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Hudson County Library/Media Specialist Named 2002-03 New Jersey Teacher of the Year

When Elspeth Corrigan was an eighth-grader at Bedford Junior High School in Connecticut, she was named "Best Librarian Aide" because, in her words, she was the "best book-shelfer."

Decades later, she can add "best teacher" to her list. Today, Commissioner of Education William L. Librera announced Elspeth Corrigan Moore, a librarian and media specialist at Memorial High School in West New York, Hudson County, as the 2002-2003 New Jersey State Teacher of the Year.

"Elspeth Corrigan Moore is a teacher committed to helping students on a one-to-one basis," Commissioner Librera said. "This is most exemplified in the library, where she keeps her lessons fresh and her focus on never giving up. She is an asset to her school, her local community and to the people of New Jersey."

Moore, known as Mrs. Corrigan to her students, is a 30-year veteran who remembers the name of every teacher she had from elementary school through high school. She is a woman who has successfully combined her love of reading with her love of libraries to work for 27 straight years as librarian at Memorial High School.

"The Department of Education is proud to name Mrs. Moore as Teacher of the Year," Librera said, announcing the recipient of the coveted award. "I'm quite certain she, as well as the other teachers nominated for this prestigious honor, will continue to serve students as best they can, with a passion for their profession as noticeable now as it was when they first set foot in a classroom."

Mrs. Moore is a teacher who administrators, fellow teachers, students and their parents have come to expect to simply always be there, and to always exhibit bright optimism and a sense of humor.

"Got a problem? Call Elspeth," said her principal, Matthew Sinisi in a letter to the Hudson County Teacher of the Year review panel in May. "The students, faculty and administration all love and admire (her). She continues to be hardworking dedicated and devoted. Elspeth (Moore) is a model teacher."

Moore grew up in Connecticut but has spent 30 years teaching at Memorial High School. She began her career teaching Home Economics. After three years, she moved to the library, where she cemented herself as the librarian and media specialist for the next three decades.

She and her husband, Bob Moore, live in Stockholm, Sussex County. While Corrigan took on her husband's name in marriage, she kept the name Mrs. Corrigan in the classroom, namely because another teacher also had the last name Moore.

Bob Moore was a longtime U.S. History teacher in Wayne. He retired last year.

Elspeth Moore holds a bachelor's degree in home economics and is a 1972 graduate of College of St. Elizabeth. She earned her master's degree in library and information science from Rutgers University in 1977. She has taken additional courses in library science and education from Rutgers, City College of New York, Jersey City State University and St. Peter's University.

"We are pleased to recognize this longtime teacher with deep-rooted ties to her school district and educational beliefs," said Maud Dahme, the state board of education president. "The board is committed to recognizing teachers focused on excelling in their classrooms. Elspeth Moore is a shining example of doing just that."

Her love of libraries and reading began as early as first grade. Moore said she simply wants to do for her students what her teachers did for her.

"We always went to the library, whether to get or return a book or to read," Moore said. "The library was an important part of our education."

Moore's educational philosophy is twofold. First, she believes teachers are role models even if they are never asked to do it. She also believes that good teachers foster and accept students' individual differences.

Such an ideal is key in the West New York school district, an Abbott special needs district with a diverse — 80 percent of the high school student body is Hispanic — high school population. Embracing such diversity is the most rewarding aspect of her job, she said.

"We see an amazing change in language skills in our (English as a Second Language) community," Moore said. "I see students come into the library who can't speak English. But after four years they are fluent in English and going off to college. They really want to learn."

In an essay for Teacher of the Year award consideration, Moore traced becoming an educator back to her early childhood, saying it was her "only career goal."

"I had excellent teachers and role models who encouraged young people to go into education," Moore wrote. "Like many high school students in the 1960s, making the world a better place was one of my goals. It may have been an idealistic outlook. Thirty years later, I still believe individuals can make their mark on the world and change it."

In addition to her responsibilities in the classroom, Moore is an active member of the West Milford Lions Club and is currently the chairperson of the New Jersey Lions Club International Foundation. Her chief responsibility in that capacity is coordinating World Trade Center and Lions Club disaster relief funding.

Moore was recently elected District Governor for the club's northern New Jersey region, comprising Bergen, Hudson and Passaic counties.

As New Jersey Teacher of the Year, Moore will be asked to be an advocate and role model for the teaching profession. She will also speak on behalf of teachers statewide and she will represent New Jersey in the national Teacher of the Year competition.

"I'm humbled," Moore said. "This is a great honor. It's an honor to be a librarian and get this award. It's honor to be from an Abbott school — a city high school."

The National Teacher of the Year is announced in April 2003 at a special ceremony in the Rose Garden at the White House.

Moore was selected by a panel of judges who represent the state's educational associations. The panel reviewed the applications of the 21 county teachers of the year and selected Moore from a field of six finalists.

As part of the award, Moore was granted a half-year sabbatical sponsored by the Educational Testing Service. The Department of Education will cover all travel costs. The department will also reimburse the West New York School District for the cost of hiring substitute teachers through December. At the request of the New Jersey Educational Association, Saturn Retailers of New Jersey have unanimously agreed to provide a Saturn for Moore's use.

NOTE TO EDITORS AND REPORTERS: Attached is a list of the 2002-03 County Teachers of the Year.

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**County Teachers of the Year
2002-03**

County	Teacher	Grade/Subject	School
Atlantic	Juanita Moore	Grades 1-2 Reading Rescue	South Egg Harbor Elem Sch/Galloway
Bergen	Betsy Panico	Grades 9, 11, 12 English	No Valley Reg HS at Old Tappan
Burlington	Nancy Bianco	Grades K-1 Multiple Disabilities	Howard Yocum Elem Sch/Maple Shade
Camden	Marlene Rubin	Grade 6 At Risk	Charles Lewis Mid Sch/Gloucester Twp
Cape May	Andrew Bristol	Grade 8 Social Studies	Upper Twp Middle School
Cumberland	Susan Jacobsen	Grades 6 & 7 Life Skills (Technology)	Lakeside Middle School/Millville
Essex	Sharon Cardoso	Grades K-8 Lead Science Teacher	Ann Street School/Newark
Gloucester	Amy Lignelli	Grade 7 Science	Gateway Regional High School
Hudson	Elsbeth Moore	Grades 9-12 Library Media Specialist	Memorial High School/West New York

Hunterdon	Kenneth Kuhn	Grades 9-12 German	Hunterdon Central Reg High School
Mercer	Georgianna Aiken	Grades 9-12 Family & Consumer Science	Lawrence High School
Middlesex	Christine Dawson	Grades 10-12 English	Highland Park High School
Monmouth	Joseph Lyttle	Grades 6-8 Vocal Music	Clifton Barkalow Mid Sch/Freehold Twp
Morris	Annette Czeterko	Grade 5 All Subjects	Sandshore School/Mt. Olive Twp
Ocean	Karen Lederle-Foglia	Grades 9-12 Special Education	Southern Regional High School
Passaic	Patricia Temprano	Grade 3 All Subjects	Thomas Jefferson Sch/Hawthorne
Salem	Marilyn Mortimer	Grade 12 English	Woodstown HS/Woodstown-Pilesgrove
Somerset	Catherine Ambos	Grade 7 Life Science	Somerville Middle School
Sussex	Kevin Fenlon	Grades 9-12 Resource Center Support	High Point Regional High School
Union	Paul Maloney	Grade 8 American History	Hillside Avenue School/Cranford
Warren	Karen Barbato	Grades 9-12 Special Education	Warren Co Special Services School District