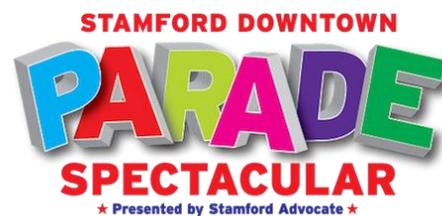


FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Stamford Downtown Parade Spectacular Float to Feature Stamford Public Schools' 2019 Teacher of the Year

STAMFORD CT, November 11, 2019 – Among the giant balloons, marching bands and entertainers, spectators attending the 26th annual Stamford Downtown Parade Spectacular will be treated to the familiar faces of many respected members of the community. One float in particular is a perpetual favorite, carrying a beloved teacher on a float themed to her specific endeavors within the classroom.

Katelyn Tavalacci, a fifth-grade literacy and social studies teacher at Julia A. Stark Elementary School and Stamford's 2019 Teacher of the Year, will be riding on one of the parade's five floats, entitled "Don't Just Read Books, Climb Inside Them." During her 13-year tenure at Stark, Tavalacci has taught several grade levels and subject areas. She also founded Stark LEAD, an extracurricular leadership academy designed to build leadership capacity in fourth and fifth grade students.

A graduate of Stamford Public Schools, Tavalacci is passionate about helping her students to become independent, creative, curious thinkers. By bringing books to life in the classroom, she is constantly working to build lifelong learners. In addition to establishing LEAD, Tavalacci has served on the Literacy Curriculum Committee and was a member of the school Data Team, a former Spotlight Winner and an SPEF Excellence in Education nominee.

Tavalacci holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Inclusive Elementary/Special Education from Syracuse University and a Master of Arts degree in Literacy Education and a Sixth-Year Certificate in Curriculum and Instruction. She is a 2003 graduate of Stamford High School.

The parade, taking place on Sunday, November 24, is one of the largest of its kind in the country, with giant helium balloons and more than 200,000 spectators annually. This parade is presented by Stamford Advocate/Hearst Media and is hosted by Stamford Downtown Special Services District. To kick off the festivities, the press is invited to attend a **Press Conference with a special photo opportunity and balloon training on Thursday, November 14, 12:00 P.M. at Latham Park on Bedford Street in Stamford. Event sponsors, volunteer balloon handlers and representatives from Stamford Downtown Special Services will**

gather to announce details of the parade. Full media kits will be provided and our featured press conference guest balloon – The Octonauts – will make a special appearance.

This year's planned parade highlights include a performance by Bello Nock, Comedic Daredevil and Annaliese Nock, Daredaughter, and 14 giant balloons such as new balloon Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer and returning favorites Bob the Builder, Clifford the Big Red Dog, Elmo, Kung Fu Panda and The Very Hungry Caterpillar. In addition to the procession's signature balloons, the streets will also be filled with fabulous floats and dance groups, and marching bands including the University of New Haven Chargers Marching Band, the Butler Golden Tornado Marching Band, NYPD Emerald Society Pipe & Drum Band, the Fairfield County Police Pipes and Drums, the Saints Brigade Drum & Bugle Corps and high school groups from Stamford, Westhill, Roosevelt, Uniondale, Brentwood and Harrison. Television personality and Stamford resident Alan Kalter will once again grace the grandstand, acting as the parade's Master of Ceremonies for his 16th year.

The parade is scheduled to begin at noon on November 24 at the intersection of Summer Street at Hoyt Street and conclude on Atlantic Street, just a few short blocks from the Stamford Metro-North Railroad Station. On the eve of the parade, a Balloon Inflation Party presented by Point72 will be held on Saturday, November 23 from 3-6 p.m. at the intersection of Hoyt Street and Summer Street in Stamford Downtown. This pre-parade event will allow spectators a behind-the-scenes look at the balloons as they come to life and offer music, parade talent including Comedic Daredevil Bello Nock and cartoon characters to greet and entertain spectators.

For photographs and more information, please email pr@stamford-downtown.com or call 203-348-5285, or to see what's happening in Stamford Downtown, please visit www.stamford-downtown.com or follow us [@BalloonParadeCT](https://twitter.com/BalloonParadeCT).

About Stamford Downtown Special Services District:

Stamford Downtown Special Services District is responsible for creating, managing and promoting a quality environment for people, which enhances the economic vitality of Stamford Downtown.

www.stamford-downtown.com

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