

## **SPECIAL EDUCATOR TO RECEIVE NATIONAL RECOGNITION FOR CAREER READINESS ACHIEVEMENTS IN CLASSROOM**

Education Associates has selected Secondary Life Skills/Autistic Support Teacher Nicole Lowers from Intermediate Unit 1 Educational Campus at McMurray in Pennsylvania as the winner for the Annual Gary Bates Memorial Award for Excellence in Career Education.

Lowers is being recognized for her outstanding work implementing Education Associates' Project Discovery curriculum with their students. Project Discovery is a hands-on career exploration curriculum that can be used for students of all functional levels with adapted supports to help students with the most significant challenges. It includes lesson plans, video modeling, performance-based assessments, hands-on activities, and more. Project Discovery is proud to be endorsed by CASE, the US Department of Education, the National Dropout Prevention Network, and the Division on Career Development & Transition.

"The students enjoy the activities and feel a sense of pride when developing these skills that correlate with real careers," Lowers says. Visually mapping student progress has motivated her students to succeed and become more independent with tasks each time they practice. Her students have learned how to complete job tasks for several career clusters, including food service and cleaning/maintenance. After mastering the skills for each opportunity for her students to demonstrate their skills in the larger school environment. For example, her students went to various classrooms for a week and practiced their new cleaning skills by washing windows, dust mopping, cleaning whiteboards, and other tasks.



Lowers' students are also positively impacted in other ways; they are excited to think about their future career options. "Some of my students are now exploring vo-tech in the future to receive further training in food service careers."

**CASE** endorses products that have proven to be effective in teaching students with special needs and strives to enhance the worth, dignity, potential, and uniqueness of every individual in society. Over 1,000 special educators from across the country will gather in Pittsburgh next week for the annual National CASE Conference.

The **Gary Bates Memorial Award** was created by Education Associates to commemorate the work of the late Gary Bates, who served as a Sales Representative for 20 years. Each year, applicants are invited to nominate themselves or someone else who has used Education Associates' Project Discovery or Achieve Life Skills curricula to make a significant, positive impact in students' lives and in the community.

**Education Associates** is the developer of Project Discovery, the leading comprehensive career education, job preparation and life skills programs for all learners, including those with special needs. Education Associates empowers educators and workforce development leaders to help all students

realize their potential. Education Associates believes everyone can become "Job Ready and Life Ready" to live the vibrant, independent lives they deserve. To learn more, visit <http://educationassociates.com>.