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NEA honors the Missouri National Education Association with human and
civil rights award

Missouri NEA is among a dozen recipients of the NEA Human and Civil Rights Award

HOUSTON—The Missouri National Education Association’s intensive action to focus on racial justice and its work to eliminate educational disparities that disadvantage people of color has earned Missouri NEA the Rosena J. Willis Memorial Award, awarded annually to a NEA state affiliate.

“Missouri NEA is leading the way in representing NEA’s goals of creating a fair, just, equitable public school system,” said NEA President Lily Eskelsen García. “We are proud of the efforts they have achieved and will continue to accomplish. Missouri NEA is an exemplary organization that understands that fighting for civil rights within our schools is essential.”

Since 2016, Missouri NEA’s Legislative Resolution committee has led the charge to identify policies in Missouri NEA’s platform that prop up institutional racism. Then, the committee re-writes or eliminates these resolutions, thereby improving Missouri NEA and what it stands for.

Missouri NEA strives to uphold and follow it platform. For example, its 3-1(g) policy, which calls for racially diverse leadership in the state association, has been emphasized as an urgent goal. At its state Representative Assembly, Missouri NEA celebrates the involvement of members and communities of color.

Outside of its internal operations, Missouri NEA also has worked to ensure that students of color have the resources they need to succeed. For example, its growing Educators Rising program encourages high school students of color to pursue careers in education by providing them support and scholarship. The goal is to foster diverse educators for future Missouri classrooms.

Even for students pursuing other fields, Missouri NEA offers scholarship opportunities. For example, the Gilbert Balderrama scholarship is offered to Missouri public high school seniors of color pursuing a college degree.

With people of color constituting 29.79 percent of its membership, Missouri NEA is growing more diverse. As it strives to create a more racially just organization and to provide opportunities for students of color in the state, NEA is proud to celebrate its efforts and accomplishments.

Missouri NEA was one out of 12 outstanding social justice oriented people and organizations honored at NEA’s 2019 NEA Human and Civil Rights Awards, which took place on July 3, in Houston, Texas. Click on link to view video tribute celebrating the Missouri NEA.

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The National Education Association is the nation’s largest professional employee organization, representing more than 3 million elementary and secondary teachers, higher education faculty, education support professionals, school administrators, retired educators, and students preparing to become teachers.