



Daniel Rich, Ph.D., with Ralph Ferretti of University of Delaware's College of Education and Jack Varsalona of Wilmington University, the recipient of the John H. Taylor Education Leadership Award in 2016.

Daniel Rich, Ph.D. named 2017 John H. Taylor, Jr. Education Leadership Award Winner

» The Delaware State Chamber of Commerce is pleased to name Daniel Rich, Ph.D., as the recipient of the 2017 John H. Taylor, Jr. Education Leadership award. Daniel Rich is a professor of Public Policy and director of the Community Engagement Initiative at the University of Delaware. He also serves as Policy Director for the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission. This prestigious award was presented at DSCC's annual Superstars in Education

Reception & Awards Ceremony on Monday, May 8, 2017, at Wilmington University's Doberstein Admissions Center Auditorium.

The John H. Taylor, Jr. Education Leadership Award recognizes someone within the community who has provided sustained leadership in advancing Delaware education and who, by doing so, has also made our community a better place in which to live and work. The Partnership, Inc. is the 501(c)3

education affiliate of the Delaware State Chamber of Commerce.

"I have worked with the State Chamber for decades in various capacities. I was one of the initial members of The Partnership, Inc. I served as a member of the Board of the Delaware Public Policy Institute from 2001 until 2015 and worked closely with John Taylor, Skip Schoenhals, and Bob Laskowski, as well as with Rich Heffron and my other Chamber colleagues.

“I have been an educator all my professional life. What inspires me is the underlying belief that public education is the foundation of a democratic society, and that the fulfillment of America’s promise depends on, more than anything, the education of all its citizens.”

I am deeply honored to receive the education leadership award from the State Chamber. It is particularly meaningful to me because it is named for my friend and long-term collaborator John Taylor. John is one of the true heroes of Delaware public education. He was a man of courage, both personally and publicly, and he was an unflagging champion for fairness and justice in all facets of society, but most especially in public education. He was a tireless advocate who believed deeply that the connection of schools and communities was fundamental to stability, prosperity and quality of life, and he was concerned that we had lost that connection, particularly in the City of Wilmington.

Everyone who knew John, knew where he stood on public issues, particularly issues of public education. John was by nature and temperament a teacher, but his classroom was the entire State of Delaware and far beyond. To receive an education leadership award named for John has great personal importance to me because he is one of the individuals who has most influenced my own outlook on public education, and what needs to be done to provide high-quality educational opportunities to all students,” says Rich.

With nearly 50 years of experience as

an educational leader at the University of Delaware, Dr. Rich is recognized for his passion, vision, and commitment. He currently holds faculty appointments in the School of Public Policy and Administration, where he serves as a professor, academic advisor, and director of the Ph.D. program in Urban Affairs and Public Policy. He was a founding dean of the College of Human Services, Education and Public Policy, a dean of the College of Urban Affairs and Public Policy, and a University Provost.

“I have been an educator all my professional life. What inspires me is the underlying belief that public education is the foundation of a democratic society, and that the fulfillment of America’s promise depends on, more than anything, the education of all its citizens. We are still struggling to achieve the full expression of that commitment, particularly as it applies to low-income, black and Latino, and many other students who have yet to have access to the high-quality public education that should be available to all Americans.

I believe that we must adopt and implement a new developmental framework for public education that starts at birth and continues through higher education, entry to

careers, and lifelong learning. Our public education system must adapt to meeting the changing and increasingly diverse needs of the students it serves, rather than trying to fit those students into a system that was never designed to meet their needs. Meeting this challenge requires contributions from all sectors and it is fundamental to the well-being and prosperity of our state and nation. We can do this and we must.”

Outside of the University of Delaware, Dan Rich’s commitment to education and public service does not end. He is an elected fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and serves as a member of the University’s Institute for Public Administration, the Delaware Environment Institute, and the Science, Ethics and Public Policy Program. Previously, he has served as a visiting professor at the University of Strathclyde in Scotland, senior research associate in the University’s Center for Energy and Environmental Policy, and is a recipient of the University of Delaware excellence-in-teaching award.

In November 2016, Governor Jack Markell inducted Dr. Rich into the Order of the First State for his service to the citizens of Delaware. Dr. Rich has served as Chair of the Delaware Early Childhood Council, a leader of the Vision Coalition education reform effort, a Delaware Commissioner of the Education Commission of the States, and a member of many Delaware education boards, commissions and councils. His research has focused on education, urban, energy, and science and technology policies; and his publications include 13 books and edited volumes, and more than 100 articles, monographs and professional papers.

“Among my most memorable experiences is the long-term collaboration with my friend John Taylor. John was an unyielding and outspoken advocate for a more just, prosperous and equitable quality of life for all Delawareans. He was an inspiration to work with, and tireless in his advocacy and his commitment to the fundamental principles of equity and fairness. I learned a great deal from John Taylor, more than I can ever express. He was courageous and never wavered at any time, in the face of any events, that the better nature of people could and would prevail, if only we would mobilize them to the higher task of all citizens.

For many decades, but more intensively when we began work on what was to become Vision 2015 and even more once he became Executive Director of DPPI, John and I worked together on education and related policy issues in Delaware. We teamed up on 13 knowledge-based partnership conferences, co-sponsored by the University of Delaware, the Delaware State Chamber and DPPI, that focused on critical issues for our state and our nation: education, health reform, economic development, energy, the nonprofit sector and much more. Education was a continuing theme, and together with our colleagues at the Vision Coalition and the Rodel Foundation, we focused attention on the critical changes needed to enable all Delaware students to have a high-quality public education.”

Dr. Rich’s devotion to excellence in education is evident in his passionate work and long record of service throughout the years. As many can attest, Daniel Rich is a dedicated worker,

enthusiastic advocate for education and progress, and has an extensive breadth of knowledge that is and has been invaluable to his field.

“I hope that we will all continue to learn from the values and commitments that John Taylor exemplified, particularly as they apply to the need to reshape public education to meet the needs of all students. That task is one of the great challenges of the 21st century, and no state and nation is better prepared to meet that challenge if we mobilize the full capacity of our communities to that common effort.”



“The committee made a great choice in selecting Dan Rich as the 2017 recipient of the John H. Taylor Jr. Education

Leadership Award. Over 20 years, I have had the privilege of working with many people dedicated to the goal that Delaware would have a world class public education system. Of all those people, Dan is at the top of the list in terms of knowledge, dedication, tenacity and wisdom about the journey we were and are on. Dan often provided insights that none of us would have never otherwise garnered. His handprints are on so many of the improvements in Delaware education that it would take pages to recite them all. Here are a few that stand out:

He was a key member of the original Vision 2015 leadership team. Many times it was his steady hand that brought differing views to a common vision, often on very thorny/complex issues. He was a master at building a consensus among

many strongly contrasting viewpoints.

Dan was the key leader that finally enabled Delaware to bring early childhood education into the 21st century. He was the chair of the Early Childhood Council when the state made and received major new investments for this very important aspect of educational improvement. These improvements have impacted thousands of students, setting higher standards and providing them with more support to reach those standards.

Dan was a key leader in the effort to have the University of Delaware be a strong community-facing institution that is at the table and engaged on issues of improving teaching quality, early childhood, school leadership, school climate, college access, and more. He led the University in the adoption of the Commitment to Delawareans initiative.

Congratulations to Dan Rich. This recognition is richly deserved. It is reflected in the thousands of student lives that have been made better by Delaware’s education system. Most of those people that have been touched by Dan’s efforts don’t even know his name, but we do and we give him a big THANK YOU!”

— Marvin “Skip” Schoenhals, WSFS Bank



“Although I left Delaware in 2011 for a career move to Indiana with my employer, PNC Bank, I worked closely with Dan Rich and others

in Delaware from 2002 through 2011, to improve the quality of early education in Delaware, with a focus on low income children. This included important policy advocacy with State legislators. Dan’s thoughtful commitment and focus on

helping improve the education for all children, starting at an early age through higher education, has been unwavering. His leadership has been instrumental in setting the stage for Delaware to create a high quality educational system. I hold him in the highest regard.”

— *Connie Bond Stuart, PNC Bank*



“Indefatigable” describes Dan to a “T.” Persisting tirelessly with determination and energy to advance the best education possible for all

Delaware’s children. I valued Dan’s wisdom, calm demeanor and unflagging optimism as we worked on everything from early childhood education to higher education issues. There is not an area of education in Delaware that Dan has not touched and left an indelible mark. Congrats to you, my friend!”

— *Terry Schooley, former chair of the House Education Committee*



“Dan Rich is tireless in his pursuits, dogged in his analysis, and true to his authentic self. I could go on about his professional career and what he has meant to me, and

quite literally thousands of students, staff, faculty, and community leaders that he has mentored over the years, but it is his passion that makes the unassailable difference. It inspires to no end and compels us all to get things done. I am pleased to know him as my colleague

and friend, but usually call him my big brother. And that will never change. Congratulations, Dan!”

— *Tony Allen, Bank of America*



“Dr. Rich is an extraordinary friend to the Delaware community. He has tirelessly contributed and invested in working to address its most challenging

and complex issues – especially those issues and opportunities involving education at any and all levels.

His successful policy work to improve Delaware’s education system spans the academic lifetime (of an individual), whether we highlight his early childhood education reform work, his work with WEIC to ensure Delaware students – no matter their race or where they live – have equal access to high-quality education, or the many, many policy scientists and students he has taught, trained and mentored (including me!) at UD, Dr. Rich’s legacy of serving Delaware’s education community will last

for years to come. Dan Rich has made, and continues to make an immeasurable difference to support our State.”

— *Rick Deadwyler, Delaware Community Foundation*



“As chair of the John H. Taylor Award committee, I could not be more pleased to acknowledge the tireless work of my friend Dan Rich. John and Dan were a dynamic

duo at UD and DPPI, where they focused on major public policy issues ranging from the environment to public education. Dan has always been a champion of partnerships and collaboration, which he exemplifies through his work on the Vision Coalition, the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission, and in the early learning community. Much like John Taylor, Dan possesses two powerful qualities in spades: the ability to bring people together and the courage to lead with passion and truth.”

— *Paul Herdman, Rodel Foundation of Delaware*

ABOUT THE JOHN H. TAYLOR, JR. LEADERSHIP AWARD

Throughout his professional career, Mr. Taylor was an educator. He began his career as a teacher, then served as the assistant to the superintendent of the Wilmington Public Schools. Taylor’s education background, coupled with his ability to share information and make connections, served him well as he rose to become editorial page editor for The News Journal before becoming president of the Delaware Public Policy Institute in 2005. As founding member of the Vision Coalition, Taylor’s leadership and directness were instrumental in building an impactful public-private partnership to advocate for improved education in Delaware. Taylor’s leadership style was always straightforward, clear-headed and unwavering. At the same time, he was a humorous and truly humble man.