

2016

Arkansas
Teacher of the Year



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STATE OF ARKANSAS
 ASA HUTCHINSON
 GOVERNOR

November 25, 2015

Meghan Ables
 Stuttgart High School
 401 A West 22nd Street
 Stuttgart, AR 72160

Dear Meghan,

I am pleased to congratulate you on being selected as Arkansas's 2016 Teacher of the Year in honor of your dedicated service to the students of Stuttgart High School.

This award demonstrates your commitment to your students, their future and their well-being. Youth are truly the future of our state, and teachers, like yourself, are on the frontlines of the fight for that future. The work you do is very important, and I want to personally thank you for your commitment to your students' success. I wish you well as you continue to teach in the years to come, and I note your success with my personal congratulations.

Again, congratulations on being Arkansas's 2016 Teacher of the Year. Together, we can make a real difference for the next generation.

Sincerely,

 Asa Hutchinson



ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Johnny Key
 Commissioner

Dear 2016 Arkansas Teacher of the Year Participants,

I want to thank each of you who applied to become the 2016 Arkansas Teacher of the Year. We received numerous applications from outstanding teachers around the state. The selection process is never easy, as it is difficult to narrow the field and ultimately select one teacher to receive the Arkansas Teacher of the Year designation.

I applaud your unwavering commitment to your students and community. Your leadership serves as an extraordinary example of excellence in education. The work you do has the ability to transform student experiences and outcomes. Because of the magnitude of this influence, you are a pillar of our global community.

Through the Arkansas Teacher of the Year program, we have had the benefit of exceptional educators serving on the State Board of Education and traveling across the state sharing educator voices. Ms. Ouida Newton, 2015 Arkansas Teacher of the Year, has been an example of the impact of teacher leadership. Ms. Newton has written monthly blogs and parent newsletters and continued the Profiles in Teacher Leadership video series. Ms. Newton's involvement in the Arkansas K-12 Math Standards review process has been instrumental to its success. Her work demonstrates a steadfast commitment to advancing the teaching profession and exemplifies the efforts being made in classrooms all across our state. Words can't sufficiently express my gratitude for her contributions as 2015 Arkansas Teacher of the Year.

I am eager to work with the 2016 Arkansas Teacher of the Year, Ms. Meghan Ables. As with each new recipient, Ms. Ables will bring enthusiasm and energy that will build on the work of all previous recipients. She will be a trusted advisor as she projects the educator's voice toward the important decisions for education in Arkansas.

It is my great pleasure to congratulate you on your achievements, and thank you for the dedication you give each and every day.

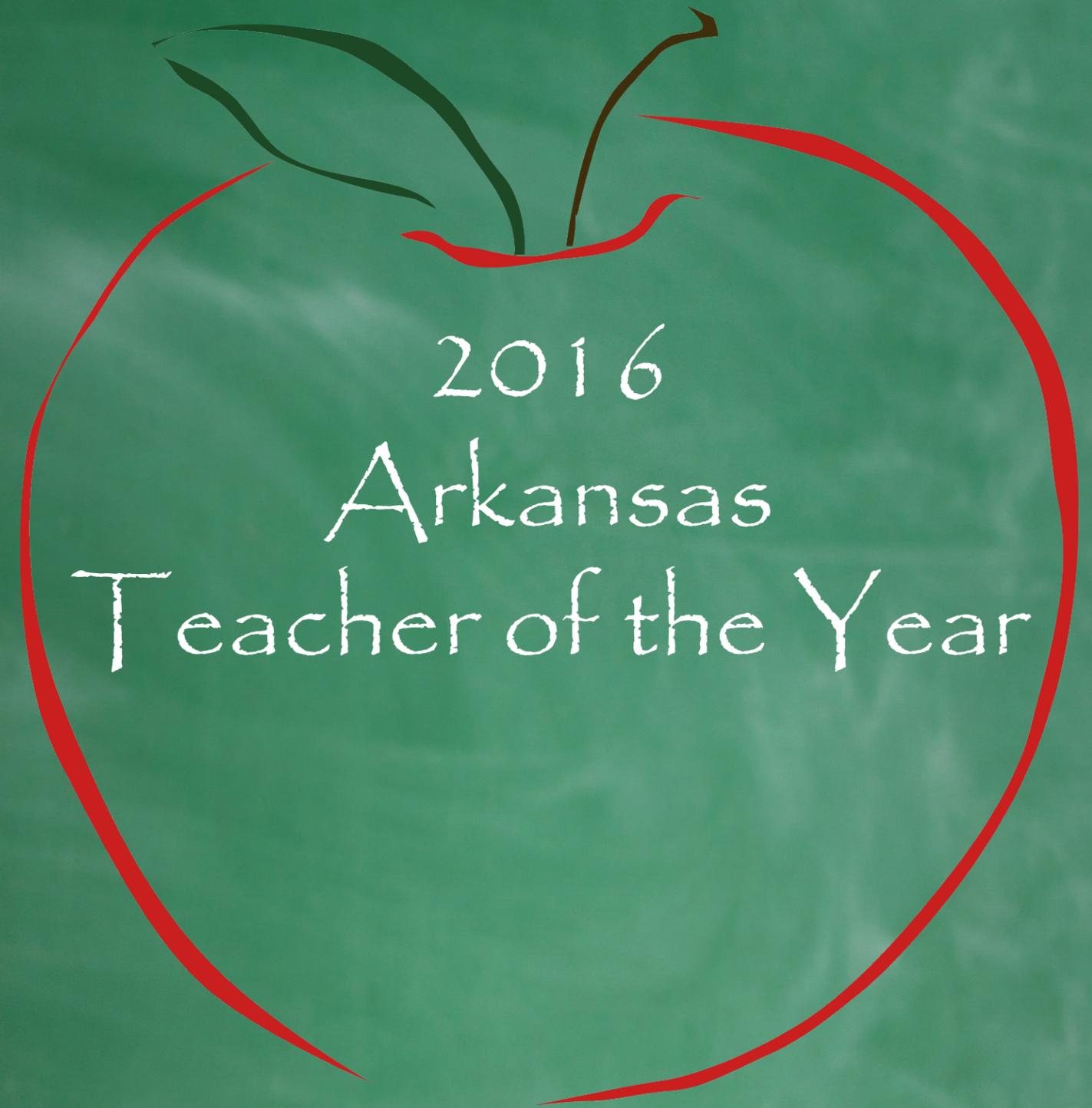
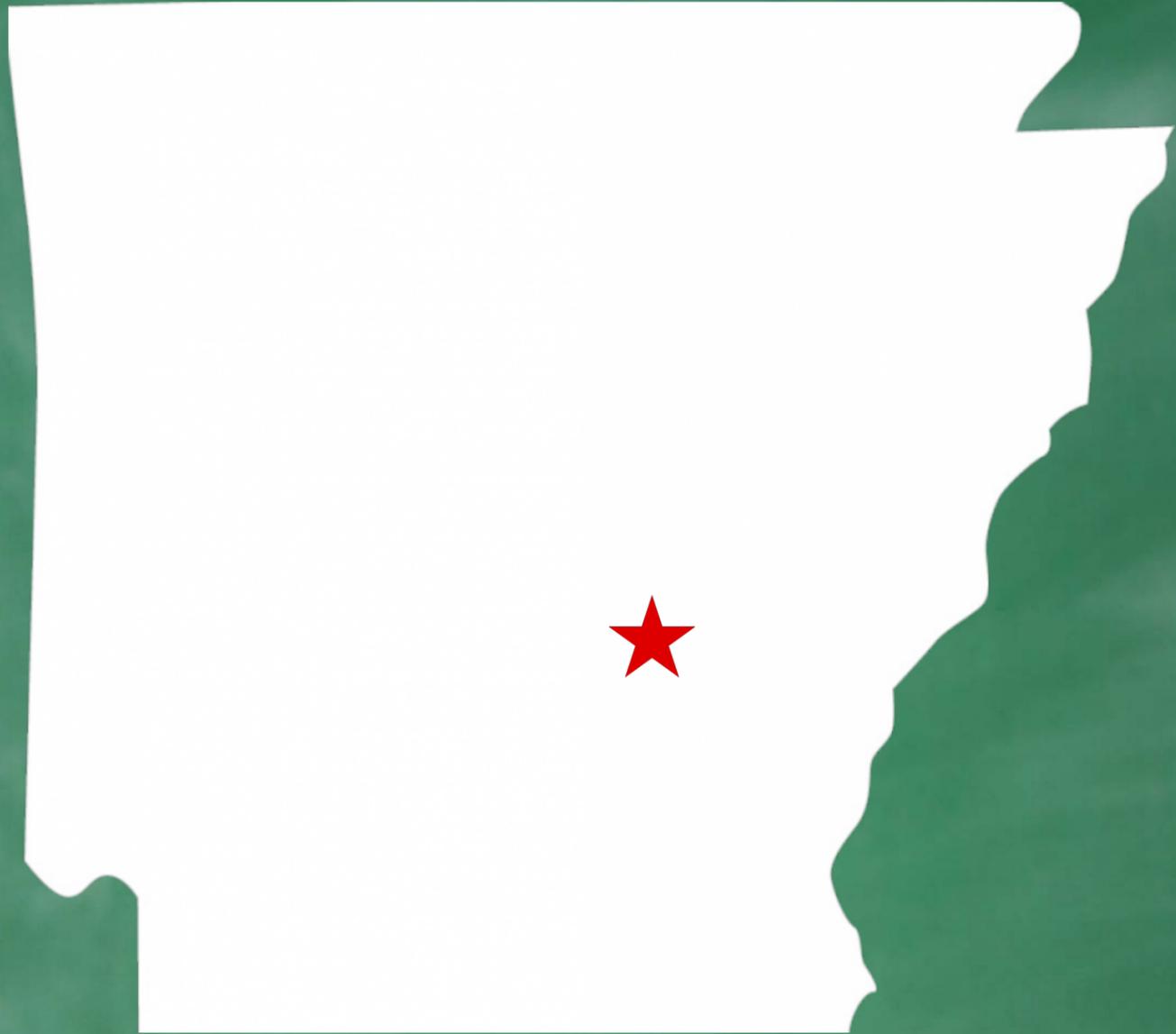
Respectfully,



Johnny Key
 Commissioner

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2016 Arkansas
Teacher of the Year
Meghan Ables

“When I see a child struggle, a test score drop, or even hear a teacher complaining, I am going to jump in with both feet to find a solution to the problem.”

-Meghan Ables-

Meghan Ables is an 11th-grade English teacher at Stuttgart High School. She has been teaching for 12 years, and she believes that teachers must do whatever it takes to help students learn. She recruited 10 teachers to be the coaches for the school literacy team, which included every 11th-grade student in the school. Ms. Ables re-established the Fellowship for Christian Athletes and a monthly magazine called *The Bird Banner* to be written by her journalism class. She is currently working on starting a Ricebird Television studio at Stuttgart High School. Principal Donnie Booth stated, “Ms. Ables doesn’t look at teaching as a job. She pours her heart into each and every student.”



Left to right: Gov. Asa Hutchinson, 2016 ATOY Meghan Ables, John Kaminar, Superintendent Nathan Gills, Kathy Smith, and Commissioner Johnny Key

Ables is an 11th-grade English and journalism teacher. Because of her contribution to learning, student test scores have dramatically improved during her tenure at the district. Ables also serves as a leader at her school, having conducted professional development activities for using literacy techniques in the classroom.

A native of Stuttgart and a graduate of Stuttgart High School, Ables received a Bachelor of Science in Journalism in 2002 from Arkansas State University at Jonesboro. She began teaching 12 years ago after completing the Arkansas Department of Education’s non-traditional route to teacher licensure.



Left to right: 2015 ATOY Ouida Newton, 2016 ATOY Meghan Ables, and 2009 ATOY Susan Waggener



2015 ATOY Ouida Newton (right) passed the torch to the 2016 ATOY Meghan Ables

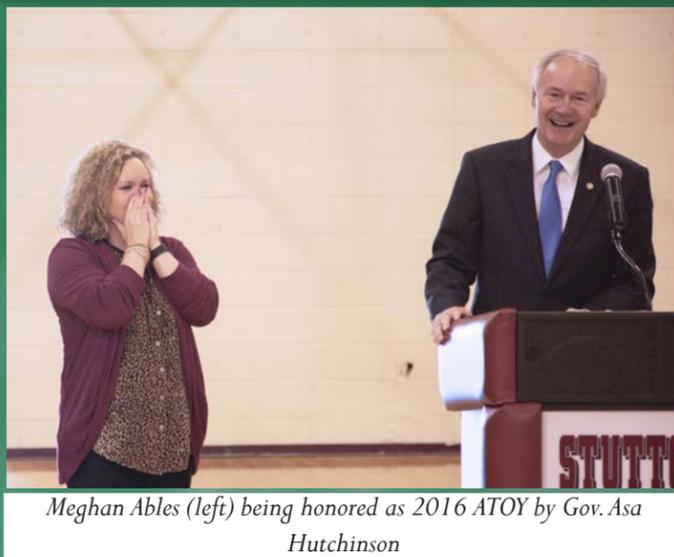


Left to right: Gov. Asa Hutchinson, 2016 ATOY Meghan Ables, and Commissioner Johnny Key

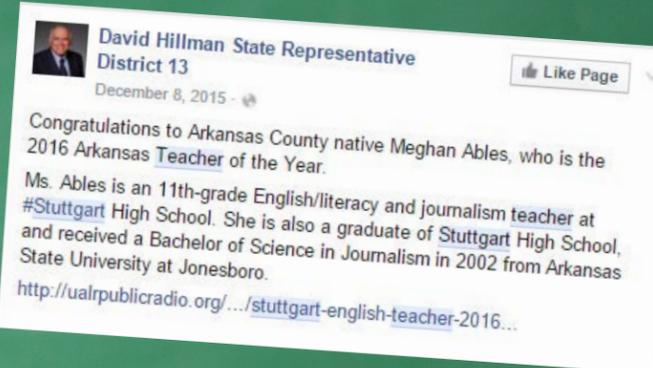
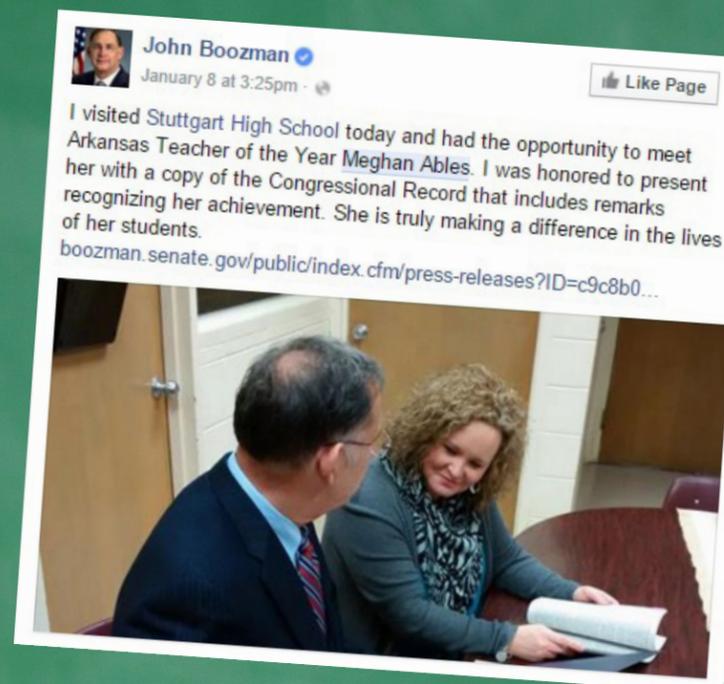
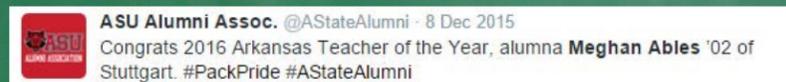
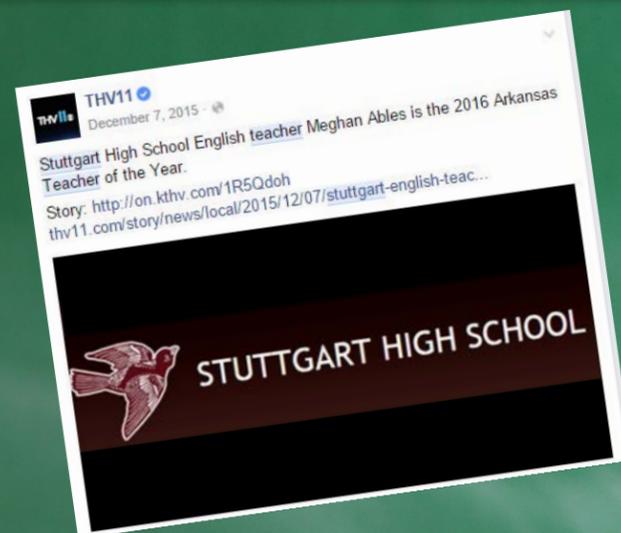


2016 Arkansas Teacher of the Year

2016 Arkansas Teacher of the Year



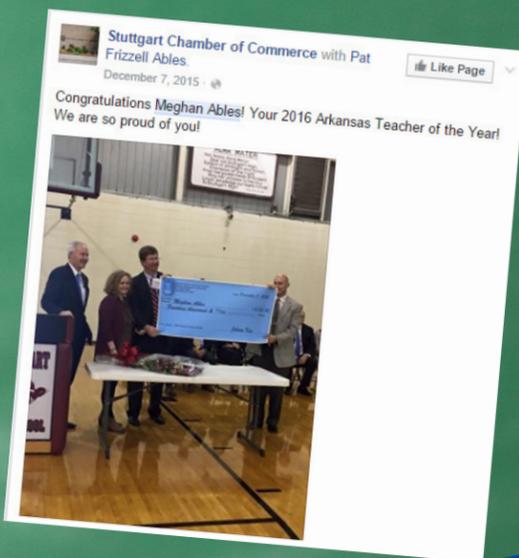
Meghan Ables (left) being honored as 2016 ATOY by Gov. Asa Hutchinson

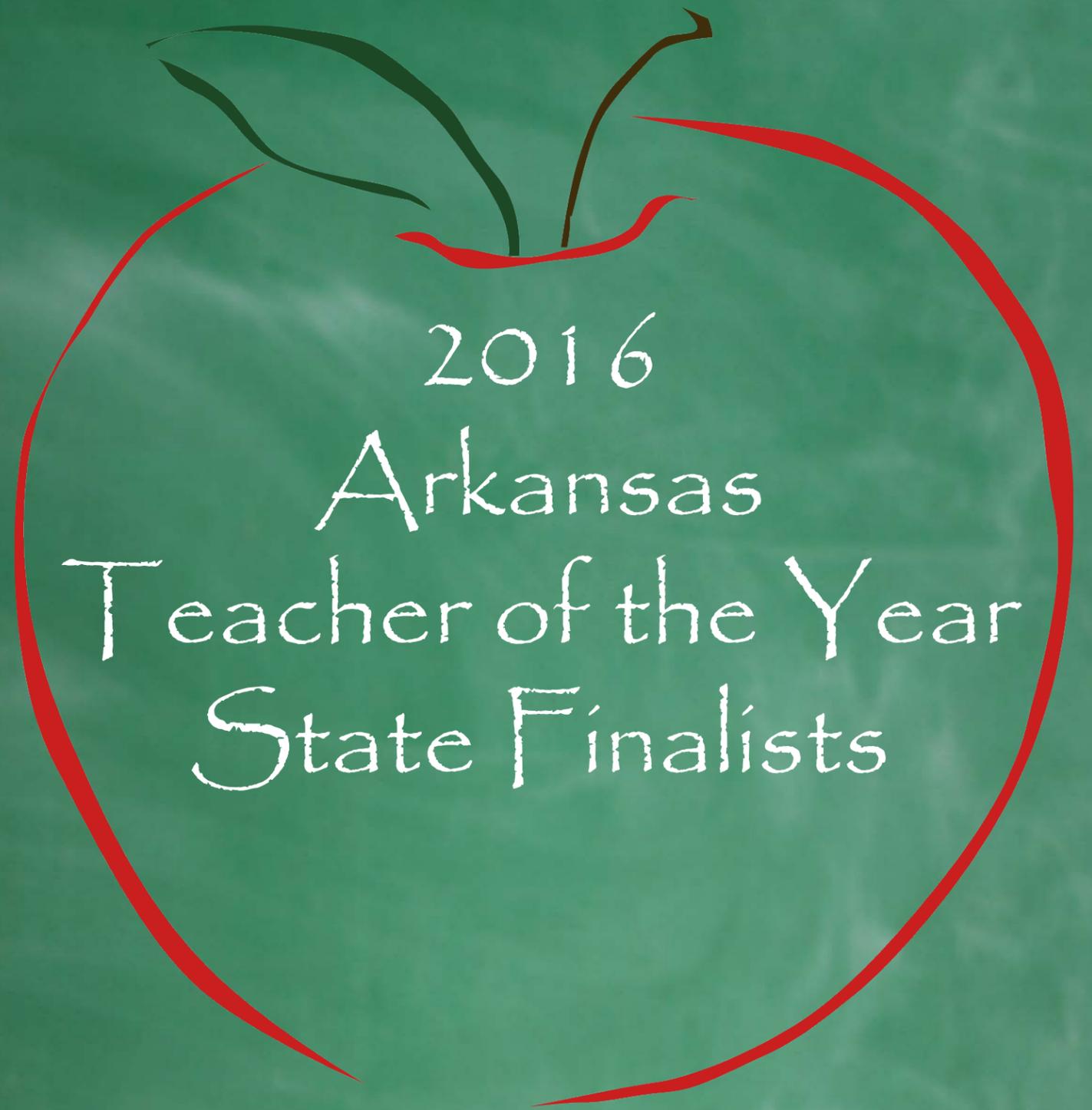
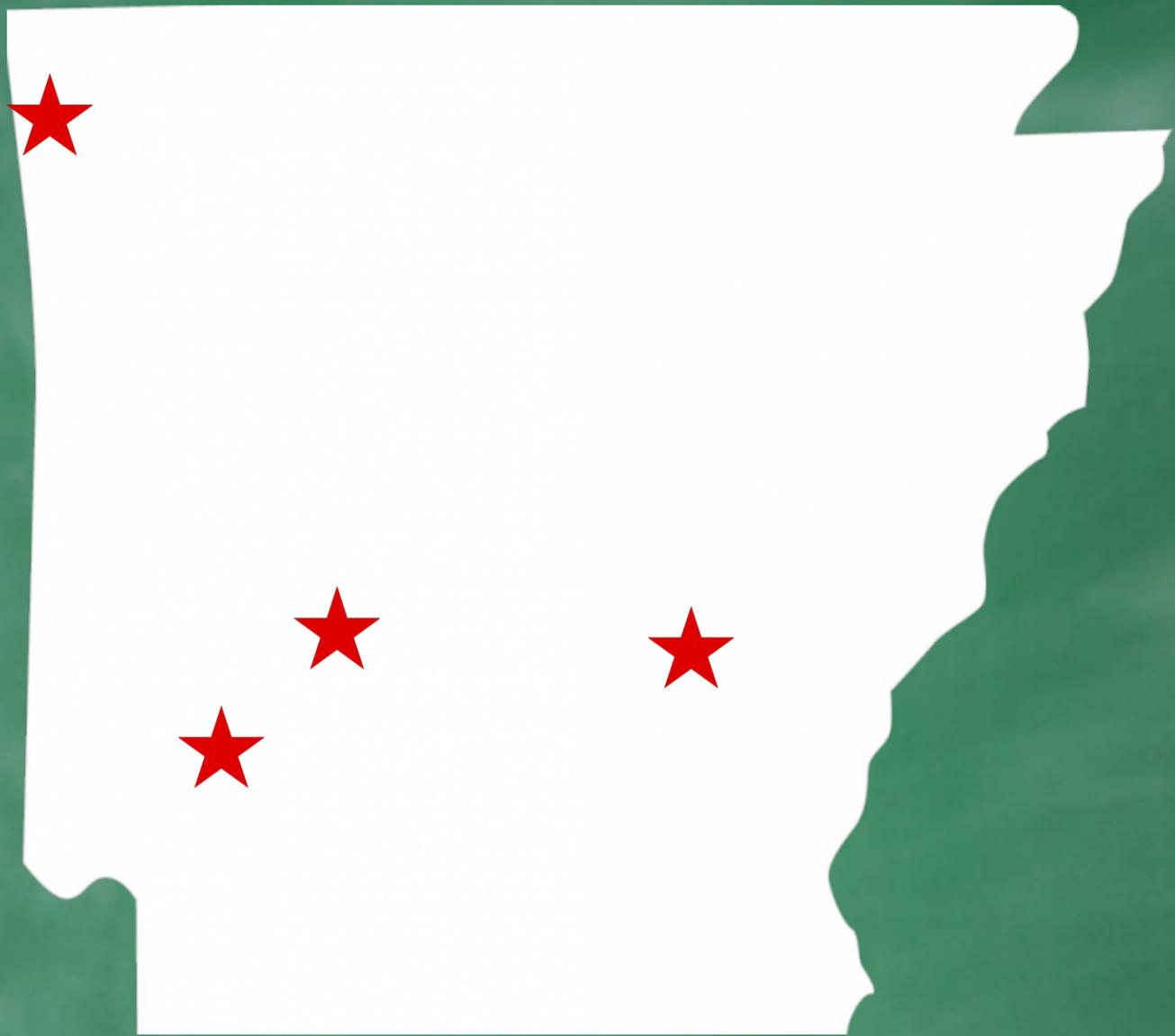


Left to right: Gov. Asa Hutchinson, 2016 ATOY Meghan Ables, Rep. David Hillman,



Left to right: 2015 ATOY Ouida Newton, 2016 ATOY Meghan Ables, and 2009 ATOY Susan Waggener







Left to right: Gov. Asa Hutchinson, Meghan Ables, Brenda Galliher, Michael Rogers, Stephanie Goodman, and Commissioner Johnny Key

“Selecting just four teachers from an exceptional group of talented educators was a difficult process. The four state finalists chosen, however, have demonstrated leadership, knowledge and the ability to inspire students in the classroom. I congratulate them, as well as their administrators and fellow educators.”

-Johnny Key, Commissioner-

The classroom teacher is the backbone of the American education system. No one person has a greater impact on the education of a child than the teacher who creates the primary learning and instructional environment. The National Teacher of the Year program, which is a project of the Council of Chief State School Officers in partnership with the Voya Foundation and People to People Ambassador Programs, began in 1952. The NTOY program continues as the oldest, most prestigious national honors program that focuses public attention on excellence in teaching.



Left to right: Gov. Asa Hutchinson, Michael Rogers, and Commissioner Johnny Key



Left to right: Meghan Ables, Brenda Galliher, Michael Rogers, and Stephanie Goodman



Gov. Asa Hutchinson, and Stephanie Goodman



Left to right: Meghan Ables, Brenda Galliher, and Michael Rogers





Meghan Ables
11th Grade English
Stuttgart High School
Stuttgart School District
Arkansas River Education Service Cooperative

"Teachers must do whatever it takes to help students learn. It may mean meeting before or after school, calling parents, writing a 'you can do this' note or giving one-on-one assistance."
-Meghan Ables-



Stephanie Goodman
6th Grade Mathematics
Hot Springs Intermediate School
Hot Springs School District
Dawson Education Service Cooperative

"Teaching is my gift, my passion and my mission. My heart yearns to make a difference in the lives of students."
-Stephanie Goodman-



Brenda Kay Galliher
8th Grade Science
Nashville Junior High School
Nashville School District
DeQueen-Mena Education Service Cooperative

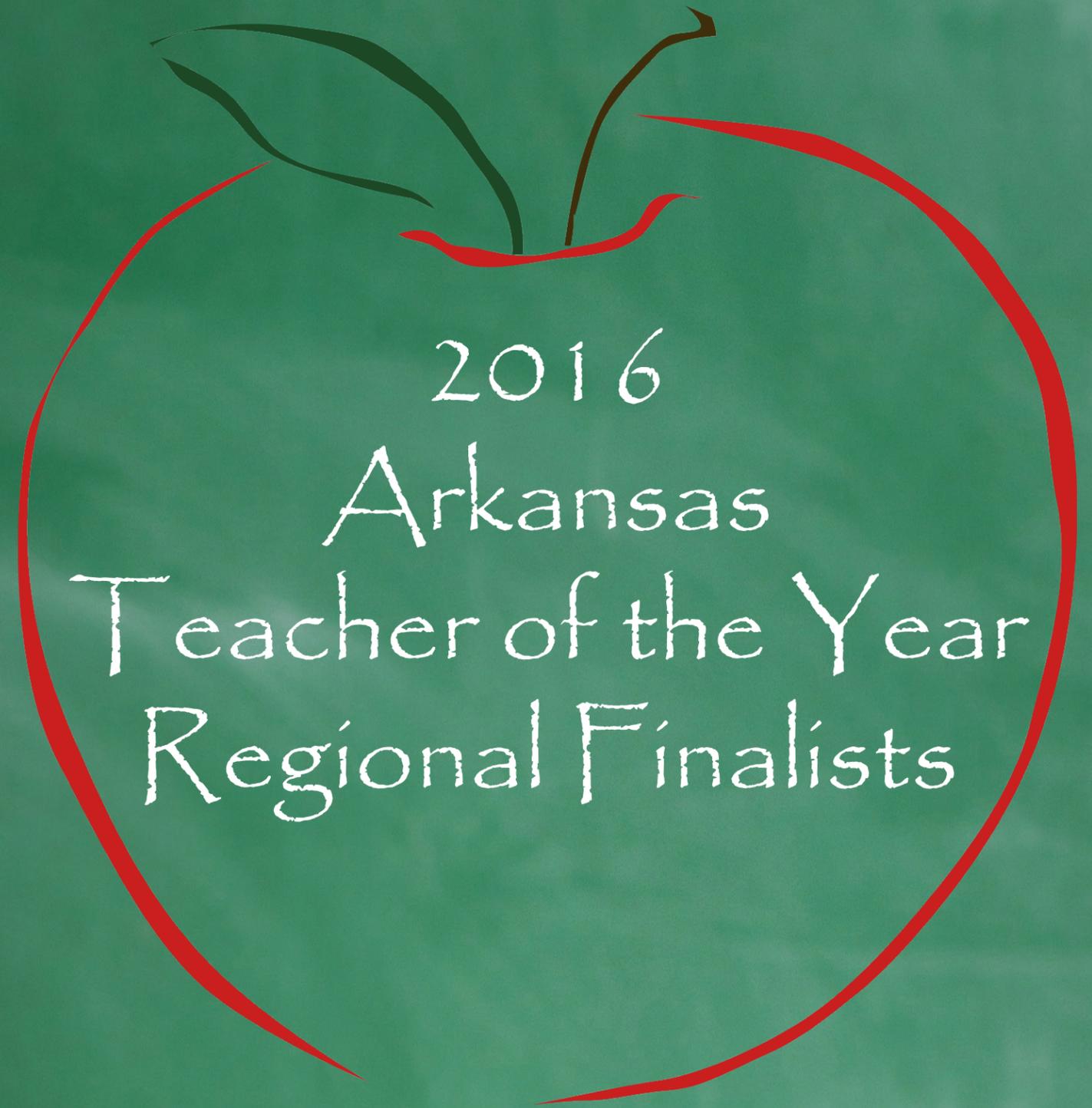
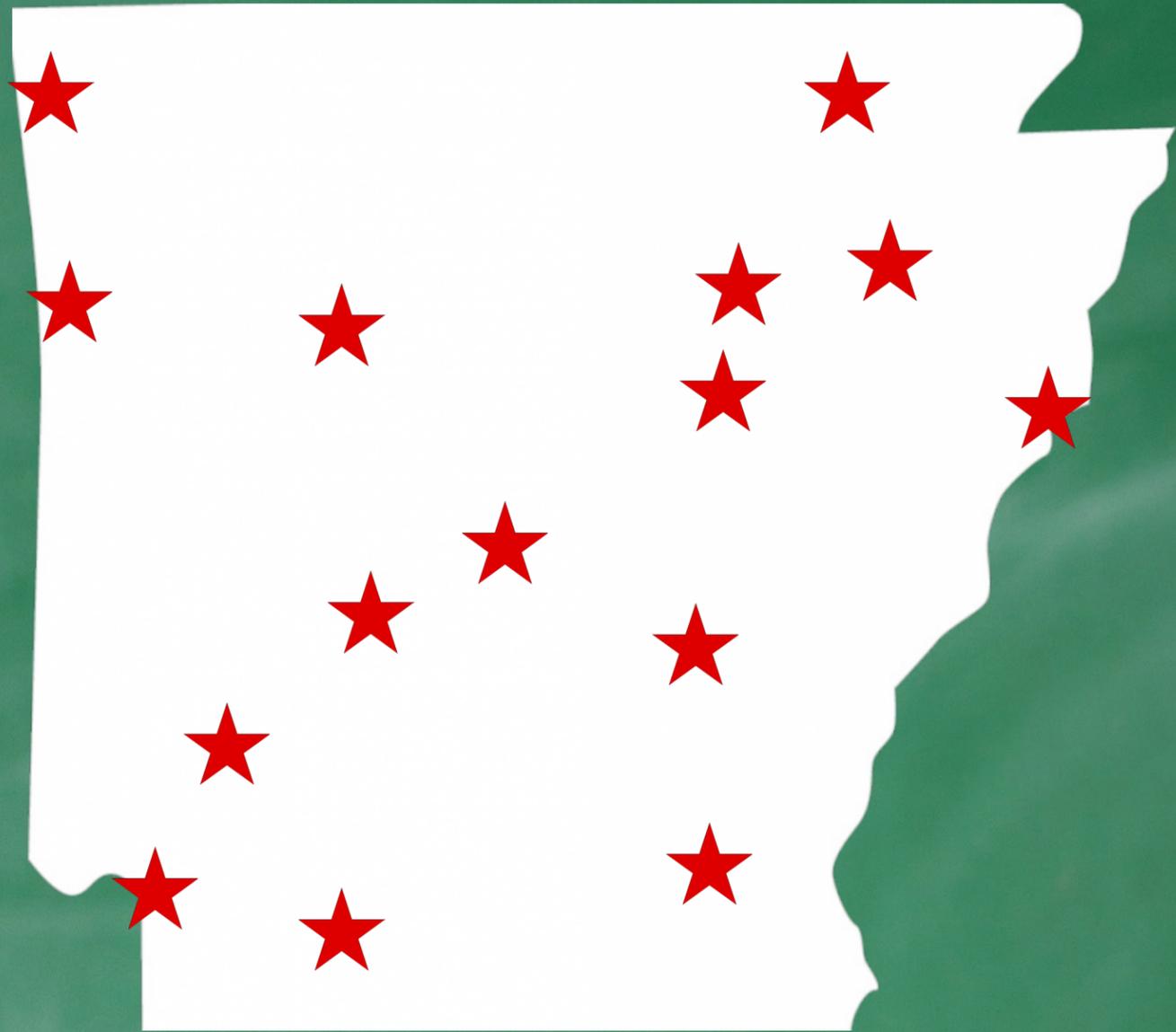
"The journey to my career in education has been about passing on the torch for STEM that was passed to me - one fire, one student, at a time. I work every day to let my students experience real science, not just learn about it."
-Brenda Galliher-



Michael Howard Rogers
9th-12th Grade Agriculture
Siloam Springs High School
Siloam Springs School District
Northwest Education Service Cooperative

"My accomplishments are not books, programs, wall plaques or certifications; my accomplishments all have names."
-Michael Rogers-







“To be selected as a regional finalist is an honor. These outstanding teachers have set the standard of excellence for their schools, districts and the state. I commend them for their dedication, commitment and hard work.”

-Johnny Key, Commissioner-

Fifteen outstanding teachers from around the state were selected as 2016 Arkansas Teacher of the Year Regional Finalists. Gov. Asa Hutchinson recognized them at a ceremony Sept. 17, 2015, at the Capitol. The top four finalists also were announced at the event.

As part of the NTOY program, the Arkansas Teacher of the Year program identifies, recognizes and utilizes representatives of excellent teaching in the elementary and secondary classrooms in Arkansas public schools. The mission of the program is to promote the profession and recognize quality teachers who implement “best practices” in Arkansas public school classrooms. The ATOY program functions under the leadership of the Arkansas Department of Education in partnership with the State Board of Education.

Meghan Ables
11th Grade English
Stuttgart High School
Stuttgart School District
Arkansas River Education Service Cooperative



Lindsey Barton
2nd Grade
Monticello Elementary School
Monticello School District
Southeast Arkansas Education Service Cooperative



Vaughanda Bowie
4th Grade Science/Literacy
West Magnet Elementary School of
Visual and Performing Arts
Batesville School District
Northcentral Arkansas Education Cooperative





Brandon Cooper
10th-12th Grade World History
Russellville High School
Russellville School District
Arch Ford Education Service Cooperative



Audrey Craven
10th-12th Grade Mathematics
Academies of West Memphis
West Memphis School District
Great Rivers Cooperative



Shedrich Franklin
5th-6th Grade Social Studies
College Hill School
Texarkana School District
Southwest Arkansas Education Cooperative



Brenda Galliher
8th Grade Science
Nashville Junior High School
Nashville School District
DeQueen-Mena Education Service Cooperative



Stephanie Goodman
6th Grade Mathematics
Hot Springs Intermediate School
Hot Springs School District
Dawson Education Service Cooperative



Jerry Haynes
7th-12th Grade Mathematics
Walnut Ridge High School
Lawrence County School District
Northeast Arkansas Education Cooperative



2016 Regional Finalists



Laurie Hicks
10th-12th Grade Visual Art
Magnolia High School
Magnolia School District
South Central Education Service Cooperative



Robert Mayes
10th-12th Grade AP Calculus, Algebra II, AP Physics
Searcy High School
Searcy School District
Wilbur D. Mills Education Service Cooperative



Kimberly Rahi
5th Grade Literacy
Barling Elementary School
Fort Smith School District
Guy Fenter Education Service Cooperative

2016 Regional Finalists



Michael Rogers
9th-12th Grade Agriculture
Siloam Springs High School
Siloam Springs School District
Northwest Education Service Cooperative

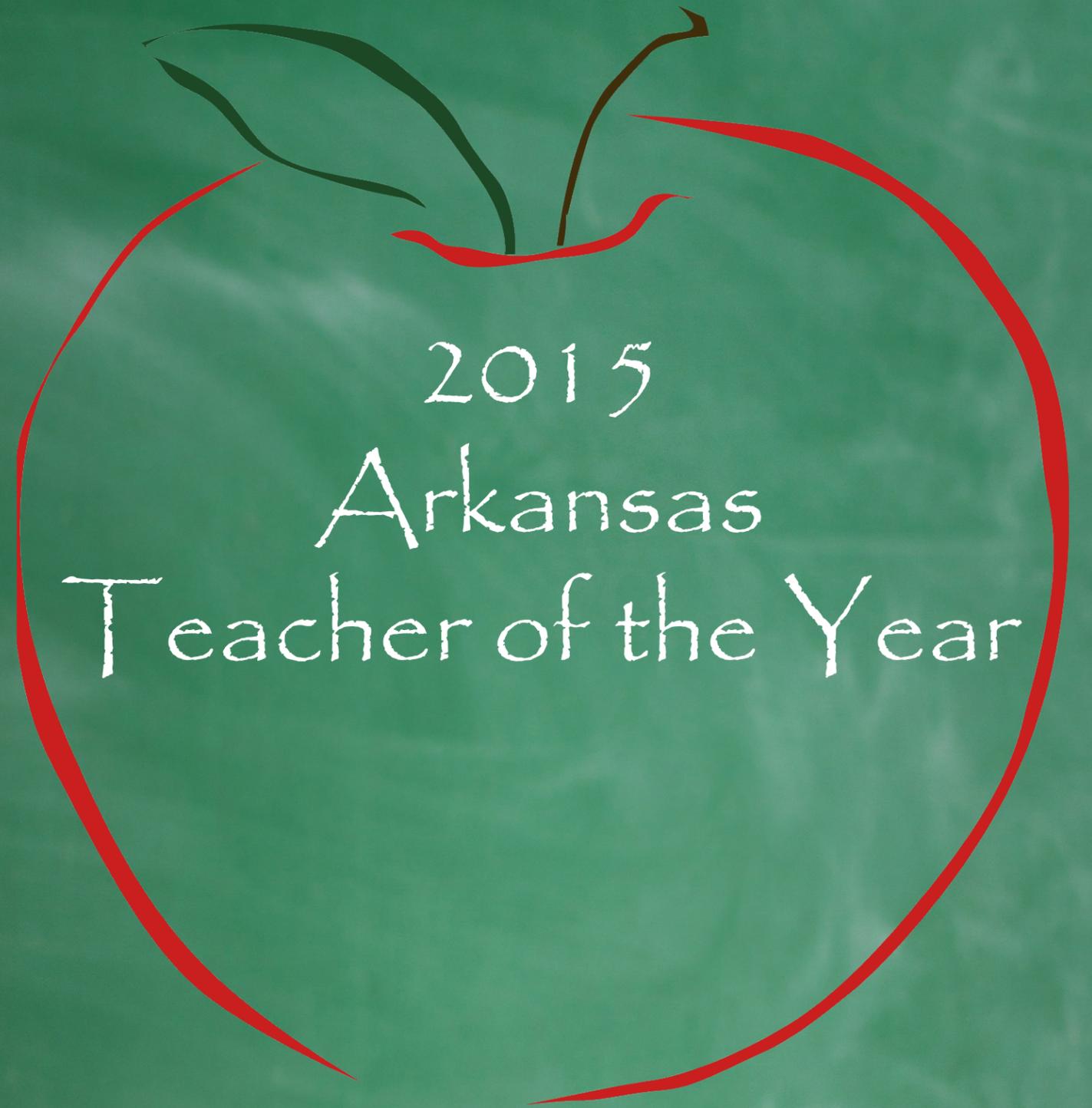
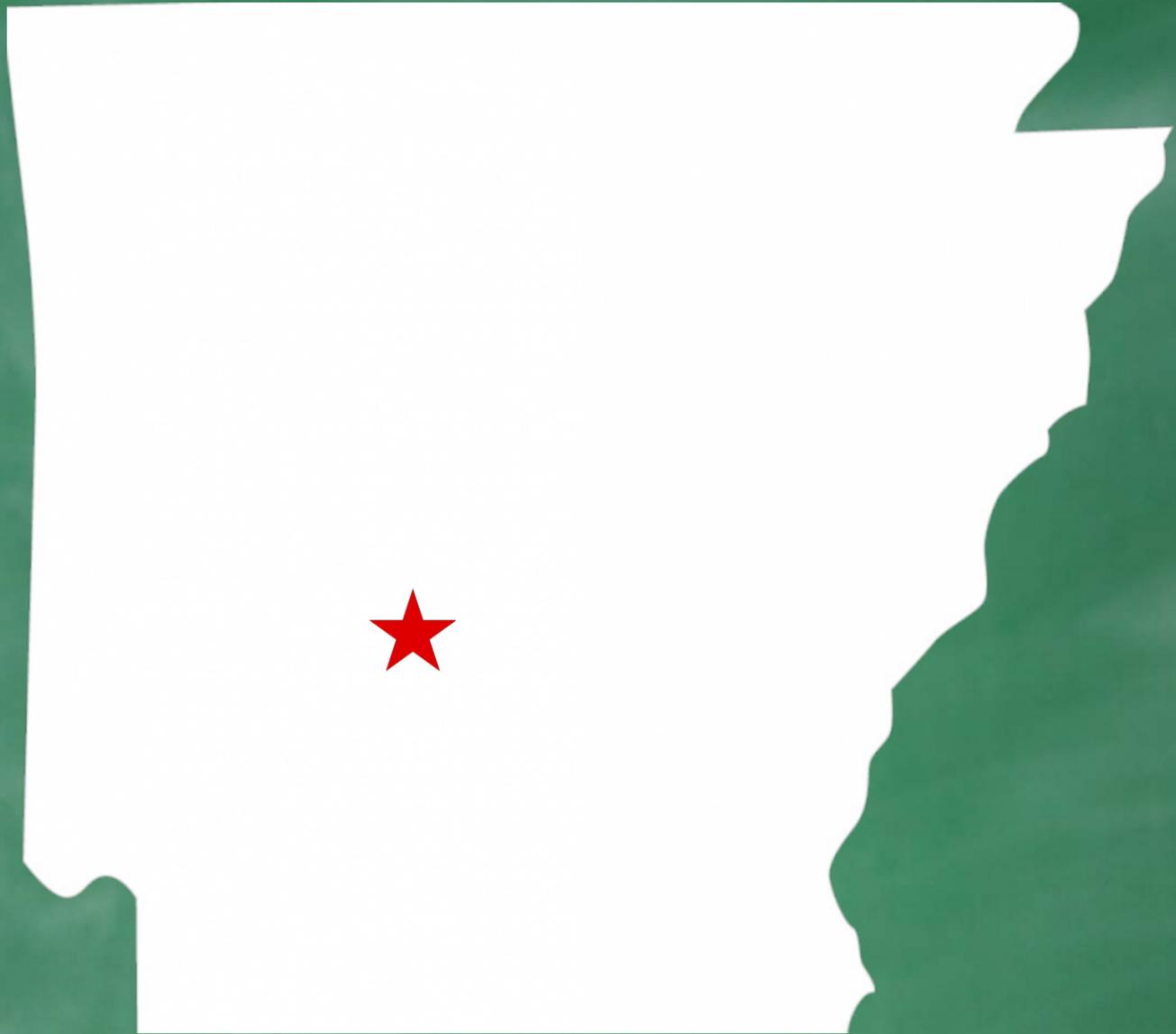


Spencer Sutterfield
10th-12th Grade Drama/Theatre Arts
Parkview Arts and Sciences High School
Little Rock School District
Pulaski County



LaJuana Warner
7th-9th Grade Vocal Music
Annie Camp Junior High School
Jonesboro School District
Crowley's Ridge Education Service Cooperative







2015 Arkansas Teacher of the Year Ouida Newton

“Arkansas has some of the best teachers in the country, so it is extremely difficult to select just one teacher to receive this honor. Ms. Newton has a strong teaching history and outstanding accomplishments, making her a deserving teacher for this recognition.”

-Former Commissioner Tony Wood-

Newton teaches math for grades 7-12 at Poyen High School. During her 38-year career, she has taught math, Algebra I and II, sixth-grade science, pre-algebra, geometry, pre-calculus, calculus, trigonometry, transition to college math, physics, and Algebra A & B.

Over the past year, Newton has done the following:

- Met and collaborated with amazing educators from around the nation and world,
- Testified before the Governor’s Council on Common Core Review,
- Was honored in Washington D.C. as the Arkansas Teacher of the Year,
- Served as a non-voting member of the Arkansas State Board of Education,
- Researched and wrote a monthly blog on current issues in education and professional development opportunities for teachers,
- Served on the grades 6-8 and 9-12 math standards review committees,
- Presented a Cultivate the Calling talk to the Arkansas ECET2 Conference,
- Worked with the ADE Teacher Recruitment and Retention program,
- Presented professional development and motivational presentations to teachers and pre-service teachers, and
- Participated in a panel discussion for the IMPACT Institute.

Dear Teachers,

I have been extremely honored to represent the teachers of Arkansas as the 2015 Arkansas Teacher of the Year. I have been inspired by teachers all across our state who are working tirelessly every day striving to make the life and future of their students better. These teachers are committed to their students and strive to create an environment where each student can grow and reach their full potential.

This year we recognized 15 exceptional educators from each region of our state. These 15 regional finalists for Arkansas Teacher of the Year exemplify the qualities of our noble profession. These men and women are the ones who inspire our children to reach for their dreams and give them the skills to make those dreams a reality. Because of their work, the future will be a better place for their students.

It is also my honor to recognize the four finalists for 2016 Arkansas Teacher of the Year. Michael Rogers, Stephanie Goodman, Brenda Galliher and Meghan Ables display the qualities and expertise that is needed to represent our state as the Arkansas Teacher of the Year. I hope these four outstanding educators will continue to be a voice for students. May they lift their voices and inspire all of us to move forward and make our state a better place, just as they have done for their own school and district.

Finally, it is my pleasure to recognize Mrs. Meghan Ables as the 2016 Arkansas Teacher of the Year. Mrs. Ables has shown her exceptional ability to motivate and encourage her students while also holding them accountable for learning. She will use those skills, as well as her contagious enthusiasm and love for young people, to inspire us all. I look forward to seeing the magnificent outcomes of her work as the Arkansas Teacher of the Year.

I am honored to call each one of these men and women colleagues. They deserve our thanks for their dedication and service to education. Each one of these amazing educators has made a life-long impact on the students of our state. I extend them my gratitude and best wishes for the future.

I also encourage anyone interested in becoming the next Arkansas Teacher of the Year to learn more at <http://www.arkansased.gov/divisions/communications/teacher-of-the-year>. Serving Arkansas as Teacher of the Year has been a life-changing opportunity for me. I am a better person and teacher because of the people I have met while serving our state as Arkansas Teacher of the Year.

Sincerely,

Ouida Newton

2015 Arkansas Teacher of the Year



Arkansas Teacher of the Year

Recipients

1959-Present

Meghan Ables	Stuttgart School District	2016
Ouida Newton	Poyen School District	2015
Jonathan Crossley	Palestine-Wheatley School District	2014
Alexia "Ali" Weimer	Marion School District	2013
Kimberly Wilson	Monticello School District	2012
Kathy Powers	Conway School District	2011
Vandy Nash	North Little Rock School District	2010
Susan Waggener	West Memphis School District	2009
Paul Gray	Russellville School District	2008
Justin Minkel	Springdale School District	2007
Marsha Petty	Texarkana Arkansas School District	2006
Pamela England	Forrest City School District	2005
Donna Adkins	Arkadelphia School District	2004
Katherine W. Knight	Little Rock School District	2003
Karen Denise Norton	Warren School District	2002
Marion Fay Haney	Valley View School District	2001
Patti Meeks	Hamburg School District	2000
Sherry Tibbs	Conway School District	1999
Charles Rossetti	Springdale School District	1998
Elizabeth H. Fulton	North Little Rock School District	1997
Phillis R. Orlicek	Stuttgart School District	1996
Sharon Denise Johnson	Texarkana Arkansas School District	1995
Lois Cooper Freeman	Nettleton School District	1994
Rosemary Faucette	Fayetteville School District	1993
Brenda Joyce Sivils Ball	Pine Bluff School District	1992
Nadyne W. Aikman	White Hall School District	1991
Jan G. Scholl	North Little Rock School District	1990

Mary Botts Carr	DeWitt School District	1989
Robin Boles Ellis	Camden-Fairview School District	1988
Muriel Morgan Chism	Rogers School District	1987
Kerry Lockwood Owen	Hot Springs School District	1986
Alfreeda P. Marshall	North Little Rock School District	1985
Ray Baker	Fort Smith School District	1984
Cecilia Ann Cox Tilmon	Texarkana Arkansas School District	1983
Sue Perry	North Little Rock School District	1982
Jennie Harrison	North Little Rock School District	1981
Annie Etherly	Pine Bluff School District	1980
Sara Beth Morris	Benton School District	1979
Bettie H. Hill	Ashdown School District	1978
Lee Anna Burton	Benton School District	1977
Alice M. Glover	Little Rock School District	1976
Mary C. Holden	Jonesboro School District	1975
Martha Ann Moore	Osceola School District	1974
Catherine J. Gill	Little Rock School District	1973
Judy Marie Horn	North Little Rock School District	1972
Evangeline Cothren	Greene County Tech School District	1971
Nell Johnson	Little Rock School District	1970
Marion Charleen Hickey	Little Rock School District	1969
Loretta Roberts	Rogers School District	1968
Norvel Arthur	Stuttgart School District	1967
Adah Arthur	Magnolia School District	1966
Robert Kirkwood	Pine Bluff School District	1965
Maxine Chapman	Fort Smith School District	1964
Simmons McClintock	Crossett School District	1963
Christine Poindexter	Little Rock School District	1962
Martha Bigley	Magnolia School District	1959

*Information on ATOY recipients from 1960 and 1961 is unavailable.





www.arkansased.gov