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Ray Diffley, Director of Admission at Choate Rosemary Hall, Receives SSATB Bretnall Award



Bretnall award winner Ray Diffley (center) with (l-r): SSATB Board Chair Kilian Forgas, SSATB Executive Director Heather Hoerle, Ray's wife Amanda Diffley, and SSATB Trustee Kevin Plummer. Photo credit: Robert Merhaut Photography.

September 19, 2014, Orlando, FL: Ray Diffley, Director of Admission at Choate Rosemary Hall (CT), received the William B. Bretnall Award from the Secondary School Admission Test Board (SSATB) at a recent meeting in Orlando.

The Bretnall Award, named for distinguished educator and first SSATB Program Director William B. Bretnall, is given each year to a leader and educator who has made significant contributions to the field of admission. This prestigious national award was first presented in 1982.

SSATB Executive Director Heather Hoerle stated, "Ray's infectious passion for research-based character assessment has been nothing short of inspiring. By example, Ray has led the way for all independent private schools to select students for essential skills that will be important in their future education and careers. Ray has been our trailblazer and SSATB is happy to learn from his example now and carry this work forward in order to influence our wider industry and the families and students we collectively serve."

Nancy Hayes, Director of Enrollment Management, New Canaan Country School (CT), presented the award to Mr. Diffley, saying "Ray is a master collaborator. In a profession which

has the potential to be isolating and competitive, he has encouraged the sharing of ideas and best practices, and helped to codify standards and competencies within the admission profession. He has worked to underscore and support the increasingly complex and important ways our admission work drives the sustainability of our schools.” Diffley himself spoke of the importance of teamwork and his gratitude to have the opportunity to work with his colleague admission professionals when he took the stand to accept the award.

Diffley is the chair of the Secondary School Admission Test Board’s Think Tank on the Future of Assessment. Choate’s Admission Office, under Diffley’s direction, partnered with assessment pioneer Dr. Robert Sternberg and his colleagues to develop the Choate Self-Assessment©, a trailblazing optional admission assessment that goes beyond the predictive power of standardized tests and grades and highlights the values so many independent schools espouse.