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Willamette Education Service District Communications Team Receives AESAs 2024 Outstanding Achievement in ESA Writing & Research Award

The Association of Educational Service Agencies (AESAs) has awarded the Willamette Education Service District (WESD) Communications Team the 2024 Outstanding Achievement in ESA Writing & Research Award for advancing the goals and philosophies of educational service agencies (ESAs).

Under the visionary leadership of Michael Clark, the Communications Team has redefined how ESAs engage with their communities, foster equity, and support strategic initiatives. Drawing on his experience in a resource-limited school district, Clark joined WESD with a mission to build the kind of communications support he once needed. Over the past four years, his vision has materialized into a dynamic six-person team that has transformed WESDs culture, expanded its impact, and pioneered communication practices that serve as a model for ESAs nationwide.

The team has implemented cutting-edge tools and strategies, such as drone photography for crisis management, research-backed visual storytelling, and modern email marketing. Their initiatives include securing state funding for critical projects, such as a career and technical education center that provides underserved students with hands-on training and career pathways.

WESDs Communications Team extends its impact statewide, offering scalable services that strengthen district operations and improve outcomes. Their collaboration with organizations like the Oregon School Public Relations Association (OSPRA), the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA), and the National School Public Relations Association (NSPRA) reflects their dedication to professional excellence and advocacy for educational innovation.

This commitment to innovation has earned the team five "Oregon's Best" awards and over a dozen Awards of Excellence, affirming their status as leaders in educational communications. The addition of the AESAs award further highlights their outstanding achievements and impact.

About AESAs

The Association of Educational Service Agencies (AESAs) is a national organization dedicated to supporting regional educational service agencies in their mission to improve educational opportunities and student outcomes. AESAs provides professional development, advocacy, and leadership support to its member agencies nationwide. For more information about AESAs and its programs, please visit <https://aesaus>.