

“Education is the most powerful weapon you can use to change the world.”

≈ **Nelson Mandela**



The Huntington Foundation for Excellence in Education

Reach FOR THE *Stars Gala*

Friday, February 6, 2015



Honoring

Mrs. Caterina Cain

District Honoree

Guidance Counselor, J. Taylor Finley Middle School



Mr. Chris Mitchell

Community Honoree

Owner, Marshs, Huntington Village



Program

Ms. Maria Cassar, Ms. Laurene Napurano

Huntington Foundation for Excellence in Education

Mr. James Polansky

Superintendent of Huntington Union Free School District

Mr. Chris Mitchell

Community Honoree

Owner, Marshs, Huntington Village

Proclamation Presentation

Ms. Kathryn Costa, Ms. Mary DiBenedetto, Ms. Nina DiGioia,

Ms. Vilma Matos, Ms. Patricia Monks, Ms. Cindy Palmirotto

Huntington School District

Mrs. Caterina Cain

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Proclamation Presentation



Our District Honoree



MRS. CATERINA CAIN

Cathy Cain loves her job and the J. Taylor Finley Middle School community is happy to have her in its midst as a guidance counselor and mentor to the more than 700 seventh and eighth graders attending classes in the building.

Mrs. Cain is a longtime Huntington School District faculty member. She worked at Huntington High School and Woodhull Intermediate School prior to settling in at Finley, where she has built strong relationships with students, parents and her colleagues on the staff.

Mrs. Cain's road to Huntington included stops in a number of states and even across the world. "I lived in Germany for a few years and went to an elementary school on an Air Force base," she said. She attended high school in Texas and California before finally graduating from East Islip High School. After high school, Mrs. Cain earned undergraduate and graduate degrees at LIU-C.W. Post College. She needs to complete one more course to earn a professional diploma in school administration.

"My first school counseling job was with the Great Neck Public Schools," Mrs. Cain said. "I worked in the external high school diploma program with middle age and senior citizens helping them obtain a high school diploma based on life experience. I think I was 23 and these folks were smart, successful, very accomplished people. They didn't have an opportunity to go to school because they worked in family businesses or cared for siblings. I met some of the most interesting people ever in that program. It was so ironic to me that I was the person certifying their credentials to earn a high school diploma."

Mrs. Cain was appointed to work as a guidance counselor at Huntington High School in 1987. "The director of guidance at the time was Dr. Edward Finn," she said. "He was a wonderful mentor and supervisor." She served as student council co-advisor for several years and gained the trust of students, parents and her colleagues.

"One of the things I feel pretty proud of was working with the Family Service League to start the Grandfriends program," said Mrs. Cain about the club that works with local senior citizens.

"Our first senior, senior prom was nothing like what current advisor Suzie Biagi does now, but we got a good thing going."

Mrs. Cain transferred from her position as a high school guidance counselor in 2000, taking up residence at Woodhull Intermediate School as the dean of students. "It was my first job working with younger students and I had much to learn," she said. "The staff was wonderful and welcoming to me. Some of my favorite parts of the job were running a bully prevention program, starting a peer mediation program and advising the student council with Maryann Sacher, a physical education teacher at the school." Huntington's Special Education PTA honored Mrs. Cain and social worker Vilma Matos in 2004 for their exceptional work with students.

While her efforts at Woodhull School were admired, Mrs. Cain knew when it was time for a change. "I hated the discipline part of the dean job and really wasn't very good at it," she said. "So after six years I decided it was time to get back to counseling and in 2007 I moved to Finley."

It didn't take long for Mrs. Cain to be embraced by members of the Finley family. She goes about her work each day with professionalism and confidence. She is always ready, willing and able to help the seventh and eighth graders she works with.

"Without a doubt, middle school counseling is the hardest work I have ever done," Mrs. Cain said. "The social and emotional needs of students in this stage of development are unmatched. I love my colleagues at Finley and feel especially proud of the work I do with the mental health team. My colleagues, Kathryn Costa, Mary DiBenedetto, Vilma Matos, Nancy Moran, Phil Lowe and Ken Parham collaborate weekly to develop plans to help and support our students who are struggling in one way or another."

Mrs. Cain said she has "enjoyed" being the advisor of Finley's community club and Friends of the Earth club. She is supervising her 13th school counselor intern this fall.

Over the past eight school years, Mrs. Cain has truly found a home at the middle school. "Finley should win an award for being the school that has the staff with the best sense of humor," she said.

Mrs. Cain and her husband, Larry are the parents of two children. Their son, Brian is an ocean engineer and their daughter, Allie works as a recreational therapist. The family takes delight in spending time together at their summer home in Maine.

"I have loved all my positions in the Huntington School District and I am very aware of how fortunate I am to have a job that I love," Mrs. Cain said.



“Life moves pretty fast...
if you don't stop and look
around once in awhile,
you could miss it.”

≈ **Ferris Bueller**

Our Community Honoree



MR. CHRIS MITCHELL

"Giving back" has been a major focus in Chris Mitchell's life. Today, he remains committed to helping support many charities and organizations on Long Island, Chris is active on the Board of Directors for the Huntington YMCA while he and his wife, Ali, support Huntington Hospital, the Heckscher Museum, the Caumsett Foundation, the Family Service League, the Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory, the SJK Foundation and Pink Aid Long Island. Pink Aid is the vision of a member of the Mitchell Family. Mitchells Family of Stores is a Founding Sponsor and started an Annual Pink Aid Connecticut Luncheon and Fashion Show in 2011. This year Chris Mitchell brought the event to Long Island at the first Inaugural Long Island Pink Chair Luncheon and Fashion Show. Pink Aid is a grant based organization that funds the efforts of programs and other organizations which provide services including mammograms, diagnostic testing, wigs, recovery garments, meals, childcare, transportation to treatment and help in covering personal expenses for patients undergoing treatment.

A graduate of Dartmouth College, he and his family have been residents of Huntington for almost ten years now. In 2005, the Mitchell Family acquired Marshs clothing store, quickly renovating the store and adding women's fashions as well as fashion and diamond based jewelry. Marshs, part of the Mitchell Family of Stores (Mitchells, Richards, Marshs and Wilkes Bashford) is one of the most respected and well known luxury specialty stores in the United States.

Prior to joining his family business, Chris was with NBC Sports (Olympic Division) for six years where he was awarded a Sports Emmy for the work he did during the Sydney Olympic Games in 2000.

Chris and Ali have two little ones, Haley (10) and Conor (8). Chris and his family have been avid supporters of our PTSA and PTA fundraisers throughout the years. Through his generosity so many of our children have benefited.



Scroll of Honor Sponsorships



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Tributes



Congratulations to our district honoree, Cathy Cain, and our Community honoree, Chris Mitchell. Job well done! **Jim Dandy Cleaners**

Cathy, Congratulations! You're one in a million. Thanks for your years of dedicated service. **Guy and Linda Guido and Family**

Your School Psychology colleagues honor you, a remarkable counselor who goes above and beyond. We appreciate all that you do!

Best Wishes Caterina Cain – so proud of all you do for Finley, both staff and students. Love, **The Finley Family**

Congratulations Mrs. Cain! **The Huntington Council of PTA's** is truly grateful for your dedication to our children.

Outstanding and Deserving accomplishment Cathy. You are a prime example of a dedicated and truly caring person. Congratulations, **The Carucci's**

Best wishes to Cathy Cain and Chris Mitchell for their dedication and commitment to the Huntington School District! **Libardi Service Agency, Inc.**

Congratulations on this well-deserved recognition. You light the path for all. Enjoy the spotlight tonight! **Jayne, Lauren, Catherine, Steve, Bernadette**

Tributes



Congratulations for Cathy Cain; our dear friend and special woman so deserving of this honor. With love and admiration ~ **The Ballins**

Congratulations Mrs. Cain! You were always so encouraging, positive and supportive. I will never forget you or your kindness! **Greg Rorke, Class of '16**

Thank you Chris and Ali Mitchell for your unwavering support of the Huntington community and school district children! Huntington is blessed to have you!
Jerry and Alice Marie Rorke

The School Principals' Association would like to congratulate Caterina Cain on this well-deserved recognition. You are amazing. **DSPA**

With many warm congratulation wishes to the amazing honorees, Caterina Cain and Chris Mitchell. Our community thanks you. **Valero, Bartco Mgmnt.**

The Finley PTA sends our thanks and gratitude to our wonderful Caterina Cain. You are a true support to our children!

Huntington High School PTSA salutes Cathy Cain for her years of guidance and dedication and Chris Mitchell for his generous support of our children.

The Reiver Family wishes a hearty congratulations to Cathy Cain on this much deserved honor.

Congratulations to the Foundation for their continued work in helping the district "Reach for the Stars." **Beverly and Peter Wayne**



Our Gratitude



...to the following individuals and businesses for their generous donations...

Lauren and Michael Brown, John and Donna LoTurco, Robin O'Leary, Todd and Joanne Bellistri, Kevin and Dina Rusch, Mark Cronin of Schlitt Law Firm, Michael and Amy Schnitzer, Energywise, FXP Realty Consulting.

...to the following individuals and businesses for generously donating to this evening's raffles and live auction...

Carvel Ice Cream, Angel Tips Nail Spa, Pet Setters, EJ Salon, Southdown Pizzeria, R & S Meat Market, Dancin' Feet, Southdown Coffee, Southdown Market, Kura Barn Restaurant, Variations Dance Studio, Neraki Greek Mediterranean Grill, Shoreline Beverage, Thai USA, Main Street Optometry (Northport), Interthread Embroidery, Alyson Richman, Gail Mancuso, Suzanne Sheran, Kathi Tafti of Fit Body Bootcamp, Kevin and Pam Lumpe, Viewpoint Photography, Culinary Studio, Gringer Appliances, Dr. Inna Gellerman, Kidz Hitz, Toast, Hanky Panky, Red, Osteria da Nino, Huntington Village Dental, Hands that Care, Cassis, Buenos Aires, My Inheritance, Martin Viette, Main St. Nursery, Massage Therapy, Sewing Seeds, Amal Kapen, String it Up, Rosemarie Spinella, Jackie Higgins, Francine's Fashion Boutique, Kashi, Libutti, Sal D's, Sunoco, Lu Hi, Ed Parry, Osprey's Dominion, Bradford Exchange, The Cain Family, The Huntington Crescent Club, The Paramount, Appliance World, Theory Manhasset, Marshs, Vitae, Pomodorino, Tutto Pazzo, Red Door Spa, Joanina Wine Shop, Huntington Bay Dental, Station Sorts, Honu, AGS Talcott/Jerry Rorke, Chris and Ali Mitchell, The Long Island Lizards, Jennifer LoTurco, The Carrello Family, The Associated Teachers of Huntington, The Lyons Family, The Steinberg Family, The Ryan Family, The Napurano Family, The Lumpe Family, The Bartolomeo Family, The Knowles Family, The Maggio Family, The Girimonti Family, The Mangan Family, The Hardardt Family, The Mills Family, The Sgrizzi Family and The Rorke Family.

. . . to the following for their generous services...

Glenn DeVeau Music Industry Entertainment Group (DJ), Laurinda (band), Jeff Klaverweiden (auctioneer), Don Tesoriero (website), Charlie Ehrman (montage), Cliff Weissman (photographer) and The Huntington High School String Ensemble.

Our Work



OVERVIEW

The Huntington Foundation for Excellence in Education is a non-profit 501 (C)(3) corporation which was founded in June 1993. Our organization is a group of volunteers dedicated to improving the quality of education for our children. In this time of slashed school budgets and decreased state funding, we are seeking your support. While each year our teachers write and apply for grants to aid education and enhance their school programs with SMART Boards™, computers, projectors, and other teaching devices, for all grade levels, we still need additional help. Some of our students barely have access to computers, sometimes less than one hour a week. Please help us provide the facilities and technology other school districts have and help secure the kind of education our children need and deserve. 100% of the money raised will go back to the district. Our kids are the future and your help is greatly appreciated!

WHO WE ARE

A volunteer group of education supporters who work with a board of directors to fund innovative and exciting educational opportunities for all children in the district. This funding affords our teachers access to educational programs that are not funded by the school budget. Often these new programs are then incorporated into the curriculum on an ongoing basis.

OUR MISSION

The Huntington Foundation is dedicated to enhancing the quality of the Huntington Public Schools in education, the arts and athletics. From state-of-the-art technology and equipment to cutting-edge teaching techniques, the educator-generated grants we fund expand our students' curriculum as well as their enthusiasm for learning.

HOW WE DO IT

We primarily raise funds through our annual Gala event. We also seek grants from other foundations and organizations which support education. We are always looking for new ways to fund the grant applications submitted by our educators. Our goal is to fulfill every Star and mini grant that is approved by our board. We know we can do it...and graciously thank all our supporters.

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“Do all the good you can.
by all the means you can.
in all the ways you can.
in all the places you can.
at all the times you can.
to all the people you can.
as long as you ever can.”

≡ **John Wesley**

JAMES POLANSKY

*Superintendent of Huntington
Union Free School District*

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