



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR RELEASE: April 2, 2024

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Maiden Choice School educator named a Maryland finalist for the 2024 Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching

Towson, Md. – Kristina Powell, a classroom teacher at Maiden Choice School, has been selected as a Maryland science finalist for the 2024 Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching (PAEMST) for Kindergarten through Grade 6.

She is now under consideration for a national award. The PAEMST is considered the nation’s highest honor for teachers of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

Maiden Choice School is a public separate day school for children from ages 3 to 21 who have significant cognitive disabilities. In 2023, under Powell’s direction, students from Maiden Choice won the grand prize in the [countywide Safe Racer competition](#). In Safe Racer, Grade 3 students design and build cars, with eggs as passengers, to see which vehicle can go farthest and keep its passenger safest.

“Ms. Kristina Powell is a highly effective teacher who is extremely skillful at delivering the curriculum in a modified manner to her students with special needs,” said Maiden Choice Principal Kathryn Wess.

“Ms. Powell embodies the belief that all students can learn in their own way, at their own pace, and she works diligently to ensure that this occurs every day in her classroom. She is a team leader and team player who ensures that the students of Maiden Choice have access to activities open to all Baltimore County Public Schools students. Safe Racer is our favorite time of year for Maiden Choice, and Ms. Powell makes it her mission that all our students can participate.”

Powell has 23 years of experience working with students with special needs. She has taught at Maiden Choice School since 2010 and serves as its science coordinator. Prior to working for BCPS, Powell managed the Towson YMCA's summer camp for children with special needs and worked for Richcroft, Inc., which provides residential services and personal care for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

"I have worked to teach my students with severe and profound special needs the same information a typical student would learn," Powell said, "just in a unique way. My students have taught me over the years that if you expect more of them, they will meet your expectations. Every student deserves a chance to achieve great things."

Powell's educational background includes a master's degree in teaching and bachelor's degree in liberal arts from the College of Notre Dame of Maryland (now Notre Dame of Maryland University) and an associate degree in elementary/special education from the Community College of Baltimore County. Powell is a graduate of Sparrows Point High School, where she was enrolled in the school's childcare program. While a high school student, she interned at Battle Monument School, another public separate day school for students with disabilities.

(Editor's note: A photo of [Powell](#) can be found on Flickr.)

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