



Quality programs that inform, involve and inspire

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Updated December 8, 2008

Contact:
Daphne Adair
206.443.6791
dadair@KCTS9.org

KCTS 9 Announces 2008 Golden Apple Award Winners

SEATTLE—KCTS 9, PEMCO Insurance and the School Employees Credit Union of Washington are pleased to announce the winners of the 17th annual **Golden Apple Awards**—eight individuals and two programs making a positive difference in Washington state education in grades pre-K–12. The winners are:

Individuals

Robert W. Adamson, Principal, Terrace Heights Elementary, East Valley Yakima School District

David Anderson, Principal, Mount Vernon High School, Mount Vernon School District

Linda M. Evans, Teacher, grade 3, Marcus Whitman Cowiche Elementary School, Highland School District

Marjorie R. Lamarre, Teacher, grade 5, John Muir Elementary School, Seattle School District

Debra D. Renner, Sign Language Interpreter, grades 9-12, Evergreen High School, Evergreen School District

Megan E. Vogel, Science Department Chair, Biology/Ecology, grades 10-12, Ballard High School, Seattle School District

Robert R. Yuong, Teacher, Mathematics, grades 9-12, Henry Foss High School, Tacoma School District

Programs

Rainier Scholars, Academic and enrichment program, grades 6-12, Seattle - Calvin Lyons, Executive Director

La Escuelita Bilingual School, Bilingual and bicultural early childhood program, preschool, Seattle – Carmen Sosa-Masso, Founder and Director

Stanley O. McNaughton Golden Apple Award

Mike Town, Teacher, A.P. Environmental Science, grades 11-12, Redmond High School, Lake Washington School District

“Every year, the slate of individuals and programs we recognize with the Golden Apples reminds us that hundreds of committed professionals are developing lifelong learners—students who will go on to make a positive impact in the community,” says Bill Mohler, KCTS Television President & CEO. “Every one of us can look back to their favorite teacher and trace a direct path to how that person made us who we are today. The teachers that we honor with this award are those teachers, setting the course of our state’s future by the efforts they put forth today.”

--more--

Golden Apple Award winners will be honored in ceremonies held January 2009 in Seattle, which are recorded for later broadcast on public television stations statewide. Each winner will receive a "Golden Apple" statuette; individual honorees will also receive \$250, and each winning program will receive \$500. PEMCO Insurance also will award each Golden Apple recipient a \$1,500 grant to support their classroom, school or educational program.

The Golden Apple Awards were established in 1992 in support of KCTS 9's values of lifelong learning, localism and public service. Each spring, KCTS 9 invites students, parents, teachers and community members to nominate individuals and programs epitomizing excellence in education in public and private schools across the state. The 2008 winners were selected from over 200 nominees by a panel including representatives from Association of Washington School Principals, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, Washington Education Association, Washington State Parent Teacher Association, former Golden Apple Award winners and local educators.

Established in 1998, the Stanley O. McNaughton Golden Apple Award recognizes educators whose commitment to excellence inspires students to attain success in academic and/or vocational areas. The award seeks to recognize teaching that enhances students' ability to think and act both logically and creatively, and to work effectively both independently and as part of a team. The award is named for the late Stanley O. McNaughton, CEO of PEMCO Financial Services. Throughout a highly successful business career, McNaughton was first and foremost a teacher—a person who believed strongly in "lifelong learning" before the phrase was ever coined. McNaughton's commitment to excellence in education and his active support of the Golden Apple Awards contributed greatly to the growth and success of the Awards.

The statewide Golden Apple Awards program is sponsored by KCTS 9, PEMCO Insurance and School Employees Credit Union of Washington.

2008 Golden Apple Awards—Winners' Profiles

Stanley O. McNaughton Golden Apple Award

Mike Town, Teacher, A.P. Environmental Science, grades 11-12, Redmond High School, Lake Washington School District

Mike Town is known throughout his school district for his passion for environmental science. He personally advocates for all students to have access to rigorous A.P. courses and believes strongly that if a student is introduced to college course material and receives credit, the odds of them attending college will increase dramatically. Because of this, Mike opens his six A.P. courses to all students with great success; 50 percent of the student body is enrolled in his courses, and 90 percent of his students score well enough on exams to earn college credit. Outside the classroom, Mike mentors the Environmental Club, which successfully reduced the school's carbon footprint by implementing environmental changes at the school, including solar panels, a recycling program and environmentally friendly practices in the cafeteria. Under his guidance—and starting from his "simple idea" to invigorate the student body with pride in their environment and their school—the students launched the Cool Schools campaign. The campaign challenged teachers to reduce their classroom's carbon dioxide emissions by 2000 pounds, with a plan to achieve a 46-ton reduction. Ultimately, the electricity bills revealed that over 72 tons of carbon dioxide emissions were prevented. This "green school" concept has been replicated at 17 other district schools and has received the Presidential Environmental Youth Award, first and second prizes in Washington State University's "Imagine Tomorrow" contest, and entry into the Congressional record. Mike's teaching philosophy holds that change begins in the classroom. As students become passionate and learn about combating global warming, they bring these lessons home to their families and friends.

Individuals

Robert W. Adamson, Principal, Terrace Heights Elementary, East Valley Yakima School District

Hugs, handshakes and high fives are a common sight at Terrace Heights Elementary. As principal of the school, Bob Adamson sees it as his duty to ensure that everyone who comes to the school understands that they are important and belong to a community of learners. Bob Adamson, better known as Mr. A throughout the school, is beloved by students, teachers and parents alike. In a school of 371 students with over 40 percent poverty rate, Bob has made significant changes that have led to increases in test scores and student enthusiasm. Students are encouraged to develop their reading skills with his "Book-It" program. Students who reach their goals—which 80 percent achieve—receive a prize and a special classroom visit from Bob. One mom writes, "Sure, the kids earn a personal pan pizza, but this is not what my daughter comes home talking about at the end of the month. She goes on and on about how Mr. A came to see her in her classroom." Bob has earned the love and respect from students, teachers and staff through his encouragement and respectful attitude. Since restructuring the reading program and instituting "Book-It," there has been a significant increase in the number of students reading at or above grade level. New full-day kindergarten classes with additional support from a bilingual paraprofessional and a reading specialist and a cohesive math curriculum have both contributed to measurable success at this K-3 school. Third graders have tested at standard on the WASL in reading at 82 percent for the past two years, and as well as above average in math those same years. Several teachers who nominated Bob wrote that his leadership style is directly responsible for their results: "Since Mr. A. has been principal... we all try to do our best to make T.H.E. the best."

David Anderson, Principal, Mount Vernon High School, Mount Vernon School District

During his eight years as principal at Mount Vernon High School, David has faced many challenges unique to his school but has served to transform the culture for students and staff to promote success. MVHS serves a diverse student body: with nearly 50 percent of students eligible for free or reduced lunch, high transience among students and families and a sizeable Latino community, MVHS demands an agile administrator ready to deal with issues ranging from socio-economic concerns to inclusivity and language acquisition. To adequately lead, educate and prepare these historically underserved students has required strengthening daily practices. In recent years, the school has been involved in an in-depth school improvement process, with great success. From 2003 to 2007, WASL scores improved dramatically. Reading went from 40.2% to 70.3%, writing went from 37.5% to 68.7%, and math went from 26.1% to 45.4%. In this time, available A.P. classes increased from one subject to nine. Among the significant changes has been to the school governance, which has allowed MVHS to grow and dramatically improve its ability to meet the needs of all students. The new model includes students from every grade level as well as parents, involving them in a transparent decision-making process. The primary focus is on student achievement, with the results going beyond test scores—budgets are balanced and the school has become a model for others. MVHS's pilot program for Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID), which targets underserved and underprivileged students, lead to students garnering over \$600,000 in scholarships—and recognition as Washington's first AVID National Demonstration Site. David is described by his colleagues as one-in-a-million. He is student-centered, resilient, personable and has genuine pride in the school that he has helped to improve so much.

Linda M. Evans, Teacher, grade 3, Marcus Whitman Cowiche Elementary School, Highland School District

Inspiring, outstanding and amazing are a few of the words used to describe Linda Evans. Her third-grade classroom is a place where learning is always fun—she has a rhyme or a song for "absolutely everything," writes one parent, and her enthusiasm is contagious. "Mrs. Evans is a life-long learner herself in the pursuit of leaving no stone unturned to provide academic success for all students. She never stops with the materials provided by the district especially in reading and math," writes her principal. Linda connects the classroom to the community by inviting in guests such as Peace Corps workers, police officers and students' parents to talk to the kids about their careers and life experiences. Her students participate in postcard exchanges and visit virtually any place in the world via a "document camera" online, encouraging the kids to learn beyond their classroom and develop a

desire to travel. Then there are Linda's songs—songs to help students learn and remember just about every concept, from science to multiplication. The kids love the songs and every year they perform them in a spring program for parents. Her various techniques and kinesthetic activities promote engagement and increase retention and learning rates for students of all learning styles and at all levels. She is a passionate reader and lifelong learner who often tells her students that her goal is to learn a new word each day. Linda is praised by parents who say that she is an outstanding example of creativity in the classroom and how learning can and should be fun.

Marjorie R. Lamarre, Teacher, grade 5, John Muir Elementary School, Seattle School District

Marjorie is known for her ability to develop and sustain meaningful partnerships with parents and lasting interactions with her students. She begins each new school year in August, calling every parent to establish trust with parents and to get a sense of the cultural norms and values of families—as well as to identify her students' specific needs, strengths and weaknesses. Marjorie promises each and every one of her students that this will be a defining year in their lives and that if they are willing to put forth the effort, she will help them on their path to greatness. Her former student, Adam, wrote in his nomination, "At the beginning of the year, I didn't think some kids would make it through fifth grade. They didn't understand what was going on, nor did their attitude show they wanted to learn. At the end of the year, those students were at the top of their game, and loved school." School principal Awnie Thompson says of Marjorie, "When she learns something new, she learns it along with them—she is not afraid to show that vulnerability in front of the kids." A trained lawyer, Marjorie has been at John Muir since her student teaching days in 1992 and, she writes, "It is my hope that I will be in this fantastic school for another 20 years." Her plans for the future include continuing to empower children to be the best that they can be and supporting them in accomplishing their dreams. As described by her principle, Marjorie's secret to success is "that she believes in them until they can believe in themselves."

Debra D. Renner, Sign Language Interpreter, grades 9-12, Evergreen High School, Evergreen School District

As an educational sign language interpreter and assistant to the Teacher of the Deaf, Debra strives to do everything she can to ensure that all of her students receive the best possible instruction for their learning styles and abilities. She is constantly looking for ways to encourage her students to take responsibility for their own learning and help them to develop independent life skills. Her math program to teach skills around balancing checkbooks and paying bills is called by a colleague "the best and most complete program of its kind"—it's complete with late-payment penalties, junk mail distractions to weed out, and the occasional hassle of running out of cash before payday. To encourage deaf and hard-of-hearing students to learn to advocate for themselves, she has arranged a system making students responsible for requesting interpreting services for school-related activities outside of the school day. Due to her enthusiasm and hard work, these students have been able to take advantage of both social and learning opportunities so important in the teenage years that they may not otherwise had access to. She gives these students the skills and the confidence to solve problems on their own in high school and beyond. Writes her colleague, Casey Foote, "Debbie is a joy to work with! Not only does she make each student feel their own value and self-worth, she does so with the staff in our class as well."

Megan E. Vogel, Science Department Chair, Biology/Ecology, grades 10-12, Ballard High School, Seattle School District

"When students enter my classroom, I know I have one year to teach them science, be successful on the WASL, and enjoy their time in my classroom," writes Megan Vogel. Megan works to ensure that learning is fun for her students, and she's succeeding. According to her principal, Megan has "developed a legendary status" among students and families at Ballard High School; one parent believes she is "personally responsible for many kids graduating high school." Growing up, Megan did not enjoy school; it wasn't until college that she was diagnosed with six different learning disabilities. When she began working in education, she wanted to ensure that she would make a difference in her students' lives. Megan developed an international ecology class that combines science education with

international travel. Over the years, she has had the opportunity to travel with diverse groups of students to Costa Rica and the Peruvian Amazon, where they study the unique ecosystems. Every student earns all or a portion of the funds for these life-changing opportunities, which often spark an interest in science that encourages students to continue studies in college. Megan received her educational degree in Special Education, and works to mainstream her special education students into her classroom and field studies. Parents have noted her talent for engaging kids of all abilities and instilling in students the drive to learn and continue with their education.

Robert R. Yuong, Teacher, Mathematics, grades 9-12, Henry Foss High School, Tacoma School District

Robert Yuong is the head of the Math Department at Henry Foss High School. He's known as a great math teacher who will stay after school to tutor students, whether they're struggling with basic math or seeking more challenges. Robert uses tutoring and Math Club as opportunities for his students to develop leadership skills; more advanced students help struggling students who often respond better to one-on-one assistance. His math team continuously wins regional contests and places in the top three in one of the four contests held every year at the state level. Robert has also taken on responsibility of mentoring and working with colleagues to update the school's math curriculum in line with state standards. Yet, Robert is remarkable for another reason: he was only 10 years old when the Khmer Rouge seized power in his home country of Cambodia in 1975. He narrowly escaped death, walking the mine fields to a refugee camp, and later, to freedom. Robert credits the teachers in his Tacoma high school where he arrived, virtually alone and not speaking English, with rescuing him from the street and helping him overcome his hardships and becoming successful—and for inspiring him now. "I have no magic to offer, but my experience of what honest hard work, care, commitment and dedication will do." In spite of his countless horrifying experiences in the Killing Fields, Robert developed strong, positive and compassionate characteristics that make him a wonderful teacher. He shares his story of survival with students every year, moving and motivating them to triumph over their own obstacles and setbacks. Writes his colleague, Caroline Merryweather, "Robert is passionate about his chosen career; perhaps he has an extra pound of love and caring because of the torture he experienced and witnessed during his years in the Killing Fields. He knows, better than many, that life is not fair, that kids are the most innocent of people, and that everyone deserves a chance at a good life. I cannot think of a more talented, caring, capable and deserving teacher in our state than Robert Yuong to be awarded the Golden Apple."

Programs

Rainier Scholars, Academic and enrichment program, grades 6-12, Seattle - Calvin Lyons, Executive Director

Rainier Scholars cultivates the academic potential of talented and motivated young scholars from ethnic minority backgrounds, working to increase college graduation rates and to develop new generations of young leaders. Every fourth grader of color who has passed the reading segment of the WASL is eligible—each year close to 500 families apply, and 60 spots are filled by children who have great potential but lack access to exceptional educational opportunities. The eleven-year commitment made by students—from sixth grade through college graduation—involves academic enrichment, academic counseling, leadership development and college support. Of the program, Allan Golston of the Gates Foundation writes, "Many impressive indicators have convinced me that Rainier Scholars is one of the very best youth programs in Seattle. Rainier Scholars retains students at very high rates and has fine-tuned a highly successful model... Noticing that some students began to struggle upon entering high school, Rainier Scholars increased academic assistance and support services to those students and has continued to retain 94 percent of all students." In fact, 90 percent of new students come from families without a college degree in the home, and 95 percent of scholars earn placement in academically rigorous schools and advanced placement programs. "Because Rainier Scholars' ultimate goal is leadership," writes Golston, "it sets up graduates to become successful and inspiring leaders who can ensure that opportunities continue to expand for students and families long into the future."

La Escuelita Bilingual School, Bilingual and bicultural early childhood program, preschool, Seattle – Carmen Sosa-Masso, Founder and Director

One of the first things that many people notice when walking into La Escuelita is the stunning and vibrant environment. Tillman Smith from Child Care Resources wrote in his nomination that the team at La Escuelita creates a “visually inviting and relevant environment for their students and families. Each room’s color is chosen to represent an artist, such as Frida Kahlo’s palette, while also setting as beautiful back drops for the students’ art and literacy work.” La Escuelita, established in 1979, is a bilingual and bicultural preschool program and daycare center dedicated to serving the needs of the linguistically and ethnically diverse populations in Seattle. The nationally recognized curriculum focuses on the bilingual and cultural development of children in a multicultural environment, has served as a model for similar programs throughout the country and was the basis of *Soy Bilingue: Language, Culture and Young Latino Children*, co-authored by the school’s founder, Carmen Sosa-Masso. The school fosters the holistic development of every child that walks through the doors, with attention to ethnic identity and education within the context of their home culture and language. Each month children explore different art forms and music in addition to learning about the biographies of significant leaders of color who have paved the way for equality and justice. La Escuelita incorporates social justice as an important part of their teaching and encourages participation and collaborative relationships with the community. This school has empowered parents and students to overcome the barriers that at-risk and bilingual families face and continues to work with families after their children graduate to ensure their continued success.

###