

Education News & Notes

Survey Reveals The Positive Impact Teachers Have On Students' Lives

(NAPSA)—Next to immediate family, teachers have the most impact on people's lives as they grow up. That's just one of the key findings of a recent national survey of Americans' attitudes toward teachers.

The survey also found that:

- 88 percent of Americans say they had a teacher who had a "significant, positive impact" on their life, and 98 percent of those surveyed believe that a good teacher can change the course of a student's life.
- 87 percent of respondents said they wish they had told their best teachers how much they appreciated their efforts.

Teachers Can Change Lives

The survey, conducted by the ING Foundation, found that people believe that teachers help in many ways. Among the vast majority of Americans who said they had a teacher or teachers who had a "significant, positive impact" on their life growing up, 83 percent said they had a teacher who helped build their confidence and self-esteem, 79 percent had a teacher who encouraged them to pursue their dreams, 75 percent said a teacher served as a mentor or role model, and 54 percent said that a teacher helped them through a tough time.

"As our research shows, effective teachers can have a significant influence on their students' lives, yet their efforts are generally underappreciated," said Rhonda Mims, president of the ING Foundation and senior vice president of ING's Office of Corporate Responsibility and Multicultural Affairs.



In a recent survey, 94 percent of Americans said that the public needs to do more to recognize good teachers.

"It's an unbelievable testament to the profession that Americans so resoundingly believe in a teacher's ability to transform lives," said Mims. "Whether sending students down a path they hadn't considered or simply ensuring them they are ready for the road ahead, a teacher's impact can be profound and enduring."

An overwhelming 93 percent of those surveyed agree that teaching is a noble profession, and 89 percent believe teachers have a "really hard job."

Many Feel Teachers Deserve More Recognition

At the same time, there is general acknowledgment that the public has not done enough to recognize good teachers. Overall, teachers are perceived as receiving less gratitude than other "helping professionals," including doctors, nurses, social workers and clergy.

The vast majority of Americans (94 percent) acknowledge that we need to do more to recognize our teachers.

"While admiration for the teaching profession is widespread, expressions of gratitude are few and far between," noted Catherine Smith, CEO, ING U.S. Retirement Services. Said Smith, "Most of us had a teacher growing up who cultivated a love of learning, helped us through a trying time or encouraged us to pursue our dreams. It's never too late to say thanks for some lessons that lasted a lifetime."

National Teacher Of The Year

The ING Foundation is also a presenting sponsor of the National Teacher of the Year. This year's recipient, Sarah Brown Wessling, is an English teacher and English Department Chair at Johnston High School in Johnston, Iowa, where she is in her 11th year as a teacher. She is the 60th recipient of this prestigious national award. Wessling holds a B.A. in English Education and a Master of Arts in English from Iowa State University.

Wessling was recognized for her community involvement, interactive and innovative teaching style and her inclusiveness in the classroom. Wessling will be a full-time national and international spokesperson for education for one year.

The ING Foundation is the charitable giving arm of ING. It awards grants to nonprofit organizations that address a variety of community needs. Visit www.ing.com/us to learn more.



Note to Editors: The URL to CCSSO for information about all the national teachers of the year is http://www.ccsso.org/projects/national_teacher_of_the_year/national_teachers or, for all of this year's state teachers of the year, http://www.ccsso.org/projects/national_teacher_of_the_year/state_teachers/2010/13905.cfm.