



Press Release

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Massachusetts Teacher Is Recipient of First Bob Costas Grant for the Teaching of Writing, Announced by the College Board

NEW YORK—Nancy Barile, teacher of English at Revere High School in Revere, Massachusetts, is one of six teachers in the nation who have been awarded the first College Board Bob Costas Grants for the Teaching of Writing, the College Board announced today. The grants are in recognition of the innovative methods these teachers use to inspire and develop their students' writing skills. The award was named for Bob Costas, the Emmy Award-winning broadcaster and author, due to his dedication to the craft of writing and his generous public service work on behalf of the National Commission on Writing. Each teacher will receive a grant of \$2,000.

"The honorees are remarkable teachers who are creative and successful in their approach to get young people excited about writing and learning," said Costas. "Their commitment is clearly reflected in the confidence they are building in their students, who are developing lifelong skills of incredible value. I'm honored to be associated with this national program recognizing such noble work."

One grant recipient was selected from each of the College Board's six regions. Barile will be honored at the College Board New England Regional Forum on February 6, 2006, at the Boston Marriott Copley Place Hotel in Boston, Massachusetts.

Nancy Barile

Approximately 18 percent of the students at Revere High School speak English as a second language or have limited English proficiency. Nancy Barile has been instrumental in designing both the curriculum for the summer school English program and a Saturday program that helps students develop the writing skills needed to pass the state assessment.

“My philosophy in teaching writing is grounded in the belief that all students can become successful writers,” wrote Barile. She teaches her students that good writing transcends ethnic and socioeconomic background.

One student, Merzudin Ibrić, emigrated from Bosnia with his family in 1998. “During my sophomore year, I was planning on dropping out of school so that I could get a job to help support my family. I was not interested in school, and my grades were terrible,” he wrote. Merzudin credited Barile with convincing him to stay in school. She told him that despite the fact that English was his second language, he could become a good writer.

Barile worked closely with Merzudin on his composition skills and helped him to pass the state assessment test. She encouraged him to take AP® English, and although he was hesitant, he received an A. Today, Merzudin is the recipient of a full scholarship to complete a postgraduate year at Phillips Andover Academy. At Barile’s prompting, he is writing a book about his personal experience “surviving the war in Bosnia, coming to the U.S., adapting to a new culture and language, becoming a track star, and learning how to be a good student.”

Barile plans to use the Bob Costas Grant to bring back the high school’s literary magazine, *Crossroads*, which was eliminated due to budget cuts.

Two other teachers from the New England Region were awarded honorable mentions: **James Siegel**, English teacher at Massabesic High School in Waterboro, Maine, and **Wayne Barr**, English teacher at Tantasqua Regional Senior High School in Fiskdale, Massachusetts.

Gaston Caperton, president of the College Board, said: “These winners, along with many of the other highly qualified applicants, are doing critical work. To succeed in the classroom and later in life, students need to acquire strong writing skills. We were heartened by the overwhelming response we received in the first year of this program and to learn about so many great efforts being made across the country to inspire students to write well.”

The College Board established the National Commission on Writing in 2002 to create more national support for the teaching of writing. Bob Costas, a *New York Times* best-selling author, has received numerous Emmy Awards, including two for writing, and has been honored as Sportscaster of the Year a record eight times by the National Sportscasters and Sportswriters Association. He has supported the Commission’s work by producing a national public service announcement encouraging young people to develop strong writing skills for success in the classroom and the workplace.

Teachers of grades 6–12 from any discipline, in both public and nonpublic schools, are eligible for the Bob Costas Grants, as are writing programs that take place within schools or the community. For more details about the award and the other honorees, visit www.collegeboard.com/costasgrants.

The College Board is a not-for-profit membership association whose mission is to connect students to college success and opportunity. Founded in 1900, the association is composed of more than 5,000 schools, colleges, universities, and other educational organizations. Each year, the College Board serves seven million students and their parents, 23,000 high schools, and 3,500 colleges through major programs and services in college admissions, guidance, assessment, financial aid, enrollment, and teaching and learning. Among its best-known programs are the SAT[®], the PSAT/NMSQT[®], and the Advanced Placement Program[®] (AP[®]). The College Board is committed to the principles of excellence and equity, and that commitment is embodied in all of its programs, services, activities, and concerns.

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