

## 2020 Golden Apple Award winners

**Business/industry category:** [The Ridge Behavioral Health System](#)

The Ridge and Fayette County Public Schools have collaborated on several initiatives to help cover gaps and provide for students' mental health needs as they aim to serve the whole child.

**Community organization / nonprofit:** [Bluegrass Greensource](#)

Bluegrass Greensource, Central Kentucky's one-stop shop for standards-aligned environmental education, has been in FCPS classrooms for over 15 years. In partnership with LiveGreenLexington, Bluegrass Greensource launched recycling programs in every school and continues to support student-driven litter, recycling, and water-quality initiatives. Bluegrass Greensource serves as the nexus between school sustainability needs and the community's desire to help.

**Faith-based group:** [First Baptist Bracktown for its Black Male Working Academy Inc.](#)

Almost 15 years ago, BMWA began to address the underachievement of black males through a school-based initiative serving 40 boys. It has since transformed into a districtwide program serving over 300 students in grades K-12. BMWA leaders, under the direction of Rosz Akins, Roger Cleveland, and Pastor C.B Akins, are making a difference in the lives of young men.

**Individual/youth:** **Deuce Russell**

For his Eagle Scout project, Jeremy "Deuce" Russell created an adaptive library for the Fayette County Preschool Center. Through conversations with staff there, Deuce decided he did not want to provide a typical library. After collecting more than 500 books, he researched how to adapt them for children with various disabilities. He also taught members of his Scout troop how to adapt books for children with motor delays and visual impairments.

**Individual:** **Heather Matics of the Fayette County Attorney's Office**

Juvenile Prosecutor Heather Matics has collaborated with FCPS to help reduce youth violent crime and create alternative solutions for youth in crisis. Her level of commitment to the district and community youth is unequalled, and this award is most fitting for her relentless efforts.

**Postsecondary institution / student group:** **Office of Diversity in the University of Kentucky's College of Agriculture, Food, & Environment**

The Office of Diversity and the Kappa League have developed a strong partnership over the past four years through Jr. Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Related Sciences (Jr. MANRRS). The Men of MANRRS now mentor FCPS students through a STEM grant project, with two-hour weekly sessions running through May 2021.

**School-based organization:** **Kappa Klub at Leestown Middle School**

Leon Buford-Kelly, administrative dean at Leestown Middle School, recognized the need for a mentoring program for male students from diverse backgrounds and launched the Kappa Klub about five years ago. Through academics, professionalism, and etiquette, Kappa Klub ensures academic success through weekly grade checks, study/homework sessions, and reading.

Posted Sept. 18, 2020