Meet M’sia’s top teachers

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Winner of RM50,000 prize to be announced on Oct 19

The Top 10 finalists for the Malaysia Teacher Prize 2024 are high achievers in fields such as science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), arts and humanities, sports, and special needs education.

Narrowing down the nation’s best from 2,209 entries was both challenging and rewarding, said Pemimpin GSL chief executive officer Constance Yuen.

The competition entered its home stretch with the announcement of the Top 10 on Sept 16.

“These entries showcased novel, out-of-the-box solutions by teachers to keep their students engaged – including bridging learning gaps through specially curated workshops and developing students’ confidence and self-worth through creative expression and performances.

“All entries were screened and shortlisted by a panel of judges, including academics and Education Ministry officials. We look forward to announcing the Top Five at the award ceremony on Oct 19,” she said in a press release.

Organised by Pemimpin GSL for the third year, the Malaysia Teacher Prize highlights educators’ efforts to unlock children’s potential and shines a light on the teaching profession in Malaysia.

The top winner will receive RM50,000, while four other finalists will each get RM5,000. All Top 10 finalists (see below) will also receive professional development support through Pemimpin GSL workshops.

> Dr Velerie Wheelervon Primus, SK Bingkor, Sabah
This special education teacher developed a teaching plan centred around a multisensory classroom, which includes a learning room for digital and STEM activities, a calming “Snoezelen” room to support pupils with sensory overload, and a play therapy room with engaging activities.

> Mohamad Nazri Ishak, SK RPS Dala (K9), Perak
Recognising the unique challenges of teaching in a remote school for Orang Asli pupils, this headmaster adopts a hands-on approach to pedagogical improvement and incorporates creative methods in teaching Mathematics, enhancing understanding and sparking a love for learning among his pupils.

> Shahira Said, SMK Badrul Alam Shah, Terengganu
This Home Economics teacher pioneered the introduction of the subject at her school in 2022, which is now the best-performing school for the subject in the Kemaman district. She actively involves her students in organising food and beverage preparations for school, district and state education official events, providing a training ground to hone their skills.

> Mohd Nizam Saidin, SK Dato’ Wan Kemara, Kedah
Through workshops related to digital education tools, this headmaster ensured his teachers were accredited as Microsoft Innovative Educators (MIE) and MIE Experts. He also secured funding to supply classrooms with equipment so that teachers could apply their newly acquired skills.

> Kamarul Shahril Kamarudin, SK Senawang, Negri Sembilan
This Music teacher's innovative approach to engaging pupils has led to nearly 700 pupils mastering the recorder, and has made his school's music programme a viral sensation on social media.

> Lim Chin Chin, SM Perempuan Cina Persendirian, Penang
By integrating cultural elements like the wau bulan and wayang kulit, this Bahasa Melayu and History teacher motivates her students to learn the language and achieve a 100% passing rate in History.

> Saifulnizan Che Ismail, SK Raja Bahar, Kelantan
This Mathematics and Design Technology teacher brings the outside world into his classroom through interactive activities, such as learning about percentage fractions through shopping simulations or understanding coordinates using wooden slingshots and augmented reality.

> Mohd Huzaire Ahmad, SK Felda Mempaga 2, Pahang
Specialising in Visual Arts and Music, he has introduced innovative programmes, such as abstract painting, which have enabled pupils to sell their artworks to local businesses, providing them with real-world financial skills. He has also established and led nasyid and kompang teams, along with other musical ensembles, helping pupils excel in national competitions.

> Nik Anita Nik Ahmad, SMK Hamzah 2, Kelantan
This Visual Arts teacher immerses herself in her students' lives both at school and in her dedicated home studio. Coupled with her "LOVE" (Look, Observe, Value, Evaluate) method, which prioritises deep personal engagement, her hands-on approach has led her students to remarkable achievements, including a gold medal at the International High School Arts Festival in Japan and top awards in national sculpture competitions.

> Kalaichelvi Jayamohan, SJKT Jalan Fletcher, Kuala Lumpur
This Bahasa Melayu and Mathematics remedial teacher created a structured plan to ensure her pupils progress from illiteracy to the ability to rejoin their peers in the same year. Beyond the classroom, she collaborates with external organisations to provide her pupils with basic support, such as stationery and breakfast.

The Malaysia Teacher Prize 2024 Award Ceremony will be open to the public free of charge. Those interested in attending can register for their entrance tickets at ticket2u.com.my/event/38192.