



**Waterford Township Schools**  
*Distinction with Pride.*

## Atco Teachers Named "NJSTA Simmons Scholars"



Kathleen Iuliucci and Shannon Vitagliano, teachers at Atco Elementary School in Atco, New Jersey were two of twenty two educators selected by the New Jersey Science Teachers Association (NJSTA) to attend a week-long professional development workshop held at Rowan University in Glassboro that was entitled Preparing Elementary Teachers to Implement the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). The NGSS and the New Jersey Model Curriculum promote scientific literacy and served as the foundation for the workshop activities. The participants plan to incorporate many of these engaging, hands-on, science activities that were developed during this summer experience into their science programs at their schools.

Participating teachers constructed content and grade-specific units that integrated the Life, Physical, and Earth/Space Sciences disciplines. To develop the units, teachers were guided by NJSTA educators to create lessons that focus on authentic experiences by which learners can advance their abilities to build, test, and refine knowledge. These lessons will change the focus of instruction from basic identification of concepts to explanations that make sense of scientific phenomenon. Participants also learned how to infuse science lessons with literacy and mathematics content, which will empower their students to achieve comprehensive results. Teachers left the workshop with many curricular tools and resources that will interest their students in scientific issues.

Ms. Iuliucci and Ms. Vitagliano also received an invitation to attend the New Jersey Science Convention (NJSC) in October 2016, where they will each be recognized as an "NJSTA Simmons Scholar." This professional development opportunity for New Jersey teachers was part of an ongoing initiative of NJSTA and its Maitland P. Simmons Memorial Award. The mission of NJSTA is to promote excellence and innovation in science teaching and learning for all.