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### **Finalists Announced – 2019 SWAE Leadership Award**

PHOENIX, AZ (December 21, 2018) - The Southwest Alliance for Excellence (SWAE) is proud to announce the 3 finalists for the 2019 Leadership Award: Ms. Sue Dahl, Northern Trust, Tempe, AZ, Dr. Lucas Kavlie, Western Governors University, Salt Lake City, UT and Mr. Hanofi Oguz, Beehive Science & Technology Academy in Sandy, UT.

The finalists were selected by a committee of individuals with a high level of experience in organizational excellence and understanding of the SWAE core values. The SWAE Leadership Award recognizes an individual who exemplifies outstanding leadership in the pursuit of performance excellence and has furthered performance improvement beyond the boundaries of their organization.

#### **Ms. Sue Dahl, Senior Vice President of Northern Trust Tempe, Arizona -**

When Sue started to build the Tempe Human Resource Operational Services Center in Tempe there were 475 employees and today, the Center is approaching 850 employees. Sue has worked tirelessly for Northern Trust for 38 years, and her standout leadership resulted in her being hand selected to oversee the establishment and build out and manage the HR Operational Services Center in Tempe. Sue's operation includes an HR Service/Call Center, HR Operations team and Payroll team servicing all United States and Canada employees.

Sue partnered with other Northern leaders to cultivate a desired culture, which has made executing on global expansion easier across cultures. A key outcome is Sue has become a trusted advisor inside and outside of HR. This reputational capital is critical because without it handling sensitive employee transactions with a lack of integrity is detrimental to an effective organizational culture.

Sue has embraced the PDCA methodology to continuously improve the employee experience through regularly analyzing employee facing processes.

Sue's humanity is strongly present in her business acumen, something so frequently overlooked in the fast paced competitive business world that is often driven by impersonal social media platforms. For example, processing employee performance actions occurs differently in Asia than it does in Europe and the Middle East and North America. Sue recognized these



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differences as partly driven by labor law and cultural norms but never wavers on the end result. A key outcome has been her approach using Cultural Relativism which has resulted in reduced resistance and improved adoption of Northern HR initiatives independent of the part of the world in which Northern expands.

Sue supports *Hiring Our Heroes* for she personally hired two interns from the program. She is also active in the *Year Up Program* and attended a session in Phoenix with the program on November 19, 2018 where she judged presentations of the students.

Sue's leadership by example has made the Tempe HR center a tremendous success for the local economy due to the high caliber jobs she has hired for from the community.

**Lucas B. Kavlie, EdD Vice President, Compliance & Accreditation at Western Governors University in Salt Lake City, UT** begins each meeting with the same set of principles to guide collaborative efforts: "Never make assumptions; whenever possible, differentiate fact from opinion; respect one another's opinions; when necessary, challenge opinions respectfully; be willing to concede your opinions; remember that contrition ≠ shame or humiliation; and, always ask questions!"

Within each meeting, a comprehensive tracker is shared that illustrates everyone's current projects and their progress toward completion (including the tasks that Luke must complete himself). This level of accountability makes symbiotic work processes apparent and unavoidably invests everyone into the individual and collective work efforts of the department.

Despite the immense workload of managing and leading the entire Compliance and Accreditation department, Luke is a current faculty member, and a current student at the institution. He expressed how he wanted to not only serve the students through teaching, but he also wanted to intimately understand the student experience by being a student himself.

This allows him to most adeptly and accurately attend to the needs of all stakeholders. As a result, the department has maintained 100% compliance and accreditation with all programs and certified 100% of any students that have sat for licensure!

Luke has an intricate understanding of how each person could, and should, work collaboratively to complete mutually beneficial tasks—to meet both personal and collective goals. Dr. Kavlie is also an active researcher, scholar, and presenter as he continues to publish and present on behalf of values that benefit all students in society. He even serves on a multitude of boards and committees. However, most impressively, above all of these, is that he serves as the Title IX Coordinator for the institution. Because of his efforts, students, staff, and



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stakeholders alike receive the requisite arbitration to ensure that their rights are respected and observed when those rights are infringed upon.

Ultimately, Luke ties each conversation back to some type of continuous improvement effort. In the end, the conversation always goes back to: “How will this make us better;” and, “How will this help our students?”

**Mr. Hanifi Oguz has served as executive director/principal of Beehive Science & Technology Academy in Sandy, UT** since 2011. The charter school serves grades 6 through 12. When Mr. Oguz joined the school, it was struggling in terms of enrollment, finances and academic performance. Under Mr. Oguz’s leadership, school enrollment has grown from 140 in 2012 to 300 in the 2018/2019 year. In 2012, the school’s graduation rate was 30 percent, and in 2015, that number was 90 percent (compared with the state average of 85 percent). In 2015/2016, Beehive achieved a 100 percent graduation rate. In addition, the school’s operating budget has increased from \$1.4 M in 2012 to \$2.9 M for 2018. In 2012, Beehive had negative asset deficiency of \$117,000, and in 2018, the school has a positive asset balance of \$1.2M.

Beehive was named Charter School of the Year 2016 by the Utah Association of Public Charter Schools, and given Platinum STEM School Designation by the Utah State Board of Education and the STEM Action Center for the 2015/2016 school year. Beehive was also recognized as an Apple Distinguished School for 2017-2019, the first and only Utah school to receive this honor as of October 2018. In September 2017, Beehive was also given an “A” grade from the Utah Board of Education—one of only eight high schools in the state to receive this grade.”

Mr. Oguz has also been a driving force in bringing STEM awareness to the public at large. He essentially created the Utah STEM Expo, a special event in which students from Utah middle schools, high schools and colleges/universities showcase their STEM projects. The special event has celebrated its fifth anniversary in 2018. Finally, Mr. Oguz has also created and overseen the MathMatters Contest, which is now entering its 12<sup>th</sup> year. This contest is open to all fifth and sixth grade students in Utah.

Mr. Oguz is constantly encouraging his staff to think outside the box in terms of creating a better learning atmosphere. As a result, teachers have implemented innovative technology and techniques in the classroom that have greatly improved student experiences and learning.



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The recipient of the **2019 SWAE Leadership Award will be announced** at the annual SWAE Knowledge Sharing and Awards Luncheon on **February, 6, 2019** at East Valley Institute for Technology in Mesa, AZ. For more information, visit [www.swae.org](http://www.swae.org).

Established in 1990, The **Southwest Alliance for Excellence** is a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation that advances improvement and excellence in organizations, communities and individuals throughout Arizona, Nevada and Utah by using the Baldrige Framework.

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