



West Virginia Academy.

EDUCATION, LATEST NEWS

West Virginia Academy will use its \$500K Yass Prize to extend its mission in the Mountain State

December 16, 2023 12:17 am

by [Jim Bissett](#), [The Dominion Post](#)

What do you do, when you're the Mountain State's first brick-and-mortar charter school, going into your third year of operation, and you were just recognized with an award widely regarded as the "Pulitzer Prize" of education?

You work that much harder, John Treu, of Morgantown's West Virginia Academy, said.

The charter school last week received \$500,000 from the Yass Prize, which annually awards schools and other endeavors it deems as innovators in education.

A total of 33 schools across the country were nominated.

A charter school in Montgomery, Ala., took the top prize of \$1 million.

Treu, a founding member of the West Virginia Academy and its board chair, said the award, more than anything, means validation for the school — which took it all the way to the state's Supreme Court in the argument and pitch to open its doors.

"Because we are so new, there are a lot of families in our community that don't realize there is a free public charter school in their back yard," he said.

"Being nationally recognized," he added, "for innovation and excellence in education."

Janine Yass agreed.

She co-founded the Yass Prize with her husband Jeff in 2021, as the nation's mainstream schools were still mired in the pandemic.

Yass alluded to the Pulitzer comparison during the awards ceremony last week in New York City.

It's not always easy being an innovator, she said.

"We know giving education innovators the opportunity to work outside the system — that is suffocating so many of them — is the most-effective way to transform the lives of America's students," Yass said.

Giving \$500,000 to the West Virginia Academy, Treu said, is a chance to extend its Mountain State mission even more.

While the academy continues the work from its main building on Chestnut Ridge Road, it's also in the middle of plans to launch a branch campus in Masontown, Preston County.

Treu said the money will be earmarked in part for that effort, along with the ongoing mission of growing the academy's enrollment to 12th grade.

"The Yass Prize will allow West Virginia Academy to expand our award-winning programs to serve more families," he said.

Visit <https://www.westvirginiaacademy.org/> for information on its academic mission and how to enroll.


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Tags: award, charter school, John Treu, West Virginia Academy, yass prize



Author: **Jim Bissett, The Dominion Post**

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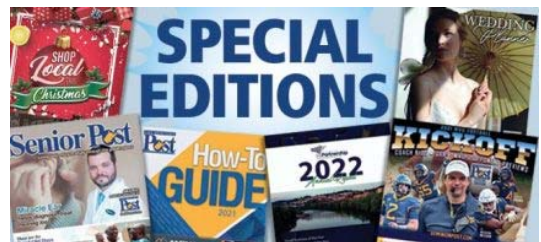
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