



American Association of Teachers of German, Inc.

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PRESS RELEASE

AATG Honors Outstanding German Educators & Programs

CHERRY HILL, N.J., September 9, 2026 — The American Association of Teachers of German (AATG) has announced the recipients of its 2026 awards, recognizing outstanding educators, programs, and advocates for their contributions to German language education in the United States.

The 2026 award recipients will be honored during a [virtual awards presentation on November 8.](#)

“These award recipients represent the very best of our profession. Through innovative, engaging programs and carefully designed pedagogies, the honorees promote real-life communication skills, cultural knowledge, and intercultural awareness and understanding. Countless German learners from across the country have benefited from their creativity and dedication—and will continue to do so into the future,” said Jennifer Redmann, president of the American Association of Teachers of German.

Outstanding German Educator Awards

AATG’s highest honor, the **Outstanding German Educator Award**, recognizes educators who demonstrate excellence in German education and creative leadership in German language education at the local, state, and national levels.

In the **University/Collegiate** category, AATG recognizes **Bettina Brandt**, Teaching Professor at Penn State University in State College, Pennsylvania.

In the **High School (grades 9–12)** category, AATG recognizes **Katrina Bauerlein**, German teacher at Mahopac High School and Middle School in Mahopac, New York.

German Embassy Teacher of Excellence

Each year, the German Embassy recognizes emerging German educators for excellence in teaching, creativity in the classroom, and exceptional dedication to German language education. Three educators will receive this recognition in 2026:

Julia Danzeiser, German teacher at Belton High School and Lake Belton High School in Temple, Texas

Will Funk-Heiser, German teacher at Centennial High School in Howard County, Maryland

Brian Jacob, German teacher at Lindbergh High School in St. Louis, Missouri

Each recipient receives complimentary registration to the AATG Annual Conference, providing opportunities for professional learning and networking with German educators from across the country.

AATG/Goethe-Institut Outstanding GAPP Coordinator Award

April Krempasky, German teacher at Northampton Area High School in Northampton, Pennsylvania, will receive the **AATG/Goethe-Institut Outstanding GAPP Coordinator Award**.

The award honors German educators who provide students with opportunities to participate in short-term exchanges to Germany through the German American Partnership Program (GAPP).

AATG/Goethe-Institut Certificate of Merit

The **AATG/Goethe-Institut Certificate of Merit** honors AATG members for outstanding achievement in furthering the teaching of German in the United States. Nine educators will receive the Certificate of Merit in 2026:

Albrecht Classen, University of Arizona, Tucson, Arizona

Brooke Gardner, Glacier High School, Kalispell, Montana

Charlene Heinzman, Westfield High School, Westfield, Indiana

David Rosenbaum, Marian High School, Mishawaka, Indiana

Katie Rombauer, Hazen High School, Renton, Washington

Marc Rathmann, Purdue University, West Lafayette, Indiana

Margaret Gonglewski, The George Washington University, Washington, D.C.

Rebecca Linam, University of North Alabama, Florence, Alabama

Sandra Alfers, Western Washington University, Bellingham, Washington

FL-A-CH Award

In 2026, **Ursula Schöneich** will be recognized with the **FL-A-CH Award** for excellence in the teaching of the languages and cultures of Austria, the German-speaking regions of Switzerland, Liechtenstein, and South Tyrol.

Schöneich has shown an exceptional commitment to German language education and the promotion of Austrian language and culture. She is Founder, Principal, and Academic Director of the GERMAN SCHOOL campus in Newport Beach, California, and serves as Director of the Exclusive Official West Coast ÖSD Examination Centre, supporting internationally recognized Austrian German-language certification.

German Centers of Excellence Post-Secondary

This year, three German programs will be recognized as **German Centers of Excellence in the Post-Secondary category**. The designation honors well-established and growing German programs distinguished by excellence in instruction and strong support from administrators, professional colleagues, alumni, and students.

The 2026 German Centers of Excellence are:

Elon University — Elon, North Carolina

University of Rhode Island — Kingston, Rhode Island

Furman University — Greenville, South Carolina

German Centers of Excellence K-12

This year, two German programs will be recognized as **German Centers of Excellence in the K-12 category**. The designation honors well-established and growing German programs distinguished by excellence in instruction, strong student engagement, and support from school administrators and the broader school community.

The 2026 German Centers of Excellence in the K-12 category are:

West Windsor-Plainsboro Regional School District, West Windsor, New Jersey

German School Campus, Newport Beach, California

Friend of German Award (Community)

Monika Moyrer of the **German Society of Pennsylvania** will receive this year's **Friend of German Award for Community Engagement**.

The award recognizes outstanding support for and promotion of German in the community and exemplary leadership in advocating for German and German language education at the local, regional, or national level.

Max Kade Prize for Best Article in *The German Quarterly*

The **Max Kade Prize for Best Article in *The German Quarterly*** goes to **Asif Rahamim** of Freie Universität Berlin for his article, *"Time(-space) Out of Joint: Franz Kafka's Disrupted Chronotopes."*

The selection committee praised Rahamim's essay for bringing the work of critic-philosopher Mikhail Bakhtin and Franz Kafka into productive conversation, offering new insight into Kafka's experience of modernity.

Award for Best Article in *Die Unterrichtspraxis/Teaching German*

The 2026 Award for **Best Article in *Die Unterrichtspraxis/Teaching German*** goes to **Lindsay Preseau** of Iowa State University for her article, "A Comparative Analysis of Gender-Just Language in First-Year German Textbooks."

Honorable Mention for Best Article in *Die Unterrichtspraxis/Teaching German*

Die Unterrichtspraxis/Teaching German recognizes **Zach Ramon Fitzpatrick, Charlie Johnson, and Susanne Rott** with an honorable mention for their article, "Navigating Non-Binary Inclusion in the German-Language Classroom."

About the American Association of Teachers of German

The American Association of Teachers of German (AATG) supports and advances the teaching and learning of the German language and German-speaking cultures in the United States. AATG provides professional development, resources, recognition programs, and opportunities for educators and students nationwide. Learn more at AATG.org.

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