



NEWS RELEASE

Three Inspiring Educators Chosen as Winners of Inaugural McGraw Hill Pathfinder Awards

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Columbus, Ohio (May 2, 2023) – McGraw Hill, a leading global education company, today announced the inaugural winners of the McGraw Hill Pathfinder Awards, which recognize educators for innovative and inventive teaching. This year's winners include three exceptional educators from across K-12, higher ed and post-graduate education who are breaking new ground in their approach to teaching and helping learners succeed.

Each McGraw Hill Pathfinder Award recipient wins a \$5,000 cash prize.

The winners of the 2023 McGraw Hill Pathfinder Awards are:

Roger Lee Mendoza, Ph.D.

Business professor, California State University-Los Angeles

Los Angeles, CA

At the root of Roger Lee Mendoza's approach to teaching is a simple, yet powerful, goal: to connect with today's students and understand them from their own perspective.

A deeply caring and hard-working educator, he routinely lingers for hours after his lectures are over to answer students' questions and help them practice for tests. Roger has also devoted his career to developing and fine-

tuning approaches to making his teaching engaging and interesting to the incredibly diverse group of students in his courses, and amid the distractions of electronic devices. Students in these courses learn through a broad mix of creative problem-solving and decision-making techniques, with seamless integration of instructional technology. They include Jeopardy-style contests, computer-based game simulations, case work, skills-building workshops, point-counterpoint debates, music, and poetry, among others. Notably, he solicits regular observations and critical feedback from colleagues, which he believes are equally important for evolving models of both learning and teaching.

Great teachers, Roger says, are lifelong learners: "The professor has to learn as much as the student, I believe. If a student is to learn and be inspired, the professor has to learn as much from him or her." That, he adds, also helps bridge the gap between the generational and educational experiences and expectations of professors and students alike.

Ibrahim Odeh

Founding Director, Global Leaders in Construction Management at Columbia University
New York, N.Y.

As a professor of Construction Management, Business Strategy & Development, Ibrahim Odeh trains engineers who will be the future leaders of the world's biggest construction projects. He teaches Columbia students in-person in New York, exposing them to industry leaders and taking them on trips to construction sites around the globe. But Ibrahim is also democratizing access to his courses through wildly popular MOOCs ("Massively Open Online Courses") that are available to professionals in the industry and to learners studying independently anywhere. His Construction Management course, which he led along with world-renowned guest presenters, currently is the largest construction course in the world with over half a million learners in 190 countries taking his courses already. Students in far-flung parts of the world have reached out to thank him for making these courses available to those who can't travel to universities in global hubs.

"We can have a great positive impact on people from the biggest cities to even small villages, in professional life, and also at other educational institutions," he says. "That's exciting and it keeps us going and motivated."

Melissa Tracy

Food Studies and Social Studies Teacher at Odyssey Charter School
Wilmington, Del.

A driven, entrepreneurial educator at a K-12 charter school in Delaware, Melissa Tracy is the driving force behind one of the most unique career and technical education programs in the country. Thanks to her creativity and inventiveness, Melissa transformed an elective Food Studies course into a massive agriscience program that has

multiple outdoor gardens, goats and chickens, a hydroponic lab and opportunities for students to earn dual-enrollment college credits. Students learn about the environment, history, culture, and power through the lens of food, and the 3,500 vegetables they grow on-site each month are regularly donated to local charities.

“If you had told me when I first started teaching that I would be an agriscience teacher almost full time, I would have told you that you’re insane,” Melissa says. Her advice for educators? “Think big...Never stop learning... Surround yourself with solutions-oriented people.”

“Incredible educators deserve recognition,” said Simon Allen, McGraw Hill CEO. “We hope by putting these innovative teachers on a pedestal we can inspire more young people to choose the teaching profession and spark new ideas for the millions of educators working with learners everyday.”

For more information about these educators and the McGraw Hill Pathfinder Award, visit:

<https://www.mheducation.com/pathfinder-awards>.

McGraw Hill

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