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CONTACT:
Katie Maloney
katie.maloney@gpsinfluence.com

The Innovation Project Honors Visionary Leaders and Districts In North Carolina

[Charlotte, NC] - [The Innovation Project](#) (TIP) is proud to announce the recipients of its first-ever awards for educational excellence, shining a spotlight on the exceptional public school educators and leaders who are driving innovation and transformation in North Carolina.

"The recipients of these inaugural awards represent the pinnacle of leadership and innovation in North Carolina's education landscape," said Dr. Sharon L. Contreras, CEO of TIP. "Their unwavering commitment to student success and transformative change serves as a beacon of inspiration for all of us"

The awards were presented during TIP's membership meeting on May 2, marking a milestone in honoring those who exemplify TIP's mission of reimagining teaching and learning, fostering creativity, and driving transformative change within their communities.

→ **Ignite Award:** Dr. Keith Parker and Elizabeth City-Pasquotank Schools. The Ignite Award honors a superintendent and district for inspiring the reimagining of teaching and learning within their community. They exhibit creativity and tenacity in implementing bold ideas.

→ **Aspire Award:** Dr. Crystal Hill and Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools.. The Aspire Award honors a first year superintendent who demonstrates a great sense of urgency, early success, and promising leadership in navigating complex change.

- **Catalyst Award:** Dr. Shawn Stover and Rockingham County Schools. The Catalyst Award celebrates a superintendent and district for courageously leveraging TIP initiatives to drive impactful change and inspire transformation throughout their district.
- **Transcend Award:** Dr. Cindy Bennett, Superintendent of Vance County Schools Honoring a "leader among leaders," the Transcend Award recognizes individuals whose vision, character and outstanding track record distinguish them among their peers.
- **Pinnacle Award:** Dr. Marvin Connelly, Jr., Superintendent, Cumberland County Schools recognizes a leader at a significant milestone and celebrates a lifetime of dedication and achievement in the service of students and education. Recipients have shown unwavering commitment and perseverance.
- **Vanguard Award:** Jevelyn Bonner-Reed and the Belk Foundation. The Vanguard Award recognizes an individual or organization that is pioneering new ideas, supporting educational change, and collaborating with TIP districts to reimagine education.

The 2024 Membership Meeting underscored TIP's ongoing commitment to fostering collaboration, innovation, and opportunity in public education, setting the stage for continued progress and impact in the years ahead.

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About The Innovation Project:

The Innovation Project (TIP) is a catalyst for transformative change in North Carolina's public schools. Committed to fostering innovation and excellence, TIP empowers educators to reimagine school systems and drive tangible, successful outcomes for students. Through collaborative partnerships, pioneering initiatives, and a relentless pursuit of excellence, TIP is shaping the future of education in North Carolina and beyond.

For more information about The Innovation Project and its initiatives, visit their website tipnc.org.