2015 PCSS Conference

October 15—October 17, 2015
The Toftrees Golf Resort & Conference Center
One Country Club Lane
State College, PA 16803

C³ = College Career Civic Life
Thank you for attending the 61st Annual PCSS Conference

C³ = College + Career + Civic Life

PCSS 61th Annual Conference - October 16 - 18, 2014
Outstanding Commitment to Social Studies Education

G. Henry Cook - President/CEO, Somerset Trust

G. Henry Cook is President, CEO and Chairman of the Board of Directors of Somerset Trust Company. He is the fifth generation of his family to be president of this 125-year old bank. Somerset Trust Company is a $900 million bank with a $532 million Trust Department based in Somerset, Pennsylvania.

In 2013, the bank was recognized with a number of honors. The Governor of Pennsylvania awarded Somerset Trust Company a State Impact Award for jobs creation. SNL Consulting named the bank to the 100 Best Community Banks in the Country. BNK named the bank as one of their Elite Banks. American Banker magazine named the bank the number 26th best bank in the country based on three-year average ROE. The bank was named fifth in the Best Places to Work in Pennsylvania, and the second Best Bank to Work For in the country. The Borough of Somerset initiated a new recognition by naming the bank an Exceptional Corporate Citizen.

Henry is active in many local, state and national civic activities. Among these, he is a Flight 93 National Memorial Federal Commissioner. He is on the Board of Directors of the Pittsburgh Zoo and PPG Aquarium. He is current President of Somerset County Economic Development Council and also the Authority. He just completed six years as President of Somerset Volunteer Fire Department and was honored by his brother and sister firefighters with their Life Time Achievement Award. He served on the committee to commission the USS Somerset in Philadelphia into the U.S. Navy.

Henry follows his father in his commitment to US 219. He is involved in three organizations committed to the completion of US 219: Continental One, Casselman Valley Economic Development Group and The Greater Cumberland Committee. He also served on the advisory group to the engineering firm designing the US 219 corridor from Meyersdale to Interstate 68.

He has been involved with Junior Achievement since 1980, with most of his work being in Somerset with the Honors Students.

2014 PCSS AWARDS

Teacher of Year (Co-Recipients)

Christian Wrabley - Greater Johnstown Middle School (Middle)

Christian Wrabley co-leads student government and a leader of the schools Interact Club. Among other things this leader as teacher led the school’s first school wide elections, where members of the student government are selected. His classes also did a mock election during March Madness, using U.S. presidents for the election. The school’s election follows the same rules for registration, voting, etc. as we do throughout PA.

Barbara Thompson - West Side Elementary School (Elementary)

Barbara Thompson, a fifth-grade teacher, and she leads the K-Kids Club, a partner of the Johnstown Kiwanis. She’s an elementary teacher who shines in the civic education, and as a club leader she and fifth graders have created a community garden and the produce is sent to a needy neighborhood co-op store for use with soups or sale. The club is presently collecting food for the Saint Vincent DePaul’s Food Pantry. Barb has been leading the club activities for three years. She is a specialist in cooperative learning and getting students to become active contributors, and her teaching is “mightily engaging,” according to his principal.

Student Teacher

Matthew Gault - University of Pittsburgh-Johnstown

As an education major at University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown, Matthew Gault completed his studies with a 3.74 GPA and was UPJ’s senior student advisor to the Pennsylvania Council of the Social Studies student affiliate. Matthew Gault completed his student teaching tenure at Westmont Hilltop High School. While there, Matthew was given charge of 11th and 12th grade Sociology and Government courses. Within each of his classes, Matthew was confronted with a diverse student population. Both his cooperating teacher and university supervisor felt Matthew display high professional standards that enabled all students to achieve at their highest abilities. Continuing to foster his love of history, Matthew currently is the Assistant Education Director for Fort Ligonier in Ligonier, Pennsylvania. Attending tonight’s presentation with Matthew are his parents Matt and Julie.
Outstanding Projects (Co-Recipients)

John Harris - Somerset Senior High School - Hometown History

John Harris is one of the few that left the private sector looking for more personal fulfillment. Upon graduating from Penn State with a degree in Aero Engineering, John worked for a Naval Defense Contractor for seven years. While working in the defense industry, John earned his degree in Social Studies Education from Saint Francis and has been teaching for the last 17 years. The majority of his professional time has been at his old high school Somerset Senior High. Here John spearheaded the design of a new course titled Hometown History and has since won two prestigious awards based on the class objectives. In 2007 John’s class idea won recognition from PSEA for his innovative class. In 2010, Mr. Harris won the History Channel’s Save Our History national contest.

John is married to Diane and has three wonderful children Lorin, Eric, and Anna.

Dan Tomak and Devin Carosi - Greater Johnstown High School - Rotary Interact Club

Dan Tomak and Devin Carosi are Greater Johnstown High School social studies teachers who initiated the new Johnstown Interact Club, which over three years has grown to over 150 student members. The club is hands on, most recently 60 members participated with their sponsor service club, the Johnstown Rotary, in cleaning up litter from local highways. Under the leadership of Tomak and Carosi, the Interact students have raised thousands of dollars to fight polio, cancer and other concerns. They have completed a couple dozen community service projects including supporting the 2014 Pennsylvania Council for the Social Studies Conference.

Outstanding Projects Cont. (Co-Recipients)

George B. Kaufman, Esq. - Somerset County Attorney - We the People

George Kaufman was born and raised in Somerset County and graduated from Somerset Area High School in 1971. Having earned his college degree in 1975, from Franklin and Marshall, George furthered his education at University of Pittsburgh School of Law and earned his Juris Doctorate in 1978. While operating his own private practice, George also served as an Assistant District Attorney for over 20 years and the Solicitor for Children and Youth for 5 years. Mr. Kaufman has also been a faculty member Alleghany College of Maryland, instructing a variety of courses in law. George has always been civic minded having served or continuing to serve on a variety of area Boards. Examples of his commitment would be Past President of the Historical and Genealogical Society of Somerset County, Past President of the Somerset County Bar Association, Past President of the Somerset Exchange Club, Co-founder of the Somerset County Rails to Trails Association, plus many more. For over ten years, George Kaufman has been an active supporter, advisor, and judge for the annual We the People Congressional Hearings. His insights have aided numerous school programs to compete competitively in the annual event. George is married to Mary E. Schellhammer, Esq and resides in Jefferson Township.