



## News Release

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## Symetra and Chicago Bears Celebrate 16 Local Teachers Recognized as 'Symetra Heroes in the Classroom'

*Symetra to launch \$20,000 MVP Award in support of innovative student programming*

CHICAGO — (May 21, 2018) — Symetra, a national provider of employee benefits, annuities and life insurance, and the Chicago Bears, hosted the 16 Chicago-area teachers recognized for educational excellence during the 2017 NFL season as Symetra Heroes in the Classroom® at a reception at the PNC Center at Halas Hall on May 18. Symetra also announced the introduction of the Symetra Heroes in the Classroom MVP Award. The \$20,000 grant will fund an innovative student achievement program. Each of the 16 schools with a 2017 Symetra Heroes in the Classroom honoree is eligible to submit a proposal.

### **2017 Chicago-area Symetra Heroes in the Classroom:**

- **Katherine Bremner**, Rufus M. Hitch Elementary School, Chicago
- **Cyndi Bringer**, Westfield Middle School, Bloomingdale
- **Krista Carlile**, Manteno Middle School, Manteno
- **Fitzgerald Crame**, Edison Regional Gifted Center, Chicago
- **Christine Forster**, Raymond Ellis Elementary School, Round Lake
- **Brandon Guernsey**, Bernard J. Ward Elementary School, Bolingbrook
- **Bridget Hellstrom**, Washington Elementary School, Glenview
- **Jill Henning**, Hough Street Elementary School, Barrington
- **Heather Iles**, Lyon Elementary School, Glenview
- **Pa'al Joshi**, Glenbrook Off-Campus Center, Glenview
- **Tony Martin**, Kishwaukee Education Consortium, Malta
- **Heather Roan**, Peace and Education Coalition High School, Chicago
- **James Stankevitz**, Wheaton Warrenville South High School, Wheaton
- **Daoruang Promlee-Benz**, Richard J. Oglesby Elementary School, Chicago
- **Ryan Talaga**, Hickory Creek Middle School, Frankfort
- **Trey Thompson**, Academy for Global Citizenship, Chicago

"Great teachers make such a powerful contribution to students' lives. Together with the Chicago Bears and our presenting partner, Arthur J. Gallagher, we feel privileged to be able to honor the dedication and inspiration they deliver in classrooms every day," said Tracy Wort, assistant director, Community Relations at Symetra. "Symetra is also pleased to help support innovative student programming with the introduction of our \$20,000 MVP Award grant. We look forward to announcing the winning proposal in the fall."

Following the luncheon event, the 2017 Symetra Heroes in the Classroom honorees, their school principals and district representatives were treated to a behind-the-scenes tour of the state-of-the-art facility, including stops at the Walter Payton Center, helmet wall and media room. Chicago Bears linebacker Sam Acho (#93) made a surprise appearance, speaking with the group about the important role teachers play in their students' lives, signing autographs, and posing for photos.

Symetra has partnered with the Chicago Bears on the teacher-recognition program since 2010, honoring 128 area teachers to date. The company established Symetra Heroes in the Classroom® in its Pacific Northwest hometown in 2006, has recognized 568 teachers nationwide and contributed nearly \$1 million to schools for classroom books, supplies and in support of student programming.

Teachers may be nominated by their principal, district staff, student or student's parent. The winners are selected based on their ability to make a real difference in students' lives; to go above and beyond in their day-to-day responsibilities; and to help students build life skills.

Symetra Heroes in the Classroom are recognized in front of their students and peers at surprise in-school presentations, and they receive a \$2,000 donation from Symetra for classroom books and supplies. In addition, they receive tickets to a Bears home game and are acknowledged during an on-field presentation at Soldier Field.

More information about Symetra Heroes in the Classroom is available at [www.SymetraHeroes.com/Bears](http://www.SymetraHeroes.com/Bears).

#### **About Symetra**

Symetra Financial Corporation is a diversified financial services company based in Bellevue, Washington. In business since 1957, Symetra provides employee benefits, annuities and life insurance through a national network of benefit consultants, financial institutions, and independent agents and advisors. For more information, visit [www.symetra.com](http://www.symetra.com).

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