

For Immediate Release

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CSI and CSI Schools Inducted into League “Hall of Fame”

DENVER, CO (March 4, 2019) – Staff at four charter public schools authorized by the [statewide charter authorizer](#), the Colorado Charter School Institute (CSI), as well as CSI’s Executive Director were recognized at the [Colorado League of Charter Schools](#) Annual Conference last week.

Each year, members from public charter schools across the state are nominated for the Colorado Charter Schools Hall of Fame, which recognizes outstanding contributors to the charter school community. Finalists are nominated by their peers, and then winners are chosen by the League. This year’s winners come from a diverse range of CSI schools, including a project-based school in Durango, classical and Waldorf models in Colorado Springs, and Core Knowledge just outside of Denver.



Violeta Apodaca, Dr. Terry Croy Lewis,
Lauren Martinez, Mary Faith Hall, Hugh
Fowler, E.D. Hirsch, Jr., Jesse Hutt

A Hall of Fame ceremony took place on Friday, March 1st where the following CSI and CSI-school staff members were recognized for the various Hall of Fame awards:

The **Charter School Leader of the Year** is awarded to a charter school leader that demonstrates significant influence in developing or maintaining a charter school, improving school accountability and performance, or driving other aspects of school excellence.

- **Mary Faith Hall, school leader at [Thomas MacLaren School](#) in Colorado Springs, was awarded the 2019 Charter School Leader of the Year.**
- Other CSI finalists included: Chad Miller, Pinnacle Charter School; Lindsey Neiman, Mountain Middle School

The **Most Valuable Charter Contributor** is awarded to a charter school staff member or volunteer who demonstrates exceptional leadership in and commitment to charter school operational excellence.

- **Violeta Apodaca, High School Administrative Assistant at the [Pinnacle Charter School](#) in Federal Heights, was awarded the 2019 Most Valuable Charter Contributor.**
- Other CSI finalists included: Jan Thirlby, Ross Montessori; Ameer Austin, Mountain Middle School; Anna Turnbull, Pinnacle Charter School; Dan Kurschner, Mountain Song Community School

The **Charter School Educator of the Year** is awarded to a charter school educator who is exceptionally dedicated to closing the achievement gap and preparing students for success now and into the future.

- **Lauren Martinez, Special Education Coordinator at [Mountain Song Community School](#) in Colorado Springs, was awarded the 2019 Charter School Educator of the Year.**
- Other CSI finalists included: Phil Emma, Pinnacle Charter School

The **Advocate of the Year** award recognizes an individual who has demonstrated significant influence in the public policy arena.

- **Jesse Hutt, co-founder and board member at [Animas High School](#) in Durango, was awarded the 2019 Advocate of the Year.**

The **Charter School Authorizer Award** recognizes a charter school authorizer employee or administrator with a strong commitment to school choice.

- **Dr. Terry Croy Lewis, Executive Director of [Colorado Charter School Institute](#), was awarded the 2019 Charter School Authorizer Award.**

CSI Executive Director Dr. Terry Croy Lewis shared, “We are extremely proud of the outstanding accomplishments of so many folks in the CSI family. As an authorizer, we recognize schools that are meeting high standards of performance in academics, operations, and finance - it’s very much focused on outcomes. It’s exciting to recognize and celebrate the people who contribute to the success of our state’s charter schools.”

[See here](#) for the Colorado League of Charter Schools’ press release, including quotes from nominations.

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About the Colorado Charter School Institute (CSI)

CSI is a statewide charter public school authorizer in Colorado, currently authorizing 39 schools from Durango to Steamboat Springs, Grand Junction to Colorado Springs and serving over 18,000 PK-12 students. We believe that every child should have access to high performing school choices and are committed to the creation and success of high-quality charter public school options that offer diverse educational models to best meet the needs of every child. Our approach to authorizing charter schools balances autonomy and accountability. We offer our schools the flexibility to choose the educational models and methods that best meet the unique needs of their students and communities, and we hold them accountable to clear expectations for academic, financial, and organizational performance. Learn more at www.csi.state.co.us and follow CSI on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).