



NEWS RELEASE

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News Media Contact: Communication and Media Relations, 678-301-6020

GCPS teacher honored for work with students interested in skilled trades

Charles “Chaz” Kachmar, who teaches metals and welding at Maxwell High School of Technology, has been named a 2018 Harbor Freight Tools for Schools Prize for Teaching Excellence award winner. The award honors the top high school skilled trades teachers in the country, and comes with a \$100,000 prize. He learned of the honor during a surprise visit to his classroom which allowed him to immediately share the news with his students as he cheered, saying “We did it! We won!” As part of the award, Maxwell High’s skilled trades program will receive \$70,000 and Kachmar will receive \$30,000 for his personal use.



Kachmar, who has been a teacher for 23 years, following a career as a marine insurance underwriter, says he’s motivated by his students. “It’s all about showing students the doors to a future, that is my love,” Kachmar said. “The students become my forever kids. I keep in touch with a majority of them through social media to follow their personal growth. Their success is what gets me excited.”

Kachmar has taught metals and welding at Maxwell High since 2012 and during that time, he has rebuilt and revitalized the skilled trades program at the school by raising the curriculum standards and developing career opportunities for students through a dual credit program with Gwinnett Technical College, where he also

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437 Old Peachtree Road, NW
Suwanee, GA 30024-2978
678-301-6000
www.gwinnett.k12.ga.us

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2010 and 2014 Winner of



teaches as an adjunct professor. His Maxwell High students give back to the community by building beds for local homeless women and children in need of emergency shelter. With the same fanfare as signing ceremonies for college-bound athletes, Kachmar holds a signing ceremony for his graduating seniors to announce where they will go on to school or employment.

The Harbor Freight Tools for Schools Prize for Teaching Excellence was started in 2017 by Harbor Freight Tools Founder Eric Smidt to recognize extraordinary public high school skilled trades teachers and programs with a proven track record of dedication and performance. The 2018 prize drew more than 550 applications from 49 states and included three rounds of judging, each by an independent panel that included experts from industry, education, trades, philanthropy and civic leadership. Kachmar is one of three first place winners.