



# Making IT\* Happen Awards

## \*INCLUSIVE TEACHING

In 2021 CCSE is proud to introduce the *Making IT\* Happen Awards* honoring an exceptional group of regular classroom teachers. These individuals passionately believe in every student's right to be an integral part of their class and in their own responsibility to help that child reach his or her potential while sharing their unique gifts with their classmates. We honor these general educators who live inclusion in their classrooms and schools every single day because it is through them that the culture of the school changes and becomes truly inclusive, beautifully illustrating the richness of the Body of Christ. The Making IT\* Happen Awards (\*Inclusive Teaching) will be presented by students with disabilities who have experienced the positive impact of such teaching excellence at our *March 13, 2021 Virtual Spring Benefit*.

### INTRODUCING CCSE'S 2021 HONOREES



**Christine Green** has taught in Catholic schools for over 36 years; the last 31 years have been at Our Lady of Mercy School in Potomac, MD. She is currently the 5th grade homeroom teacher and teaches language arts, math, and Leadership Seminar (Grades 7 & 8). In addition, she is the director of Mercy's Educational Extension Program and Assistant Principal. Christine enjoys developing programs based on current best practices in education, and she works collaboratively with colleagues and parents to create plans to support students so they can thrive and embrace their gifts and talents. Our Lady of Mercy's mission and philosophy inspire Christine to seek and implement strategies to motivate her students daily. She continually finds tremendous joy in teaching and marvels at the abundance of synergy and acceptance among students in an inclusive learning environment.

**Alison Interlandi** previously taught third grade at Our Lady of Lourdes School in Bethesda, Maryland for eight years before moving to a school closer to her home in Annapolis, where she currently teaches fourth grade. Alison is a firm believer that every student benefits from learning in an inclusive environment, and that a disability does not define who you are: it just makes you "you!" She feels blessed to have begun her teaching career with so many unique learners in such a welcoming and nurturing environment. The sense of inclusivity at Our Lady of Lourdes is felt throughout the community--from school leadership to the littlest learners.



**David Long** has taught at Our Lady of Lourdes School for 23 years. Before teaching, David was a paratrooper in the US Infantry. Combat zones and elementary schools have more in common than people think. Both are full of unexpected challenges and unseen rewards. He never thought of inclusion as anything extra or out of the ordinary. Catholic School teachers are called to "teach as Christ did." We open our doors at Lourdes every day to any family that wants a catholic education for their child. In his time at Our Lady of Lourdes School he taught PE, religion, middle school math, library, computer science, and history. David currently is the Assistant Principal at Our Lady of Lourdes and the Director of Athletic Mentoring and Varsity Boys basketball coach at the Mclean School of Maryland. His firm hope is that soon the list of inclusive Catholic schools is too long to count.

**Donna Reese** has been an Educator of Dance for over 46 years and is a strong proponent of inclusive teaching. She excels at ensuring that students of all abilities are not only fully included in her studio classroom but also can shine 'under the lights.' Through her passion every Holy Cross Dance Recital becomes a visible celebration of the unique talents and gifts present in their community. Her students have performed on Broadway in shows like *Once on This Island*, *Little Mermaid*, *Rent*, *Billy Elliott*, *The Addams Family*, and *Newsies*, among others. Her students have performed on cruise ships, in dinner theatres and with professional ballet and dance companies. Donna has a degree in Dance Education from Towson University and has taught in both public and private schools. She also owned and operated, for 25 years, five dancing schools in Montgomery and Carroll Counties. She is currently in her 18th year at The Academy of the Holy Cross. She attended elementary school at Holy Redeemer in Kensington.

