



The Treatment and
Learning Centers
TLC

a family of services where caring comes first

2301 Research Blvd., Suite 110
Rockville, Maryland 20850
301.424.5200
Fax 301.424.8063
TTY 301.424.5203
www.ttlc.org

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CONTACT
Kristin Fletcher
301.424.5200, ext. 270
kfletcher@ttl.org

Dustin Hartwigen a Winner in *The Gazette's* "My Favorite Teacher" Contest *High School Teacher from TLC's Katherine Thomas School Wins Rockville/Aspen Hill*

Rockville, MD—[TLC—The Treatment and Learning Centers](http://www.ttlc.org) announced today that [Katherine Thomas School](http://www.katherinethomas.org) teacher **Dustin Hartwigen** was the winner for Rockville/Aspen Hill high schools in *The Gazette's* "My Favorite Teacher" contest in Montgomery County. Hartwigen, one of four finalists, is a second year physical education and health teacher at KTS, an independent day school for students in preschool through twelfth grade with moderate to severe learning disabilities and/or high-functioning autism.

Said Hartwigen, "The reason that I teach is because I know that I can make a difference every single day. And even if I only reach one student a day, I know that the world is better for what I have done." When asked to name one of the things he likes most about teaching at KTS, Hartwigen said, "I really enjoy the way that the staff and administration give the teachers the ability to be creative in the ways that they teach, I think that it gives our students the best opportunity to use the skills they learn here later in life."

Hartwigen was nominated by 10th grader **Marley Hein**, who wrote in her nominating essay:

"I like him because he helps everyone whether you're in a bad mood or not. He is interested in what I do and the things that interest me. He tries ways to get me interested in new things that I think I don't even like to do. He always is happy to see us and tells us stories about when he was our age and the sports he was involved with. He also coaches my Special Olympics basketball team. He shows us by doing so many extra outside activities that he cares a lot about us. He is a great person."

Both humbled and honored, Hartwigen thanked everyone at TLC and KTHS for making his job easy and fun, with special thanks to high school director **Rhona Schwartz** and teacher **Debbie Hokanson**, because without them, "I wouldn't be here."

Hartwigen, 24, is from Monrovia, Maryland and holds a bachelor's degree in exercise science from McDaniel College.

About TLC

[TLC—The Treatment and Learning Centers](http://www.ttlc.org), located in Rockville, Md., improves lives and expands possibilities for individuals with special needs. Celebrating over 57 years of service to the community in 2008, TLC is committed to integrity and excellence in our care and strives to assist all, regardless of their ability to pay. For more information call 301.424.5200 or visit www.ttlc.org.

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