



NJDOE News

For More Information Contact the Public Information Office:

Jon Zlock
Kathryn Forsyth, Director
609-292-1126

For Release: October 15, 2004

New Jersey Honors Bergen County Teacher with 2004 Milken Family Foundation National Educator Award

Jill Stauffer begins every day at George Washington School in Wyckoff at 6:30 a.m., long before the pitter patter of kindergarten feet skip into her classroom. She is innovative. She is dedicated. She is a 2004 Milken Family Foundation National Educator Award recipient.

Mrs. Stauffer was honored today by the Gov. James E. McGreevey Administration, Department of Education and the Milken Family Foundation for being among the very best teachers in the state. She is quick to personalize each lesson to a student's individual needs, and she does so in new, original and creative ways, her colleagues say.

Among the innovative methods Mrs. Stauffer has used at George Washington School are: a planned trip to a Mexican restaurant to accompany a lesson about the letter "R"; bringing a bunny into her classroom and talking about the letter "B"; and using frog puppets to discuss the letter "F."

"Mrs. Stauffer is a bright, dynamic and inspirational teacher who has a wonderful zest for learning," said Joseph E. Desiderio, principal at George Washington School. "She has a joyful spirit that is contagious to all who are in her presence. She is an educator who designs her educational message in her mind, but delivers it through her heart."

Mrs. Stauffer, a 15-year-teacher who holds a master's degree in education from William Paterson University and a bachelor's degree from Trenton State College (now the College of New Jersey), received a check for \$25,000 from the Milken Family Foundation at a special assembly this afternoon at her school.

The award recognizes outstanding educators who continue to learn and are essential in fostering student growth, improving schools and enhancing the education profession.

"We are so very pleased to recognize Jill Stauffer as a great and dedicated innovator, motivator and educator," Commissioner of Education William L. Librera said. "It is clear to her peers and to the Department of Education that she is of great value, not only to her kindergartners and her school, but to her district, county and state. Her success should be both recognized and shared with others so that we can continue to raise the bar for teacher success."

Mrs. Stauffer is the second National Educator Award recipient announced by the Department of Education this week. She joins Theresa Bordo of Vineland as the two honorees from New Jersey this year. Nationwide, the Milken Family Foundation will honor 100 outstanding educators this year.

The state of New Jersey and the Milken Family Foundation are in the third year of a partnership for the National Educator Awards. Founder Lowell Milken, the foundation's chairman, created the award program in 1985.

"We joined with the Milken Family Foundation three years ago because we believe they see the value in recognizing good educators, educators who have the chance to become even better," Commissioner Librera said. "We must continue to recognize, and more importantly, share, great success stories. They occur each and every day in so many fine schools across the state."

Since 1985, the Milken National Awards Program, which honors teachers, principals and specialists in public education from kindergarten through 12th grade, has become the largest teacher recognition program in the United States.

This year alone, the foundation will issue \$2.5 million worth of National Educator Award in 47 states and the District of Columbia. More than \$51.9 million in awards have been doled out since the program's inception.

For more information about the Milken Family Foundation National Educator Awards, please contact the Department of Education Public Information Office at (609) 292-1126 or the Milken Family Foundation at (310) 998-3009.