

Morris County Career and Technical Education Teacher Named New Jersey's Teacher of the Year for 2018-19

For Immediate Release

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Trenton, NJ – The New Jersey Department of Education today announced that Jennifer Skomial, a high school career and technical education (CTE) teacher in the Morris County Vocational School District, has been named the 2018-19 New Jersey State Teacher of the Year.

Jennifer prepares her students to become teachers, child psychologists, social workers and school counselors at the Academy for Education and Learning at Morris County School of Technology. This is a full-circle moment for her, as she attended the same high school program where she now teaches. She coaches students who assists in an on-site preschool, plans guest speakers and field trips, and designs lessons to engage her students in child development, classroom management, and other education-related topics.

"Jennifer truly exemplifies what it means to be a teacher in New Jersey," said Governor Phil Murphy. "Her passion is evident and I am glad that we are able to recognize her and the valuable work she does with our students."

"I congratulate Jennifer on this honor. She is a great example of the committed educators we have in our state," said Education Commissioner Lamont O. Repollet. "As a career and technical education teacher, she understands the need for all students to have opportunities to pursue career pathways. We are proud to have her represent New Jersey and I look forward to collaborating with her throughout the school year. She is truly an inspiration."

Jennifer grew up in Morris County and as a young girl always knew she wanted to become a teacher. Throughout her own educational experiences, she encountered many passionate and dedicated teachers who fostered her desire to become an educator. Jennifer recounts being captivated by Mrs. Barbara Lombardy's enthusiasm in first grade, Ms. Deana Toma's passion in middle school, and Mrs. Jean Constantine's support in high school. Finally, Dr. Laura Nicosia at Montclair State University served as a mentor and continues to be a positive role model in education.

Scott Moffitt, superintendent of the Morris County Vocational School District, said, "We are incredibly proud of Jennifer and the impact she has on our school community. Her leadership as a career and technical education teacher has had a positive impact on both her colleagues and future educators."

Jennifer earned a bachelor's degree in English secondary education from Montclair State University and a master's degree in special education from New Jersey City University.

In her role as State Teacher of the Year, Jennifer will work closely with the state Department of Education, give presentations around the state, and will attend national conferences with other State Teachers of the Year.

"I am humbled to be chosen to represent other educators in the state," said Jennifer. "This role will allow me to showcase all the great things happening in New Jersey classrooms, promote the teaching profession, and share this experience with my students."

The other five New Jersey State Teacher of the Year finalists will be recognized at the State Board of Education Special Recognition Ceremony in December. The finalists received the highest scores on their applications and their interviews with a distinguished panel of representatives from the state's education associations and other stakeholder groups. The finalists are: Christine Esola, a kindergarten special education teacher at The Valley Program, Northern Valley Regional School District; Carrie Merritt, a first grade elementary school teacher at Ocean City Primary School, Ocean City School District; Vanessa Paccione, a third through fifth grade art teacher at General Charles G. Harker School, Swedesboro-Woolwich School District; Patricia Smeyers, a fifth grade elementary school teacher at Clarendon Elementary School, Secaucus School District; and William Smith, a middle school social studies teacher at Southern Regional Middle School, Southern Regional School District.

Additional information can be found on the [Governor's Educator of the Year webpage](#).