

President's Message

"Oh, the Places That We Will Go"

By Rob McFee, NEOEA President



Like all educators the last two years, we have had to adapt to a changing world and make the most of our situation. That is one of the many things that make educators so special. When there is a problem, we don't just sit back and say, "oh well," instead we say that may be a problem for mere mortals, but for an educator...let me tell you what we are going to do!

One of the things I most appreciate about NEOEA is the multiple opportunities we have to meet

"This is what NEOEA is all about, providing the resources to support our members and current leaders while also providing the opportunities to help develop our future leaders."

members from different districts across northeastern Ohio. We get to learn and share with leaders in the truest sense of the word. Leaders that advocate for their members, bargain contracts, question administration, lobby legislators, and that's on top of taking on all of the day-to-day challenges of being an educator in today's society. You develop a sense of the broader community that makes up NEOEA and realize our common needs and our common goals.

The best way to ensure the strength and power of our collective voices continues to be heard is to make sure that we engage the next generation of educators, the next generation of leaders. This is what NEOEA is all about, providing the resources to support our members and current leaders while also

providing the opportunities to help develop our future leaders. Our challenges begin in our locals, but the same challenges we face locally are the same ones being faced by our colleagues across North Eastern Ohio. Gathering our unique and diverse skills and experiences together helps us collaborate on solutions that benefit all of our members and, ultimately, all of our students.

If you have never served on one of our NEOEA committees, I challenge you today to consider it. I promise you (from personal experience) that the relationships you build will be transformative in your professional career. If you are or have previously served on a committee, then I challenge you to find one of those future leaders in your local and invite them to share in that experience. The work of NEOEA is driven by our multiple committees which are designed to utilize the strengths of our diverse membership. On our website (www.neoea.org) there is a link that lists and explains all of our committees. You can also find there a Committee Volunteer Form that can be filled out and sent directly to our office.

To our next NEOEA President and my friend Melanie Hameed, I had no idea what NEOEA would come to mean to me. This is an amazing organization. I am super happy that it is you, with your huge heart, that will become our next president. After these last couple of years, our members will need that big heart and all the love that goes with it. I know you will be amazing, and I can't wait...to see...the places...that we will go under your leadership!

To NEOEA, thank you for an awesome four years as your president, thank you for what you do for our members, and thank you for what you **will do** as NEOEA moves forward. Oh, the places that NEOEA will go!

NEOE STRONG!

Rob



Each spring we sponsor a delegate reception before the OEA RA. This is an opportunity to network and discuss the proceedings and elections for the OEA RA the next day. Our delegates had a great time at our reception held at Rooster's near the OEA delegate hotel.



Some of our members (and their families) joined us at Playhouse Square for *To Kill a Mockingbird* on Saturday, April 30. We had quite a group attend this wonderful program and hope to offer more opportunities in the future. Stay tuned!



We were all honored to meet the National Teacher of the Year—Oberlin EA's Kurt Russell.

Will You Be the Lucky Winner of Our Quarterly Quiz?

Congratulations to **Karen Kowalchik** from **Brecksville-Broadview Organization of Support Staff (BOSS)**, winner of last issue's "Quarterly Quiz" contest.

In each issue we'll be asking a question. (Often, this one for instance, the answer can be found in the pages of the newsletter itself.) All the entries will be made online, and one winner will be drawn each time to receive a gift card. Answer a few, quick questions, and you

could be our winner!

The fourth question this year is: **Where will the Summer Leadership Conference social event take place?**

We'll welcome all entries, but to be considered for the gift card, the winner needs to answer by Friday, June 10. To answer, go online to <https://tinyurl.com/NEOEA2022-05>.

Thank you to all who have participated!

Wednesday-Thursday, July 20-21

NEOEA Summer Leadership

Friday, October 14

NEOEA Day

NEOEA Negotiations Conference

For the most up-to-date information on the NEOEA calendar, go to www.neoea.org.

Web Resources

at www.neoea.org

Click "Join NEOEA Online" button in the upper right-hand corner of the website. In order to access the membership level, you will need your MEMBERSHIP NUMBER to create a log-in. You will be able to set your own password.

- Best Benefits Club
- Bright Now! Dental discount
- Committee Volunteer form
- Communications Contest
- NEA Member Benefits
- Summer Leadership Conference

Be on the Lookout—More Money for Your Local!

We are excited to announce that this coming year NEOEA will be awarding even MORE money for your local—if you choose to submit an application for one of our awards. The Board of Directors is committed to acknowledging locals for the work they do for our members.

Our PR Mini-Grants will increase to \$400 and our Community Involvement Grants will increase to \$200.

So, what's the difference between a PR Mini-Grant and a Community Involvement Grant? PR Mini-Grants are for a public relations project that will promote a positive image of your association within your community.

Examples of qualifying projects include Grandparents Day, Graduation Congratulations Yard Signs, and Giving



Tree. A Community Involvement Grant helps locals to become actively involved in local charitable event such as the American Cancer Society Relay for Life, Reach Out and Read, Special Olympics, or other highly-visible community charitable events.

Other awards and scholarships will be increasing, also. All the details on these awards will be on our website on June 1—so check back then.

Social Media



facebook.com/NEOEA



[neoea44124](https://www.instagram.com/neoea44124)



[@NEOEA](https://twitter.com/NEOEA)

Network for Public Education

The Network for Public Education is a grassroots citizen-driven organization committed to keeping all citizens informed and engaged in supporting and strengthening public schools. Its member organizations include many of Ohio's most powerful advocates, including NEOEA. Founded by its current president Diane Ravitch, the group is



tireless in the fight to keep public schools by engaging all of the stakeholders in the fight. Ravitch is a powerful and

eloquent advocate and is surrounded by an ever-growing group of individuals including Public Education Partners headquartered in Columbus and Northeast Ohio Friends of Public Education headquartered locally.

Our involvement keeps NEOEA in the room with the most powerful voices today who are speaking out and standing up in all those places where decisions are made. Debbie Bernauer and Labor Marti Franks attended the latest conference at the end of April. They came away with great information and made great contacts. We will be sharing more on this soon.

Fun Fact

A high-water mark for women in NEOTA was reached in 1896. At the annual meeting, Mrs. Mary M. Bill of Cleveland became the first woman elected NEOTA president.

Labor Lines

The difference between ordinary and extraordinary is that little extra. — Jimmy Johnson

North Eastern Ohio Education Association
is affiliated with the
Ohio Education Association
and the
National Education Association

Rob McFee, President
Lillian Tolbert, Past President
Melanie Hameed, President-elect
Suzie Neff, Recording Secretary
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Linda Grunden, Executive Assistant and Editor

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Address e-mail for *News & Views* to desk@neoea.org.

Summary: NEOEA Representative Assembly Virtual on Saturday, April 9, 2022



The North Eastern Ohio Education Association held the spring meeting of its Representative Assembly virtually on Saturday, April 9.

The Representative Assembly (RA) is the top governing body of NEOEA, following a governance structure similar to the National Education Association and the Ohio Education Association, with which NEOEA is affiliated. Representation is proportional: each local is allotted at least two delegates at NEOEA's RA, and larger locals are allotted more delegates.

The 204 delegates and 16 guests present were greeted by Rob McFee, President of NEOEA.

Presiding at the last of the RAs in his fourth year of office, NEOEA President Rob McFee reflected on being a new teacher, how he was invited into his local by a colleague, and eventually asked to be a building rep. In time, he was asked to be a UniServ representative, and that led to his deeper involvement in NEOEA on the Legislative Committee, Board of Directors, and NEOEA President. He then quoted Dr. Seuss from *Oh, the Places You'll Go*. President McFee continued by reviewing his four years as NEOEA President. He thanked Executive Director Mary Alice Conkey, his wife Karen, and NEOEA President-elect Melanie Hameed.

In a fundraiser conducted during the Legislative Committee's report at the Representative Assembly, delegates donated \$3,400 to the OEA Fund.

After the motion passed unanimously, STRS candidates Rob McFee, Jeff Rhodes, and Rita Walters, spoke on their history with the STRS Board and why they wish to continue to serve on the Board.

The Constitution and Bylaws Committee presented several amendments to the NEOEA Constitution. Amendment 1 makes three changes in language to recognize current practice. These changes do not alter NEOEA practice. Amendment 2 changes the method of taking a secret ballot so that the ballot can be conducted outside the time and place that the Representative Assembly is in session. During our voting break, delegates were able to vote through Simply Voting. Both amendments were adopted: the vote for Amendment 1 was 166 for the amendment and 1 against the amendment, and the vote for Amendment 2 was 162 for the amendment and 5 against the amendment.

Positions for representatives on the Board of Directors were filled by acclamation. Sue Messinger (Parma EA) will be the NEOEA President-elect. The following Directors were re-elected: Barbara Armour (Brunswick ESP Assn.) as NEOEA ESP Representative at-large, Andrew Smith (Sheffield-Sheffield Lake TA) as NEOEA Unit 1 Representative, Stephani Itibroot (Medina City TA) as NEOEA Unit 4 Representative, Meaghan Coe (Warren EA) as OEA/NEOEA Unit 5 Representative, Jason Scherer as OEA/NEOEA Unit 8 Representative, and Jen Hein

(Brunswick ESP Assn.) as NEOEA Unit 9West Representative. Lauren Stanislav (Bay TA) will be the new OEA/NEOEA Unit 2 Representative. The NEOEA Unit 7 position remains vacant.

Delegates endorsed candidates for statewide positions to be elected by the OEA Representative Assembly on May 7: Scott DiMauro for OEA President and Deborah Jackson for OEA Director-at-large.

The 2022-23 Budget was presented and was adopted by unanimous consent.

Northeastern Ohio delegates to the Ohio Representative Assembly met in caucus to review procedures before the OEA RA when it meets on May 7.

Delegates received reports from OEA President Scott DiMauro, OEA Vice President Jeff Wensing, and OEA Secretary-Treasurer Mark Hill.

The Representative Assemblies for 2022-23 will meet on November 12, 2022, and April 22, 2023.



Sue Messinger, our new President-elect



- Leadership Development
- Professional Growth
- Peer-to-Peer Support



Ohio's New Educators (ONE) is a unique community within the Ohio Education Association (OEA) supporting early career educators in their first years of teaching. Our statewide network engages and empowers educators in the first 10 years of their career to become successful, active and visible in their profession and community through collective action.



BECOME ONE



NEOEA Summer Leadership Conference: We're Back—Live and In Person! Wednesday, July 20, through Thursday, July 21, 2022

We are back in person for your leadership needs this summer!

Please join us on July 20-21 at the Hilton Garden Inn in Mayfield Village. NEOEA offers leadership development for our members and local leaders. There are 28 sessions designed specifically for leadership members to attend, but we also offer a plethora of other topics with all members in mind. Our committee is confident our members will be able to build a schedule for a day and a half of worthwhile training to incorporate in their local this fall. You will notice a dedicated track for new presidents. This track is presented by seasoned local

presidents who will offer our new leaders strategies and first-hand knowledge when it comes to being a president. We also have a dedicated session for experienced treasurers and new treasurers.

We are using our new online registration procedure for the first time. The easy-to-follow directions are outlined on the last page. Your confirmation email will include an invoice for you or your local treasurer to submit payment to NEOEA.

We are planning an engaging social event for Wednesday evening. Join us at the Lake County Captains Classic Park in Eastlake to enjoy ballpark fare, tour of the

ballpark, and on-the-field games. There will be opportunities to win prizes ... and most importantly time to socialize with colleagues while enjoying an easy-going summer evening.

Looking for graduate credit? We offer participants the ability to receive two graduate credits (for \$360) through Lake Erie College. We will also offer CEUs to all participants at no extra charge.



Join Us for NEOEA Summer Leadership Conference By Amy Butcher, Chairperson, NEOEA Summer Leadership Conference

It is time to get excited for summer! Many of us are counting down the days. One of the things I always look forward to is NEOEA Summer Leadership. We are very happy to announce that we will be back in person this year! We are excited to see your faces (not in little squares)!

Some of the best parts of Summer Leadership will stay the same. There will be lots of sessions for you to choose. We

are presenting 28 this year.

This year Summer Leadership will have some new exciting parts. We will be at the Hilton Garden Inn in Mayfield Village. We will be using our new online registration system for the first time. We will be holding our Wednesday night social event at the Lake County Captains Classic Park. There will be some ballpark classic fare, tours of the stadium, on the

field games, and chances to win prizes. The best part will be time to relax and socialize with colleagues and make some new NEOEA friends.

I hope all of this has you as excited for Summer Leadership as it does me. I am really looking forward to meeting in person again and learning some new information. I hope to see you there, July 20-21.

Registration: Summer Leadership Conference

Process:

- 1) Registration is online this year. Please go to the link at <https://vireopay.net/transact/NEOEA/EventRegistration>. Besides the usual demographic data, we will need to know which session(s) you'd like to attend, if you will be joining us for the meals and Wednesday night social event, and if you'll need a hotel room. Once you've made your selections, you'll be able to print a receipt.
- 2) An email confirming your enrollment for the NEOEA Summer Leadership Conference will be sent along with the amount due for your registration. Please make your check payable to NEOEA, and mail it to NEOEA Summer Leadership; 6001 Landerhaven Drive, Suite D; Mayfield Hts., OH 44124-4190.

3) **Registrations must be received by Friday, July 8. No reservations will be accepted after this date.**

4) On Tuesday, July 12, you'll receive an email with a link to the conference site and any other details that you'll need.

Registration Fee:

Register early and save! Payments postmarked by Friday, June 10, get the reduced price.

	Before	After
Treasurers' School only (includes dinner)	\$30	\$50
Commuting (1 person/ no sleeping room)	\$70	\$90
Double occupancy (2 people/1 sleeping room)	\$220	\$240
Single occupancy (1 person/1 sleeping room)	\$180	\$200

Notes:

- 1) Summer Leadership Conference is for **NEOEA members only**.
- 2) Course selections are subject to room limitations.
- 3) Course descriptions and presenters are subject to change.

Graduate Credit:

Participants of Summer Leadership can receive two semester hours of graduate credit (\$360) through Lake Erie College for attending the Conference and completing an outside assignment. Registration and payment is online through Lake Erie College. Details are available at neoea.org/files/GradCredit.pdf.

Any questions? Please email us at desk@neoea.org.

Workshops and Conferences

Summer Leadership Conference — July 20-21, 2022

WEDNESDAY—PRE-SESSION—12:30-2:00 p.m.

Treasurers' School for Experienced Treasurers

This session is designed for the experienced treasurer (who has been in the job for more than five years) and will be a “what’s new” in the area of treasurer responsibility. Participants will learn about changes in practices along with a cybersecurity presentation.

WEDNESDAY—SESSION ONE—2:30-4:30 p.m.

1A: Meeting Members' Needs in the “New Normal”

At the start of the pandemic, NEA Member Benefits had to quickly reassess how we engage members and determine what new needs members have during and after the pandemic. Learn ways NEA Member Benefits responded by providing some new programs and services while making changes to others and how other locals are using this to recruit and retain members, including Scott County in Kentucky where they more than doubled their membership in less than a year!

1B: Can You See Me? Why “Seeing Color” Is Important and Strategies for Inclusivity

In our increasingly diverse and multicultural society, it’s more important than ever for educators to incorporate culturally-responsive instruction in the classroom. In this session, participants will discuss the meaning of diversity and identify applicable strategies for seeing and honoring the whole child.

1C: Adult Learning Theory

When adults attend professional learning sessions, they need more than basic step-by-step instructions. They want to achieve a deeper understanding and higher-level thinking and to be respected for their experience. They want to have opportunities to contribute to collective learning and to engage in conversations with their peers. As facilitators, we need to balance teaching new paradigms with honoring previous experience, knowledge, and perspectives in the room. During this session participants will learn to differentiate leadership of learning events, the characteristics of adult learners, and will learn specific strategies that support strong adult learning.

1D: Understanding and Exploring Pandemic Fatigue

It’s all in the little things that we can do for ourselves. Join us for some tips and discussions on how we can start nurturing our souls.

1E: New Treasurers' School (*treasurers and presidents with five years of experience or less*)

The responsibilities of the local association treasurer can seem ominous, especially for the first-time treasurer. OEA Secretary-Treasurer Mark Hill will give you the knowledge you need to do the job for your local and its members. This session will be tailored to the needs of treasurers who have five years or less experience on the job. Participants will focus on fiduciary duties, membership, and accounting issues, along with cybersecurity.

Wednesday evening join us at 4:30 for our social event at the Lake County Captains!

THURSDAY—BREAKFAST—8:00; MORNING ANNOUNCEMENTS—8:45; SESSION TWO—9:00-10:30

2A: OTEs 2.0 and HQSD

This session will briefly review the law and required 2.0 framework, the newly-updated OEA 2.0 sample model language, and address existing misinformation and myths regarding HQSD, improvement, and professional growth plans.

2B: Active Shooter Preparedness Training (ALICE)

Presented by Westlake police personnel, this session will be an overview of ALICE school safety training. Educators need options to respond to violence in the workplace based on their circumstances. Proactive strategies allow educators to feel empowered to make the best decisions.

2C: School Funding in Ohio: An Examination of the Fair School Funding Plan—Is It the End of the K-12 Hunger Games?

For years, almost no one was happy about how the State of Ohio funded public schools. The system pitted cities against each other and private and charter schools against public schools. We were living in the K-12 version of the “Hunger Games,” wherein victory hinged on the wealth of your district. The wealthier your district, the stronger your chances of success. In the last Budget session, policymakers implemented the Fair School Funding Plan, a new funding formula in Ohio as an effort to create a more equitable and constitutional school finance structure in the state. This session examines the Fair School Funding Plan (FSFP) and the implications that it has on school funding and outcomes for all students in the state.

2D: FMLA and Other Leaves

The Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) has a broad impact on members. This session will focus on the application of FMLA and how it can be used and bargained to best protect members during difficult moments in their lives. Other leaves may also be explored.

2E: View From the Bridge

Mediators from the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service (FMCS) concentrate their efforts on mediating collective bargaining negotiations and grievances as well as providing training and facilitated dialogues. This session will showcase the agency’s View from the Bridge program designed to reset and improve labor-management relationships within a particular community.

2-4F: New Presidents' Track (*from OEA*)

Participants will learn about the roles and responsibilities of a local president, the essential knowledge and skills needed to be successful, as well as build connections with other local presidents from across the state. (*Must attend all three parts; this session concludes at 2:30 p.m.*)

2G: Political Action I - Campaign 2022

OEA members continue to be a force in elections on all levels. See how to change the trajectory of your education policies in Ohio through campaigns to elect better local school board members and examine OEA’s plan for Campaign 2022.

2H: Bargaining Crises and Strikes: Preparing for Victory

Most locals don’t plan to get into a bargaining crisis or strike situation. And every crisis is different. But, if you do get there, you want to win! No matter where you are, there are a number of key components to success that are critically important that you and your local need to plan for—and hopefully not in a “last-minute” scramble when you need it. Come and engage with us to get your local ready for anything!

2-3 I: You’re a New Association Leader— Now What? Building Rep Training

This session will avail new leaders of the tools necessary to be an effective local leader. Leaders at all levels will learn how to conduct effective meetings, explore communication techniques, advance member advocacy, and update the local C&B, along with a plethora of tips and ideas for a successful year of member engagement. (*Must attend both parts; this session concludes at 12:15 p.m.*)

Summer Leadership Conference — July 20-21, 2022

THURSDAY TRAINING SESSIONS—SESSION THREE—10:45 a.m.-12:15 p.m.

3A: Identifying and Addressing the Needs of Students with Dyslexia: Law and Guidebook

The purpose of this session is to provide attendees with the details of Ohio law and the content of the Ohio Dyslexia Guidebook. Areas covered will include mandatory screening, intervention, professional development, and certification.

3-4B: Grievance Processing

Although this course is a guide to being a grievance chair and association representative, the session will also supply information of value for every member. Learn the legal background for contracts and grievances and how to use the grievance procedure to enforce your local contract. *(Must attend both parts; this session concludes at 2:30 p.m.)*

3C: Individualized Instruction Requires Individualized Bargaining

This session reviews the characteristics of the single salary schedule and how they can be constructed to further the economic interests of your members.

3D: Legal Update *(repeated in the next session)*

Find out about the latest developments on the legal front. You will hear an OEA attorney versed in the latest ways to protect yourself and your members. The content of legal updates depends on legal developments at the time of the update. *(Also at 1:00 p.m.)*

3E: Dealing With Conflict ... Post Covid

Mediators from the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service (FMCS) concentrate their efforts on assisting employers and employees in coping with the demands of a rapidly-changing workplace. This session will assist members with best practices to manage and resolve conflict, especially those conflicts that have risen from the current pandemic.

2-4F: New Presidents' Track (from OEA) *(Must attend all three parts; this session concludes at 2:30 p.m.)*

3G: Political Action II - Using Social Media in Campaign 2022

Using social media for strategic purposes requires a more sophisticated way of connecting the components. Learn how to use some of the new tactics to engage with your colleagues online to influence Campaign 2022 and other critical issues of importance to our profession.

3-4H: Understanding Equity and Inequity

What the heck is equity? During this session we will answer that question by exploring your understanding of equity, considering and applying definitions of equity and inequity, applying an equity lens to a school case study, and by considering equity mitigative and transformative approaches that schools could implement. *(Must attend both parts; this session concludes at 2:30 p.m.)*

2-3I: You're a New Association Leader—Now What? Building Rep Training *(Must attend both parts; this session concludes at 12:15 p.m.)*

LUNCH, ANNOUNCEMENTS, AND GIFT WINNERS—12:15 p.m.; SESSION FOUR—1:00-2:30 p.m.

4A: Constitution and Bylaws: Why It Really Matters

A local's Constitution and Bylaws is the second most important document after its collective bargaining agreement. The session will review the important provisions of a local's C&B and provide guidance utilizing OEA's Model Constitution and Bylaws.

3-4B: Grievance Processing *(Must attend both parts; this session concludes at 2:30 p.m.)*

4C: Health Insurance: The Benefit that Keeps on Giving (and Increasing in Cost)

This session is designed for locals that are able to negotiate health insurance and is intended for individuals unfamiliar with health insurance principles and terms. The session will provide an overview of this important part of your compensation package and will include an explanation of common terms, funding models, and strategies to successfully bargain health insurance plan design and health insurance labor-management committees.

4D: Legal Update

Find out about the latest developments on the legal front. You will hear an OEA attorney versed in the latest ways to protect yourself and your members. The content of legal updates depends on legal developments at the time of the update. *(Also at 1:00 p.m.)*

4E: Advocates for Nondiscrimination in Contracts

This session will provide local Associations with valuable resources to ensure the protection of their members' LGBTQIA+ identities through the Collective Bargaining Agreement.

2-4F: New Presidents' Track (from OEA) *(Must attend all three parts; this session concludes at 2:30 p.m.)*

4G: Political Action III - Strengthening Relationships with Elected Officials

We all need to establish and strengthen relationships with ALL elected officials. This session will take a look at what we have achieved reaching across party lines and how we can continue to influence the policies and legislation that impact public education.

3-4H: Understanding Equity and Inequity *(Must attend both parts; this session concludes at 2:30 p.m.)*

4 I: New Hope and Opportunity for Student Loan Borrowers

In October 2021, the Dept. of Ed. announced major changes to loan forgiveness programs and in just the first two months, 70,000 borrowers had a combined \$5 million forgiven, with hundreds of thousands more finding forgiveness within reach. Included in the reform is a once-in-a-lifetime limited-time opportunity to receive credit for payments made on loans that normally do not qualify for forgiveness, payments made using an ineligible repayment plan, late payments, partial payments and more, but members must act before October 31, 2022.

Positive Image Award Winners

At the NEOEA Spring RA, we were so proud to honor our Positive Image Award Winners.

The **Euclid Teachers' Association** participated in a community service



project to benefit the local food bank. The teachers hosted a holiday food drive in the weeks leading to the Thanksgiving holiday. Canned goods, dry food, and other nonperishable items were donated by teachers and community members. The Association was nominated by **Kelly Henry**, ETA's PR chairperson.

Chris Forgacs and **Libby Frato-Sweeney** from **Garfield Education Association** teamed up to create a military honor wall. They had students



help design and create the wall and asked the community to send in pictures of their loved ones from Garrettsville who had served in the military. They were nominated by GEA Treasurer **Missy Petrie**.

Chris Moriarty nominated the **Hubbard Education Association**. HEA bought almost 200 Christmas gifts for students through their Philanthropy and Community Relations Committee. The HEA "felt it was important to reinstate this holiday tradition to ensure all of the students in Hubbard schools experience the joy of opening presents on Christmas morning." They raised \$24,000 since the middle of October for this endeavor.

Lakeland Faculty Association President Tobin Terry nominated LFA member **Peter Orr** for NEOEA's individual Positive Image Award. During the spike in coronavirus cases in December 2021, Peter organized a drive-thru testing clinic on December 29 at the Lake County Fairgrounds. Peter oversaw the pop-up clinic, organized volunteers (including two other LFA members), processed tests, and confirmed positive results. The pop-up clinic had to close three hours earlier than planned because the supply of tests could not meet the demand of the community. In only a few hours, the volunteers tested 800 people, and almost 25% of the tests were positive. It's clear that Peter has a passion for service and that his passion persists regardless of location or circumstance. The LFA is grateful for his commitment to his students and to our community at-large,

and we are honored to have him represent our local in such a positive light!

Abbey Chieffo, **Natalie Bolino** (**Niles Education Association**), and their **Students for the Environment** group hosted a "baby drive" for a six-month old baby who lost her mother to a tragic car accident and her father to Covid-19. The baby's mom was a math teacher at



Salem High School, and the baby is being cared for by family members. This project was the November/December Service Project for their Students for the Environment members.

The **Parma Education Association** held their Thanksgiving Food Drive from November 1-10, 2021. PEA was joined by the Parma City School District PTA and district students and families throughout Parma, Parma Heights, and Seven Hills to collect thousands of items from all 15 district school buildings. Contributions were collected and then delivered to the Parma Hunger Center located at the Parma Lutheran Church. Seventy families from around the district received direct support, and the Hunger Center was able to stock their shelves for the season. PEA was nominated by their president, **Sue Messinger**.

NEOEA Friend of Education Award Winner

At the NEOEA Spring Representative Assembly, President McFee announced our Friend of Education Award recipient—**Mandy Jablonski**.

Mandy is a fierce social media advocate and lobbyist for public education. She founded Lorain County Supporting Our Students and Teachers and was a leader in lobbying for minimizing state testing and ending the Third Grade Guarantee. She also advocated for increased Pathways of Graduation for seniors.

Mandy was nominated by Stephani Itibrou, NEOEA Unit 4 Director, who submitted this nomination:

If you have ever monitored a bill or committee, if you have ever contacted a state legislator or local politician or board member, if you have participated in any sort of political action to advocate for educators and students, you know Mandy Jablonski. Mandy maintains constant communication with anyone with local, state, and even national power who has an opinion about what is

best for education in Ohio. She tirelessly monitors all bills, committees, and testimonies that can affect Ohio students. She uses her vast social media presence to encourage people to stay informed and active in their advocacy. I can think of no better Friend of Education.

Mandy resides in Elyria with her husband, Matt, a teacher at Elyria High School, and son, James, a student at Elyria High School. James was her inspiration for advocating for students across the state.

The National Teacher of the Year and Ohio ESP of the Year Are From Northeast!

We are developing quite a pattern in the land of northeast Ohio, and we love it!

The OEA ESP of the Year is **Debra VanGorder**, paraprofessional from Ashtabula ACSE. Debbie is so much more than her job title—she is a support at the junior high for so many students—always ready with a joke, a hug, or a shoulder to cry on. She takes



her work as a union member seriously, too. When there was no contract, she organized members to get out and rally for a fair contract. As a scholarship recipient, she was able to attend the NEA ESP Conference in New Orleans this spring. She reported, “The connections with fellow ESPs were great. I met and interacted with people from all over the country! I learned so very much from my experiences. I could never thank you enough for this opportunity!”

The National Teacher of the Year is Oberlin EA’s **Kurt Russell**. Kurt was first inspired to become a teacher in middle school, when he encountered his first Black

male teacher. Now as 2022 National Teacher of the Year, he plans to advocate for classrooms to better reflect the students within them — from a curriculum that reflects their backgrounds and identities to a more diverse teaching profession.

Congratulations to both of these leaders!



North Eastern Ohio Education Association
6001 Landerhaven Drive, Suite D
Mayfield Heights, OH 44124-4190

DON'T LET THE SAVINGS GO!

NEOEA Members can save up to 15% off tickets to Disney's FROZEN at Playhouse Square! Use your unique link and promo code below to unlock your discount:

Disney FROZEN THE HIT BROADWAY MUSICAL

AUG. 11 - SEPT. 11, 2022

KeyBank BROADWAY SERIES

Use Promo Code: NEOEA

SCAN ME