



Jessica Boisclair • Daily Times

Fifth-grade teacher Susan Flynn of Tiogue Elementary in Coventry was presented with a Golden Apple award last Thursday.

Tiogue's Flynn gets apple award

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COVENTRY — Tiogue Elementary School teacher Susan Flynn was more than shocked when she was given the “Golden Apple” Teacher Award last Thursday.

NBC 10, the Rhode Island Department of Education and Hasbro team up to hand out the award to the winners. The Golden Apple Award recognizes a teacher who goes above and beyond in the classroom to help their students learn.

Flynn, a fifth grade teacher at Tiogue, was shocked when she was given the award on Dec. 6.

“I looked back on the presentation and thought I should have jumped up and down or something, but I was just in utter shock,” she said. “My whole family came — my aunts, my brother, my parents and my kids. I was shocked to say the least.”

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Flynn 'shocked'

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Flynn said she has been teaching in the Coventry School District for 25 years, jumping from Blackrock Elementary School to Tiogue Elementary School.

The winner is chosen based on their nomination letter, which states why the educator is unique or creative, highlights how the educator is student-focused and offers compelling examples of how.

Flynn was nominated by Tammy Duxbury, the mother of a former student. She explained that when her students enter her classroom, she takes a photograph of them.

After the student graduates high school, Flynn said she mails the picture and a note, with words of encouragement, to them.

In the note, Duxbury stated that Flynn "identified critical reading deficiencies in both of my children that had gone undetected in earlier grades. She not only identified the problem but fought tirelessly to gain access to resources needed to bring their reading to grade level."

Flynn explained that what separates her from other people is the fact that she has a passion for her job.

"When I wake up in the morning, I don't think, 'I'm going to work,'" she said with a smile. "I just say, 'I'm going to school.'"

She explained that having a

great partner working alongside her makes it easier, crediting teaching assistants she's worked with.

She said she tries to use different methods in the classroom to help teach the students.

"I'm every teacher: science, math, social studies," she said. "With science, we do labs everyday and we try and do hands-on activities."

She said her students are given opportunities to work with technology to help them prepare for the future, learning how to write blogs.

Flynn said she focuses on each student individually and tries to help them improve in whatever areas they need help in.

Every Friday, students who have followed the class rules and have done all their homework are given a reward.

For winning the Golden Apple, Flynn received \$250. Once again, she put her students first when considering how to spend the money.

"I've asked my students to write up what they think we should get and we'll vote on it," she said.

Hasbro Toys also donated Scrabble, which the students are using to help strengthen their vocabulary.

"It was a tremendous surprise to her and all her students," said Principal Louise Seitsinger. "We are extremely proud of her outstanding teaching and this is well deserved recognition."