State of New Jersey
Department of Education

Point Pleasant Teacher Receives $25,000 National Award for Excellence From Milken Foundation and New Jersey Department of Education

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The New Jersey Department of Education, in partnership with the nationally-recognized Milken Family Foundation, is pleased to honor Rachel Tonkovich with a 2010 National Educator Award. Tonkovich received the $25,000 award at a surprise assembly at the Nellie F. Bennett Elementary School in Point Pleasant yesterday morning. This event is part of the Milken Family Foundation's 24th Annual National Notifications tour honoring 55 outstanding educators as 2010 Milken Educator Award recipients.

"Rachel Tonkovich is a teacher who demonstrates what educational excellence is all about," said Governor Chris Christie. "I congratulate Ms. Tonkovich for her commitment to her students and for being an outstanding leader in her school community."

At yesterday's school assembly, longtime New Jersey Department of Education leader Rochelle Hendricks praised Tonkovich in front of a cheering crowd of students and teachers.

"The state of New Jersey is extremely fortunate to have such a wonderful example of excellence in the classroom," Ms. Hendricks said. "A teacher's success is our children's success."

Ms. Hendricks and Senior Vice President of the Milken Educator Awards, Dr. Jane Foley, attended the surprise ceremony. The money can be spent in any way the teacher wishes, and Tonkovich will go on an all-expense-paid trip to California to participate in a conference with other winners.

The Milken Educator Awards, conceived by Milken Family Foundation Chairman and Co-Founder Lowell Milken to attract, retain and motivate outstanding talent to the teaching profession, has grown to become the nation's preeminent teacher recognition program. Including this year's selections, since 1987 over $62 million has been awarded to more than 2,500 educators. New recipients will join the Milken Educator Network, a group of distinguished educators whose expertise serves as a valuable resource to fellow educators, legislators, school boards and others shaping the future of education.

You can access a photograph from the event here:
http://www.state.nj.us/education/educators/rpr/recognition/teach/milken/

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