



# Recognition

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## Governor's Educator of the Year Program

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## New Jersey State Teachers of the Year

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### 2023-24 New Jersey State Teacher of the Year

[Joseph Nappi Highlight Video](#)

Joseph ("Joe") Nappi is a social studies teacher at Monmouth Regional High School in the Monmouth Regional High School District. He received his bachelor's degree in history from Rowan University and has been teaching Holocaust, Genocide and Modern Humanity as well as United States History at Monmouth Regional High School for eighteen years. He also serves as the Key Club Advisor, a member of the Equity Council, and the chair of the Monmouth Helping Its Own Charitable committee.



Since taking over the Holocaust Class, he has taken over six hundred students to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C. where he has been honored to serve as a Museum Teacher Fellow since 2019. He is also an Alfred Lerner Fellow with the Jewish Foundation for the Righteous, a member of the Center for Holocaust, Human Rights and Genocide Education (CHHANGE), and serves as his district's liaison to the Diversity Council at Kean University. Joe's work in challenging his students to "Be the Change" they wish to see in the world has seen his students pursue a variety of philanthropic endeavors, taking on problems both locally and globally and developing and implementing an action plan that will bring about positive change. His students have pursued campaigns to end human trafficking, infuse Holocaust and Genocide education in curricula nationwide, and raise money for refugee resettlement in the United States, just to name a few.

During the summer of 2022, Joe worked with a national team of educators assembled by PBS to design lessons for Ken Burn's film, "The US and the Holocaust". He wrote a blog, "10 Concrete Tips for Teaching About the Holocaust" that accompanied the release of the film and was the featured blog on PBS Learning Media.

Joe has worked hard to put his students first, focusing on getting to know each one, identifying and helping them address issues they may be facing, establishing a safe space for student conversations, and giving them each a voice. He ensures that all of his students see themselves reflected in his lessons and strives to make them see the connections between what they are learning and the world today. When one of his students confided in him that they have no food to eat at home, Joe founded and began Monmouth Helping Its Own, which is a faculty-run charitable organization that helps students facing financial hardships. Since its origin, they have handed out over \$20,000 in direct aid and scholarships to students within the district, so that they can focus on education, without having to worry about where dinner might come from.

In his free time, Joe offers professional development workshops outside of the district to post bachelor teachers and pre-service teachers on issues ranging from infusing service learning into curricula, countering Anti-Semitism with education; teaching about the war in Ukraine: History and Pedagogy; best practices and resources for teaching about the Holocaust; as well as presenting on his lesson for PBS: Jewish Immigration, the Holocaust and the Modern Global Refugee Crisis.

Through this distinguished career, Joe has received numerous awards including: The Ida and Jeff Margolis Medallion for Excellence in Multicultural Education from Rowan University in 2005, Teacher of the Year at Monmouth Regional High School in 2010 and 2023, a United States Navy Distinguished Educator in 2010, and the Dr. Frank Kaplowitz Human Rights Educator of the Year Award from Kean University in 2017.

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