

PRESS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

Hartford Magnet Middle School Chosen the Best in America

(Tuesday, May 17, 2011) Hartford Magnet Middle School in the city's Learning Corridor today received the prestigious Dr. Ronald P. Simpson Distinguished Merit Award as the best magnet school in the United States.

The award, given annually by Magnet Schools of America, is presented to the one magnet school in the country that most exemplifies a commitment to diversity, high academic standards and curriculum innovation. There are nearly 6,000 magnet schools in the United States, serving more than 1 million students.

HMMS Principal Sally Ann Biggs accepted the award, which includes a \$5,000 cash prize, at the MSA's 29th national conference in Indianapolis, Ind.

This is the first time that a Hartford Public School has been so honored.

"I am proud to accept this distinguished award on behalf of the Hartford Magnet Middle School Family," Ms. Biggs said. "I am truly blessed to work with the best children in the world and the most dynamic and devoted staff. The HMMS staff works very hard to create the finest and most unique learning experiences possible for our students, and every day our students make us proud and put smiles on our faces!"

Hartford Magnet Middle School serves children in grades 6-8. Its curriculum places an emphasis on the arts and sciences and has partnerships with the Greater Hartford Academy of the Arts, the Hartford Stage Company and COMPASS Youth Collaborative. The school also has an award-winning marching band.

In order to compete for the Dr. Ronald P. Simpson Distinguished Merit Award, a school must first be recognized as a Magnet School of Excellence, the top category given to a group of select magnet schools all across the country. A total of 57 received that designation this year.

"Hartford Magnet Middle School's selection as the best magnet school in America is a historic event for Hartford and Connecticut," Superintendent Steven J. Adamowski said. "It should give all of us confidence that we are capable of creating the best schools in the nation for our children in Hartford. It is also a much deserved recognition of the work of the HMMS staff, parents and students, under the leadership of Principal Sally Biggs."

The incredible recognition comes at a particularly good time for HMMS, as it enters into a historic agreement with Trinity College to create a 6-12 high school.

“I heartily applaud the Hartford Magnet Middle School family and Principal Sally Biggs,” said Dr. Christina Kishimoto, who takes over as superintendent on July 1. “Their success is further proof that Hartford Public Schools has come to its own as one of the most progressive, reform minded districts in the country – and people are taking note.”

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