

***The O'Rourke Prize
2012- 2013 Honoree
Michelle Bourgeois***



Learning Forward Colorado is honored to present the 12th annual O'Rourke Prize to a distinguished Colorado educator, **Michelle Bourgeois**. Michelle serves as an Instructional Technology Director for the St. Vrain Valley School District in Longmont, Colorado.

The O'Rourke Prize, sponsored by Learning Forward Colorado and Mrs. Anne O'Rourke, honors an exemplary leader of professional learning and collaborative practices who has significantly impacted the learning of educators. This annual award is named for the late Dr. Bill O'Rourke, a distinguished Colorado educator. The nomination process addresses the attributes of vision, commitment, leadership, and effectiveness as well as the Learning Forward Professional Learning Standards.

Michelle was nominated by Learning Forward Colorado Co-President, Joan Watson, who stated that despite her advanced technological knowledge, Michelle portrays the perfect staff developer: approachable, non-judgmental, flexible, and willing to take folks from where they are to the next knowledge level. She celebrates the learner's current knowledge and willingness to learn. Michelle consistently exemplifies her vision of using technology to enhance teachers' delivery techniques and content knowledge, giving them additional tools to motivate and engage every student in every classroom.

In addition to her technological skills, Michelle is a big picture systems thinker who is adept at seeing the most important aspects of an issue and figuring out how the use of technology can be supportive in finding the most productive solution. She is amazingly wise and uses great intuition as well as empirical data for all of her professional decision-making.

Perhaps most important is Michelle's kindness. She wants everyone to be competent in the necessary 21st Century skills but is quick to emphasize that adults, like our youthful students, are unique learners with various learning styles and learning time lines. Her cheerful persistence and tact are present in every interaction she has with her fellow educators.

We celebrate Michelle's knowledge, wisdom, kindness, passion, and dedication to quality professional learning for all educators and their students, and we deeply appreciate the work she is doing in the St. Vrain Valley School District and the state of Colorado.

Learning Forward Colorado believes the success of all students is dependent upon highly effective educators who engage in ongoing professional learning.