

WVRA Awards & Recognition

One of the goals of the West Virginia Reading Association is to recognize professional educators across the state that have made outstanding contributions in the area of reading literacy.

To accomplish this goal we need these individuals to be nominated by people who see their efforts. Nominated individuals will receive packets to apply for the awards. The award winners, as well as all the nominees who have completed their applications, will be recognized at our annual conference in November.

For the second year we've included a student award, The Outstanding Future Teacher Award, to recognize and honor those individuals exhibiting excellence as a literacy educator in their undergraduate work.

The four awards and nomination guidelines are not limited to WVRA members. Please review and send your nominations by Monday, September 15, 2025. The nomination form for the first four awards has been attached to this same email. The Cynthia Lorentz-Cook Memorial Grant application is attached, as well. These forms are also available on our website: wvreading.com

Eddie C. Kennedy Award

- ANY certified teacher K-12, across the curriculum, who has made an outstanding contribution to helping students become proficient readers and motivating them to become lifelong readers.

[This award is named in honor of Dr. Eddie C. Kennedy, an inspiring professor at WVU and member of WVRA.]

Madge McDaniel Award

- An educator or administrator who has made outstanding contributions to the field of reading literacy. This may include, but is not limited to superintendents, principals, supervisors, Title I directors, county language arts coordinators/supervisors, staff development coordinators, and college educators.

[This award is named in honor of Madge McDaniel, the first elected president of WVRA.]

Dr. Jennie Bechtold Award

- A full-time elementary teacher, Title I teacher, or a reading interventionist who has been employed for 1-5 years and has demonstrated excellence in teaching.

[This award is named in honor of Dr. Jennie Bechtold whose untiring commitment to WVRA, IRA, and to her many students was exemplary.]

Outstanding Future Teacher Award

- A full-time undergraduate student enrolled in a Teacher Education program at a college/university who demonstrates potential and promising qualities as a preservice teacher. This student is making notable progress toward becoming a skilled educator who understands the importance of effective literacy instruction, is dedicated to continuous learning, and aims to foster a passion for reading in their students.

The Cynthia Lorentz-Cook Memorial Grant

- This provides grant money (up to \$1000) to local WVRA reading councils for literacy programs and projects.

[This grant is named in honor of Cynthia Lorentz-Cook, a Charleston, WV native.]