

Honoring Innovation and Creativity in the School Business Profession

Every day, school business professionals must find creative solutions to challenging problems—and never more so than today, in a climate of low resources and high accountability.

To salute creativity and innovation in the profession, ASBO International and Virco Mfg. Corporation honor four school business officials every year with the Pinnacle Awards. Since 1993, 78 school business officials have been recognized for their outstanding work. From online registration systems that save millions of dollars, to cultivating relationships between adults and

students, to ensuring every student has a nutritious meal, to saving thousands of dollars in fuel costs and helping the environment, this year’s recipients have all made a positive impact on those around them.

Our Partner

ASBO thanks Virco Mfg. Corporation, America’s leading furniture and equipment manufacturer and supplier for K–12 schools, providing thousands of customers with popular furniture items, for supporting this program since its inception. Virco’s generous support awards \$5,000, school furniture

valued at \$5,000 for their school district, and a crystal Pinnacle Award to the Pinnacle of Excellence Award recipient. Pinnacle of Achievement Award recipients receive a check for \$1,000 and a crystal Pinnacle Award.

Celebrate Your Award-Winning Ideas

Share your outstanding practices, or nominate an innovative colleague, by applying for the Pinnacle Award before May 1, 2012. Showcase the unique solutions that worked for you and your school district! Visit www.asbointl.org for details.

Congratulations to the 2011 Pinnacle Award Recipients

PINNACLE OF EXCELLENCE



Cathy M. Antee, CPA, SFO®
Chief Financial Officer
Hoover City Board of Education
Hoover, Alabama

Integrated Online Registration and Payment System

Recognizing the challenges of collecting and processing thousands of documents related to new and returning students each year, Cathy Antee led an effort to gather and manage student information more efficiently and reduce paperwork in the payment process.

All students register online now, which saves the district approximately \$60,000 a year in postage and mailing, personnel, and printing costs. Approximately 75% use

the online payment system. Online payments increased from \$300,000 in 2008 to more than \$1 million in 2010.

“The collection of fees using the Web-based process has provided more instructional time for our teachers,” Antee says. “They no longer have to keep track of money brought in by the students, field trip forms, or parent authorization forms. Creating an environment that reduces the administrative burden from our teachers allows their focus to remain centered on the needs and achievements of their students.”

PINNACLE OF ACHIEVEMENT



Deborah F. Frazier, CPA, SFO®

Assistant Superintendent of Finance
Madison County Board of Education
Richmond, Kentucky

Leveraging Leadership: Bridging the Gap Between Classified Employees and the Students They Serve

Determined to help district employees make the connection between what they do and who they serve, Debbie Frazier rallied members of the district finance office to become a part of the lives of the Madison County students. District finance personnel now visit elementary schools and read to the students, volunteer as lunch buddies for at-risk students, assist with schools' special events, and provide additional help in schools and classrooms wherever and whenever they can.

"We have grown beyond processing paperwork and crunching numbers," Frazier says. "Our often-routine work now has a greater purpose: serving students. Through bridging the gap between the finance department and the students we serve, we have also seen a dramatic increase in the level of customer service we provide. At the same time, we have become much more than a department—we are a team."

The 2011 Pinnacle Award recipients gathered backstage at the 2011 AM&E: Derek Jess, Cathy Antee, Debbie Frazier, and Tom Kurucz. They are joined by Brian True and Don Friesz from Virco Mfg. Corporation.

PINNACLE OF ACHIEVEMENT



Derek J. Jess, RSBA

School Business Administrator/
Board Secretary
Perth Amboy Board of Education
Perth Amboy, New Jersey

Free Breakfast for All

The Free Breakfast for All program Derek Jess established in Perth Amboy provides all students with breakfast in their classroom before they tackle the school day, regardless of their free and reduced-price status. Not only are students eating a nutritious breakfast, they are beginning the day with teachers and classmates in a "family-like" atmosphere. Because they start the day with a full stomach, they are able to concentrate on their academics. District educators say students are performing better in the classroom and discipline problems have decreased.

Jess says the program promotes healthy eating, keeps students in school, and helps them focus on academics. "It is about student performance, a healthy environment, and going the extra mile to provide [students] with what they need to achieve and survive: nutrition and a safe environment."

PINNACLE OF ACHIEVEMENT



Thomas P. Kurucz, Ed.D.

Deputy Superintendent of
Operations
Lee's Summit R-7 School District
Lee's Summit, Missouri

Implementation of an All-Electric Distribution Fleet

In 2008-2009, the Lee's Summit R-7 School District's distribution fleet included vehicles that were more than two decades old and, as such, were energy inefficient. Under Tom Kurucz's leadership, the district partnered with a local coalition and applied for a federal matching grant for alternative fuels. The district received the grant and was able to purchase four all-electric vehicles, making it the first school district in the United States to operate an all-electric distribution fleet.

"With this program, the district is able to eliminate the exhaust from old diesel trucks. And the new all-electric fleet is quieter and less disruptive when traveling in the surrounding neighborhoods and in the school zones," Kurucz says. "The impact on the local district's budget will exceed \$80,000 in diesel fuel savings and provide a program pay-back in seven years."

