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For Immediate Release

Horace Mann and Illinois Principals Association Announce
2024 Illinois Assistant Principal of the Year

Horace Mann and the Illinois Principals Association are pleased to announce that Jen Carter, Assistant Principal of Riverton Elementary School, Riverton, has been named the 2024 Illinois Assistant Principal of the Year. The award recognizes assistant principals who have demonstrated a positive impact on their students and learning community. Criteria for the award include:

- Demonstrates a positive impact on education and advocacy for children
- Ensures the school climate is positive and reflects high staff and student morale
- Moves actively to implement the goals and objectives of the school
- Works collaboratively with teachers and other staff to improve the educational program and student achievement
- Involves the community in the life of the school and uses community resources for students.

Jen Carter has served as assistant principal at Riverton Elementary School for 7 years. She previously served as a Special Education teacher in the Riverton School District since 2006. Carter currently serves on the Illinois Principals Association Region Board for the Abe Lincoln Region, which includes school leaders from Christian, DeWitt, Logan, Macon, Menard, Moultrie, Piatt, Sangamon, and Shelby counties.

“Effective instructional leaders must possess a range of competencies and attributes,” said Carter. “They must have a strong knowledge of instructional practices, be a skilled communicator, have a clear vision for excellence, be able to analyze data and make decisions, provide mentoring and coaching, be skilled at building collaborative relationships and fostering a positive school culture and be able to easily adapt. I've learned to have a clear vision versus trying to do everything at once and strive to inspire and motivate teachers to work towards our vision. I try to lead by example, have high expectations, and work to promote a positive school culture and create a supportive and collaborative environment.”

Bradley Polanin, Superintendent of Riverton CUSD #14 shared, “Mrs. Carter has exhibited exemplary skills as an administrator, and continues to be a valued member of the administrative team for the Riverton School District. (Mrs. Carter) displays exceptional leadership skills along with her ability to work cooperatively and cohesively with all school stakeholders. Mrs. Carter is intelligent, dedicated, and compassionate. Mrs. Carter has earned my respect, and more importantly the respect of every student and staff member, as well, by displaying these qualities daily with her enduring desire to improve lives.”

Mrs. Carter’s dedication to the Riverton School District and her advocacy for its improvement are truly commendable. As a lifelong resident of Riverton, she is deeply invested in making the district a better place for students, staff, and families,” added Jaclynn Shoufler, Principal of Riverton Elementary School. “Her outstanding work ethic, dedication, and leadership skills make her an exceptional candidate for this recognition.”

The Assistant Principal of the Year winner was selected from a pool of regional nominees provided by the 21 Regions of the Illinois Principals Association. Jen Carter will be recognized at the IPA's annual Education Leaders Annual Conference in October 2024.

Horace Mann -- the largest national multiline insurance company focusing on educators' financial needs -- provides auto and homeowners insurance, retirement annuities, life insurance and other financial solutions. "*Founded by Educators for Educators*" in 1945, the company is headquartered in Springfield, Ill. Visit www.horacemann.com for more information.

The Illinois Principals Association is a leadership organization which serves over 6,500 educational leaders throughout the state of Illinois. You can find out more about the IPA at www.ilprincipals.org. Visit <http://www.ilprincipals.org/about-ipa/awards> for more information about the IPA Principal of the Year Awards Program.

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