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31 Educator Prep Providers and 1 Outstanding Volunteer Recognized at the 2026 CAEPCon for their Outstanding Contributions to Education

WASHINGTON – The Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) announced today the recipients of three prestigious awards that highlight leadership, service, and innovation in educator preparation. These honors—the **Frank Murray Leadership Recognition for Continuous Improvement**, the **Shelly M. Boardman Award for Exceptional Volunteer Service**, and the **Emerson J. Elliott Award for Excellence in Educator Preparation Continuous Improvement**—reflect CAEP’s commitment to advancing equity and excellence in education through quality, evidence-based practices.

The **Frank Murray Leadership Recognition for Continuous Improvement** is awarded to educator preparation providers (EPPs) that achieved accreditation with no stipulations or areas for improvement by demonstrating strong evidence and data trends. Named after the founding President of the Teacher Education Accreditation Council (TEAC), the award celebrates Murray’s legacy as a champion for rigorous educator preparation standards and his role in uniting the profession through the creation of CAEP.

“These providers are committed to preparing their candidates to make a positive difference in the lives of all K-12 students as soon as they enter the classroom,” said Stacey Edmonson, Chair of the CAEP Board of Directors. “The Murray Leadership Recognition highlights their dedication to continuous improvement, accountability, and quality through purposeful use of evidence.”

Recipients of the **2026 Frank Murray Leadership Recognition** include:

American Museum of Natural History
Ball State University
Bethel College
Black Hills State University
Carson-Newman University
Drew University
Fairmont State University
Hiram College
Inter American University of Puerto Rico -
Metropolitan Campus
James Madison University
Longwood University
Louisiana Tech University

Marshall University
MidAmerica Nazarene University
Midwestern State University
North Greenville University
Northeastern State University
Northern Kentucky University
Nova Southeastern University
Pathway to Practice NC
Queens College
Radford University
St John Fisher University
Tennessee Technological University
The College of Wooster
University of Notre Dame

University of Tennessee-Martin
Virginia Polytechnic Institute & State
University

Walden University
Western Kentucky University
William & Mary

In addition to honoring educator preparation providers, CAEP also recognized one individual and one program that exemplify dedication to service and continuous improvement:

The **Shelly M. Boardman Award for Exceptional Volunteer Service** pays tribute to the late Shelly M. Boardman, whose unwavering dedication and contributions significantly advanced CAEP's mission. This award honors volunteers who embody her spirit of reliability, passion, and commitment—individuals whose consistent and meaningful service strengthens CAEP's initiatives and inspires others to uphold the highest standards of excellence.

Awarded to
Ana Maria Schuhmann
CAEPCON September 2026

The **Emerson J. Elliott Award for Excellence in Educator Preparation Continuous Improvement** honors the legacy of Emerson J. Elliott, the first commissioner of the National Center for Education Statistics and a leader in developing data-driven educational policy. The award recognizes educator preparation programs that demonstrate sustained dedication to improvement through robust quality assurance systems, evidence-based practices, and a culture of inquiry and accountability.

Awarded to
Drew University
CAEPCON September 2026

“These awards collectively celebrate the people and programs that make lasting impacts on P-12 learning,” said CAEP President Christopher Koch. “Whether through exemplary provider performance, volunteer service, or the innovative use of data to improve educator preparation, the recipients embody CAEP's mission of advancing equity and excellence.”

CAEP accreditation serves the dual purposes of accountability and continuous improvement. To date, 549 educator preparation providers in forty-three states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Bahrain, Jordan, Oman, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates have earned CAEP Accreditation. Approximately 600 providers are currently engaged in the accreditation system.

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*The **Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation** (www.CAEPnet.org) advances equity and excellence in educator preparation through evidence-based accreditation that assures quality and supports continuous improvement to strengthen P-12 student learning.*
