



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Hazelwood West Middle School science teacher earns state distinguished service award

Becky Cook, a eighth grade science teacher at Hazelwood West Middle School, received a Distinguished Service Award from the Science Teachers of Missouri (STOM) at its 2009 conference in Jefferson City. She is one of four teachers statewide who received the honor.

The Distinguished Service Award is presented to educators who have made significant contributions to science education and/or to STOM.

“I was really honored,” Cook said. “Others who have received this award in the past are people who I have felt the impact of in the classroom, so to receive this award myself was overwhelming. Sometimes, you are just never sure what the effects of your efforts are.”

Cook has held the following STOM positions - St. Louis area representative, vice president, president-elect, president and past-president. She has also served as regional director for the Science Olympiad, which is an international, non-profit group dedicated to raising student awareness in science and recognizing outstanding achievement in science education by students and staff members.

Chris Link, another science teacher at Hazelwood West Middle School, praised Cook for her work. He is also a mentee of Cook’s.

“I’m happy that Becky is being recognized for her efforts inside and outside of the classroom,” Link said. “I have observed Becky in her classroom and I have worked with her on the Science Olympiad. It is clear to me that Becky has a deep love for her students and for science. My students from last year continue to come down to my room and tell me the fun they are having in science this year and all the opportunities that Becky has exposed them to. She certainly deserves this award.”

Cook’s principal, Dr. Allison Klouse, agrees.

“The amount of time and effort she spends getting kids excited about science is amazing,” Klouse said. “She is so humble. That is one thing I love about her.”

Cook has taught science in the District for 13 years. In 1997, she enrolled as a summer student at the Physics and Chemistry Instrumentation Institute in Columbia, Missouri. She then worked there as a master teacher from 1998 to 2000 and served as the co-director in 2001. Cook also taught science methods for elementary teachers in the evening at the University of Missouri-St. Louis for five years.

STOM is the state chapter of the National Science Teachers Association. It also is a link to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, speaking for teachers on science education matters. STOM members assist with national grant proposals, workshop presentations and revisions of key skills.

Photo Information: Becky Cook, left, a science teacher at Hazelwood West Middle School, receives a Distinguished Service Award at the 2009 Science Teachers of Missouri Conference in Jefferson City. Cook is one of four educators statewide who received this honor.

The Hazelwood School District is the second largest district in St. Louis County and serves nearly 19,000 students. Communities in the district include Hazelwood, Black Jack, Spanish Lake, a large section of Florissant, portions of Bridgeton, Bellefontaine Neighbors and Ferguson, and several square miles of unincorporated St. Louis County. The mission of the Hazelwood School District is to launch learners on a quest for high standards, fairness and distinguished achievement.

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