PHYSICAL EDUCATION TEACHER AT FRANKLIN REGIONAL NAMED NATIONAL ALL-STAR IN EXCELA HEALTH’S PARTNERSHIP WITH PROJECT FIT AMERICA

MURRYSVILLE, PA ... April 20, 2017 ... Excela Health’s collaboration with Project Fit America (PFA) jump-started a fitness in education program that has resulted in a national award for physical education teacher Anthony Berardinelli of Heritage Elementary School in the Franklin Regional School District. Berardinelli is the lone recipient of the 2016 National All-Star Teacher of the Year Award from PFA who partnered with Excela Health on a pilot project to enhance physical activity and health education in participating schools.

PFA is a non-profit organization that implements innovative Fitness in Education programs in elementary and middle schools. In 2014, Excela Health, through its foundations, pledged more than $53,000 to pilot this program in three schools. PFA conducted a call for proposals with all public schools in Westmoreland County. The schools that were selected by PFA for program award were Greater Latrobe Junior High School in Latrobe, Norwin Hillcrest Intermediate School in North Huntingdon and Franklin Regional’s Heritage Elementary School in Murrysville.

Berardinelli was nominated for the award by the onsite PFA trainers and invited to submit lesson plans, teaching philosophies and PFA implementation strategies for his classes and after school activities. His selection was based on several factors including evidence based outcomes and overall rapport with the students that would affect their willingness to become more physically active.

“We are very proud to be part of this vital youth health initiative in our community. It speaks directly to Excela Health’s mission to improve the health and well-being of every life we
touch,” said Ron Ott, Excela’s Senior Vice President for Community and Government Relations. “Healthy habits must be cultivated from the start. We are pleased to honor Franklin Regional and instructor Anthony Berardinelli for recognizing that learned behaviors can make a difference over a lifetime.”

Excela Health’s Community Health Needs Assessments continues to spotlight obesity as a concern. Project Fit America helps foster healthy habits at an age when adolescents are coming into their own regarding decision making. “We are hopeful that what they learn through this program stays with them as they grow, and helps them guard against the chronic illnesses that inactivity can foster,” added Ott.

As part of the Excela Health-PFA partnership, Franklin Regional received state-of-the-art above ground outdoor fitness equipment, indoor sports equipment, and comprehensive core curriculum and lesson plan resources, as well as onsite training. Pre and post testing since the program launch in the fall of 2014 continues to demonstrate Berardinelli’s success in the PFA program.

“Quality physical education has a direct impact on a child’s academic success,” said Stacey Cook, Executive Director, “which is why we applaud Excela Health for taking this leadership role and bringing programming to these schools. These exemplary partnerships between the public and private sectors prove we can all work together to make a difference in improving the health of children.”

As for Berardinelli, Cook said, “Coach B stands out as head of the class. He has the spirit, energy, dedication and commitment that earns him the status of National All Star. He is an outstanding role model for his peers and the physical education profession. We look forward to shining a national spotlight on him through this award and to sharing with all of our PFA schools, across the country, the outstanding PFA Program he has created and continues to progress.”

Other:
Website Profile http://www.projectfitamerica.org/AllStarTeacher_Gallery/index.html
Anthony’s All Star Teacher submission and profile will be in Gallery of All Stars. His profile will go up on the site on April 20, 2017. A gallery will also be posted to the Project Fit America social networking sites.