

1-13-2017

Press release : 2017 : 01 : 13 : USFSP Education Alum Wins National Milken Educator Award

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Recommended Citation

University of South Florida St. Petersburg. Office of University Advancement., "Press release : 2017 : 01 : 13 : USFSP Education Alum Wins National Milken Educator Award" (2017). *USFSP News and Press Releases*. 992.
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USFSP EDUCATION ALUM WINS NATIONAL MILKEN EDUCATOR AWARD



From left: Milken Family Foundation Senior Vice President Jane Foley, USFSP alumnus and award recipient Lukas Hefty, Jamerson Principal Brandie Williams-Macon, Florida Department of Education Deputy Chancellor of Education Quality Brian Dassler, and Pinellas County Schools Superintendent Michael Grego. Photo: WUSF and Cathy Carter.

USF St. Petersburg alumnus Lukas Hefty, a science and math magnet program coordinator at Douglas L. Jamerson Elementary School and adjunct instructor in the College of Education, was recently recognized as the recipient of the national [Milken Educator Award](#), known as the “Oscar of Teaching.” He is the second Pinellas County educator to receive the honor in the award’s 30-year history.

As one of up to 35 honorees who will receive the recognition nationwide in 2016-17, he also received a \$25,000 financial prize.

“Lukas was a great student but also wonderful as a person,” said [Dr. Bill Heller](#), director of the Bishop Center for Ethical Leadership and former dean of the College of Education. “In an effort to upgrade our science offerings, we sought his expertise as an adjunct professor and his evaluations by students clearly support that in doing so we achieved our goal.

Hefty, who received a bachelor’s degree in Elementary Education in Fall 2004 and a master’s degree in Elementary Education in Spring 2008 from the College of Education, is passionate about helping others learn about STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering

and Math). Under his STEM leadership, the number of fifth graders at the elementary school who passed the state standardized science test rose from 48 percent in 2011 to 81 percent in 2015.

“Lukas is an example of the excellent teachers who graduate from the USFSP program,” said [Dr. Olivia Hodges](#), interim dean of the College of Education. “It has been a pleasure to work with him as he continues to contribute to the teacher preparation program here at USFSP.”

“It is educational professionals like Lukas that make education an honorable degree. He is giving back to his profession,” said Hodges.

Read more about Hefty and the Milken Educator Award in this coverage by the [Tampa Bay Times](#) and [WUSF](#).

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