



ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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LITTLE ROCK: Vandy Nash of North Little Rock was named the 2010 Arkansas Teacher of the Year during an awards gala at the Governor's Mansion in Little Rock on Friday night. Nash, a fourth-grade teacher at Indian Hills Elementary School in the North Little Rock School District, received a \$15,000 cash award with the title. In addition, she will represent Arkansas in the 2010 National Teacher of the Year competition and spend the 2010-2011 school year working in-residence at the Arkansas Department of Education.

The award was presented by Governor Mike Beebe and Education Commissioner Dr. Tom W. Kimbrell during the Arkansas Teacher of the Year Awards Gala, which was televised live by KTHV. Craig O'Neill served as the emcee.

"Teachers are the most important factor in a child's education," Kimbrell said. "Not only do we know that through research, but intuitively we know it is that person leading the instructional activities in the classroom who sparks a child's desire to learn."

Fifteen regional finalists were selected by a committee composed of former teachers of the year and Arkansas Department of Education Office of Teacher Quality staff. Those 15 were then narrowed to four, with Nash the winner and three runners-up:

- First runner-up Andrea White, a second-grade teacher at Valley View Elementary School in Valley View School District
- Second runner-up Jeannie Martin, an English as a second language teacher at Angie Grant Elementary School in Benton School District
- Third runner-up Kathy L. Prophet, a seventh-grade science teacher at Hellstern Middle School in Springdale School District

The 11 regional finalists included:

- Lisa Morris Anderson, an eighth-grade science teacher at Nashville Junior High in Nashville School District
- Angela Brady, a sixth-grade math teacher at Walnut Ridge School in Lawrence County School District
- Lenora Bullington, a literacy facilitator at Cavanaugh Elementary School in Fort Smith School District
- Bobbie Ruth Coleman, an 11th and 12th grade English teacher at Searcy High School in Searcy School District
- R. Ellen Corley, a special education teacher at Forest Heights Elementary in Harrison School District
- Toni L. Elliott, third-grade teacher at Noble Elementary in Hamburg School District
- Shelley Forbess, a tenth- through 12th-grade physics teacher at El Dorado High School in El Dorado School District

- Lekia Jones, a sixth-grade mathematics teacher at College Hill Middle School in the Texarkana School District
- Bill Maxwell, a sixth- through 12th-grade band director at Mountain Home Junior High School in the Mountain Home School District
- Delois McGhee, and eighth-grade mathematics and Algebra I teacher at Dollarway Middle School in Dollarway School District.
- Cherilyn Minnis, a 12th-grade English teacher at West Memphis High School in West Memphis School District

Each finalist received a \$1,000 cash prize. All cash awards were made possible by a grant from the Walton Family Foundation. In addition, all finalists received software from the SMARTer Kids Foundation. Other major sponsors for the evening included Delta Dental, Entergy Arkansas, KTHV Channel 11 and the Arkansas Department of Higher Education's Say Go College campaign. Please see attached list for all sponsors.

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The Arkansas Department of Education strives to ensure that all children in the state have access to a quality education by providing educators, administrators and staff with leadership, resources and training.