalized learning**

(Photo/Text: Lin Yi-chun, Division of Special Education for Indigenous Peoples)



In an effort to bolster the morale and passion of special educators, the Ministry of Education held the 2020 Excellent Special Educator Award Ceremony in Yilan on September 22, 2020. Mr Peng Fu-yuan, the Director-General of the K-12 Education Administration of the Ministry of Education, presented awards to 32 prize recipients winners and expressed his appreciation to them for both their heart work and hard work.

During the award ceremony, a group of children with special needs put up a Taiko drum performance. Seeing the children drumming on their Taiko drums with so much gusto, the auditorium was filled with much cheer. In addition, Tseng Yu-chien, the first student with multiple disabilities from National Yilan Special School to become a certified street performer, also presented a music performance. Despite having only 10% vision, Tseng did not shy away from challenges. Tseng's tenacity, on top of the dedicated care and guidance of his teachers, allowed him to chart his own career path. His brilliant performance earned him a round of rousing applause from the audience.

The selection of Excellent Special Educators this year foregrounded the principles of fairness, impartiality, and transparency. The first round of selection, consisting of preliminary nominations and evaluations, was carried out by various education administration authorities in a stringent and objective manner. A total of 78 outstanding teams was shortlisted to be part of the final selection, which was carried out by a committee comprising experts and scholars engaged by the Ministry of Education. 32 winning teams were eventually selected, of which 2 were from tertiary institutes, 5 from special schools, 5 from senior high schools, 18 from junior high schools, elementary schools, and kindergartens, and 2 from education administration agencies.

Director-General Peng spurred special educators on by sharing the following statement, "Education for all, a special commitment; personalized learning for students, a dedicated education," to highlight the fact that behind every child's growing-up years was a different story. Besides having to provide professional guidance to their students, special

educators also have to steer students onto the right path with warmth and empathy. They have to respect every individual and their respective differences and uphold the principle of "education for all", in order to support children in their growth and development and bring out their strengths at the same time they teach practical skills to these students. Only then can these young minds continue to contribute and thrive in the future.

Chen Pin-yu, a teacher at National Hemei Experiment School, is one of the winners of the Excellent Special Educator Award in the Special Schools category. She has served as an instructor for the Curriculum Guidelines of Taiwan's 12-Year Basic Education policy and a Seed Teacher at the Gender Equity Resource Center under the Ministry of Education. In her work, she has actively supported administrative work related to special education, tirelessly improved the national curriculum, and used her professional capability to organize relevant lectures and experiential courses. As an educator, Chen is held in high regard by fellow teachers, parents, as well as the community and schools. Wang Yin-ssu, one of the winners of the Excellent Special Educator Award in the junior high schools, elementary schools, and kindergartens category, is a teacher in Kaohsiung Municipal Kaisyuan Primary School. She is an advocate of a pedagogy that emphasizes collaboration between preschool education and special education. This student-centric model focuses on their learning, and teachers adopting this pedagogical approach prioritize the needs of students and adjust the use of teaching tools and supplementary materials. Overall, this model has reaped positive outcomes in terms of inclusive education.

The K-12 Education Administration of the Ministry of Education affirms the outstanding contributions and wonderful story behind each prize recipient, and the fact that their dedication to providing guidance to students with special needs makes them great examples for every individual working in the field of special education to emulate. The K-12 Education Administration will continue to allocate more and more resources to special education to create better learning environments that will enable every student with special needs to learn and grow with joy.

