

PRESENT.:

MILKEN

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RECIPIENTS

1996 Milken Family Foundation National Educator Awards

The Awards Program

The Milken Family Foundation National Educator Awards program provides public recognition and financial rewards to elementary and secondary school teachers, principals and other education professionals who are furthering excellence in education. The goals of the program are:

- To honor and reward outstanding K-12 educators for the quality of their teaching, their professional leadership, their engagement with families and the community and their potential for even greater contribution to the healthy development of children.
- To focus public attention on the importance of excellent educators and to rally support for dramatic improvements in the motivation and achievement of students.
- To encourage able, caring and creative people to choose the challenge, service and adventure of teaching as a career.
- To create national and state networks of Milken Educators that:
 - foster the active professional development and career enhancement of Milken Educators and other professionals,
 - encourage Milken Educators to help shape the educational policies that influence their classrooms and schools,
 - connect Milken Educators with the educational improvement efforts of state education agencies, universities, corporate partners and other allies.
- To engage corporate and foundation partners in support of Milken Educators and in advocacy of policies that advance education.

Each Milken Educator Award carries with it an unrestricted award of \$25,000.

The Milken Educator Awards are announced in the fall in surprise notifications that occur in classrooms, assemblies, and meetings. Usually the chief state school officer and other dignitaries attend accompanied by electronic and print media. Spreading the news of the Awards is an important way of attracting the attention of talented youth to the adventure and importance of teaching.

After the notifications, the honorees are celebrated at a state conference sponsored by the Foundation, the state education department and corporate partners and attended by the recipients' families, local school administrators, community leaders, the state's chief of education and frequently its governor. These events are an important part of the program since a major goal is to honor educators publicly. The conferences not only recognize new and veteran Milken Educators, they also bring them together with other distinguished teachers and principals to advance their professional development and policy influence.

The Foundation presents the financial awards to all 138 honorees at the gala that concludes the annual Milken Family Foundation National Education Conference held in June. This celebration also advances the goal of gaining widespread recognition for outstanding educators, as it is attended by government officials and distinguished representatives from the professional, business and cultural communities.

Through their daily efforts, our country's best educators are making children's lives more secure and interesting -- by cultivating their minds, their characters and, in many cases, by protecting their essential welfare. This effort is our soundest investment in the future, and it confirms the crucial role and exponential impact of education and educators.

In 1981, the members of the Milken families conceived an awards program to acknowledge this crucial contribution to our national security and welfare. Their main belief was -- and is -- that the most effective way to address the crisis in American education is to respond to educators' professional interests, enhance their resources and reward their achievements, thus elevating the profession and encouraging talented young people to become educators.

Building on that program and a number of early education initiatives, in 1985 the Foundation established a formal recognition program, and in 1987 presented the first awards in California to 12 highly accomplished educators.

Since those first awards, the program has expanded to 32 states: Alaska, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Georgia, Hawaii, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Tennessee, Washington, West Virginia and Wyoming.

Including recipients announced in the fall of 1996, the program has invested over \$25 million in financial awards alone, recognizing 1,020 outstanding kindergarten through 12th-grade teachers, counselors, librarians, principals and other administrators with unrestricted individual Milken Educator Awards of \$25,000.

Criteria

The criteria considered for the selection of Milken Educators include:

- Expert pedagogy
- Distinguished achievement in developing innovative educational curricula, programs and/or teaching methods
- Outstanding ability to instill in students character and self-confidence
- Outstanding ability to develop children's understanding of the direct bearing that education and "real world" activities have on one another
- Commitment to professional development and policy leadership in the school, the district and the state
- Exemplary and innovative use of education technology in teaching and learning (desirable)
- Strong potential for even greater contribution to children, the profession and the community
- For administrators, outstanding ability to attract, support and motivate committed education professionals

Selection Process

Based on guidelines established by the Foundation, participating states' departments of education appoint blue ribbon committees that identify candidates for evaluation and selection. Identification and selection procedures are confidential, and the program does not include a nomination or application procedure.



More information: Harry Gamble, Information Officer, 465-2851

January 27, 1997

COMMISSIONER HOLLOWAY ANNOUNCES OUTSTANDING EDUCATORS

Four Alaska elementary educators will receive the 1996 Milken Family Foundation National Educator Award. Commissioner of Education Shirley Holloway announcement today. Dr. Holloway informed the four educators about their awards this week. Each of the four educators will receive an accompanying financial award of \$25,000 from the Milken Family Foundation.

"It was wonderful informing each of these outstanding educators that they have been so highly honored and that they will receive a large cash award for being the best that they can be," said Dr. Holloway. "Each of these educators represents what is good about the education profession. They deserve this honor because of their contributions to the future of our children and our state."

The educators who received the award are:

- Frederica Buffmiro—Principal, Pearl Creek Elementary School, Fairbanks North Star Borough School District.
- David Gillam—Second Grade Teacher, Susima Elementary School, Anchorage School District.
- Ledwina Jones—Kindergarten Teacher, Mikeinguut Elitnaurviat School, Bethel, Lower Kuskokwim School District.
- Judy Kuhn—Elementary Teacher, McGrath School, Iditarod Area School District.

"This award intends to make a powerful statement," said Lowell Milken, president of the Milken Family Foundation, which sponsors the award program. "It tells educators that their contribution to our national security is crucial; it tells students that education is a noble and rewarding profession; and it tells society that educators, as the architects of our future, merit the highest respect."

The Milken Family Foundation, in cooperation with the Alaska Department of Education, sponsors the awards program. Alaska has participated in the program since 1990. Since that time 38 Alaska teachers have received the honor. In addition, 31 other states also team up with the Milken Family Foundation program to honor educators annually. The program honors both elementary and secondary educators, but annually alternates the award program between both groups. The program's goal is to elevate the education profession by increasing public recognition and support of outstanding educators.

Following guidelines established by the Milken Foundation, Commissioner Holloway sets up a process to identify and evaluate educators for the award. Commissioner Holloway then appoints a blue ribbon review team of legislators, former Milken awardees, parents, school board members and other educators to make final recommendations. The Milken organization makes the final awards based on the recommendations. The program includes neither an application nor a nomination procedure.

The four Alaska recipients and their spouses will be among 138 recipients from around the country to attend the 1996 Milken Family Foundation National Education Conference. The three-day conference in Los Angeles in June 1997 will include workshops, discussion sessions and presentations by nationally recognized scholars and practitioners in the field of education.

The conference will culminate in a Saturday evening ceremony at which the recipients will be honored and presented their \$25,000 awards. This will bring to \$25.5 million the total awards given to 1,020 teachers nationwide during the program's 10-year history.

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**Milken Family Foundation
National Educator Awards
Recipients from the
State of Alaska**

1990

Paul Bowen
Teacher
Petersburg High School
Petersburg

Dora Cline*
Programs Coordinator
Dillingham High School
Dillingham

Grace A. Heacock
(deceased)
Teacher
Rosamond Weller
Elementary School
Fairbanks

Suzanne Henning
Teacher
Tanana School
Tanana

Larry Moye
Teacher
Barrow High School
Barrow

Floyd Sucher
Principal
Chugiak Elementary School
Chugiak

1991

Walter J. Clark
Principal
Blatchley Middle School
Sitka

Jacqueline D'Cafango
Kookesh
Teacher
Angoon High School
Angoon

Ruthanne Rust
Teacher
Denali Elementary School
Fairbanks

Dick Sander
Teacher
Ketchikan High School
Ketchikan

Susan A. Stitham
Teacher
Austin E. Lathrop High
School
Fairbanks

Donna L. York
Teacher Expert
Benson-East High School
Anchorage

1992

Peter Burchell
Founder and Principal
Matansuka-Susitna
Alternative School
Wasilla

Linda Clement (retired)
Teacher
Annette Island Indian
Reserve
Metlakatla

Carolyn Coe
Principal
Mt. Iliamna Preschool
Anchorage

Pat Hartland*
Teacher
Mendenhall River
Community School
Juneau

John Pingayak
Teacher
Kashunamiut School District
Chevak

Rod Poole
Counselor
Sitka High School
Sitka

* now Dora Andrew

* now Pat Holman

**Milken Family Foundation
National Educator Awards
Recipients from the
State of Alaska**

1993

Michele B. Bifelt
Teacher
Jimmy Huntington School
Huslia

**Lorraine "Sammy"
Crawford**
Teacher
Soldotna High School
Soldotna

Ron Gleason
Principal
Juneau-Douglas High School
Juneau

Jerry Hartsock
Principal
Austin E. Lathrop High
School
Fairbanks

Ron James Manook
Teacher
West Valley High School
Fairbanks

Harry A. Matrone, Jr.
Teacher
McLaughlin Secondary
School
Anchorage

1994

Leslie Sears Gordon
Teacher
Badger Road Elementary
School
Fairbanks

**Anthony Barrington
Harduar**
Principal
Willard L. Bowman
Elementary School
Anchorage

Nancy Norman
Teacher
Finger Lake Elementary
School
Palmer

Nita Yurrlig Rearden
Teacher
Kotzebue Elementary School
Kotzebue

John A. Rusyniak
Media Specialist
Alaska Gateway School
District
Tok

1995

Don Bernard
Teacher
Chugiak High School
Eagle River

Esther Cox
Principal
Martin Luther King, Jr.
Career Center
Anchorage

Elaine Griffin
Teacher
Chiniak School
Kodiak

Georjean Seeliger
Teacher
Hutchison Career Center
Fairbanks

Lyle Sparrowgrove
Teacher
Blatchley Middle School
Sitka



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 5, 1996

More information: Harry Gamble, Information Officer, 465-2851

McGrath Teacher Judy Kuhn Named 1997 Alaska Teacher of the Year

Alaska's 1997 Teacher of the Year is Judy Kuhn, an elementary school teacher from McGrath. The announcement was made today by Commissioner of Education Shirley Holloway

Holloway also today submitted Ms. Kuhn's name for the 1997 National Teacher of the Year competition.

Ms. Kuhn has been a teacher at McGrath School since 1985. Beginning in 1977, she was a reading and special education aide, assistant counselor and substitute teacher in Aniak and McGrath. She received her bachelor's degree in teaching in 1982 from the University of Alaska Anchorage. She spent the 1990-91 school year in China as an exchange teacher.

Said Commissioner Holloway: "Judy Kuhn is an example of the best of the teaching profession. She works night and day for her students, keeping parents informed and getting help from children's families in a most positive way. She is the kind of teacher we are thankful for and proud to have in our school system. I am pleased to appoint her to serve as Alaska's 1997 Teacher of the Year. I am equally pleased to place her application among the elite few from across our nation who will compete for the 1997 National Teacher of the Year honor."

Monty Bunes, a seventh and eighth grade math and science teacher at Stikine Middle School in Wrangell, was selected 1997 Alternate Teacher of the Year. Patricia Truman, an eighth grade teacher at Palmer Junior Middle School, was selected second alternate.

A statewide selection committee appointed by Commissioner Holloway recommended Kuhn and the two alternates from a group of 11 statewide applicants.

As Kuhn was growing up, teachers were the people she admired most. "My teachers had always been an extraordinary group of people having the skills required to shape young minds and to make learning fun," Kuhn wrote in her application. "School was something that I looked forward to every day."

She immerses her students in the subjects she teaches. "I like what Merlin the Magician told King Arthur when he was a boy under Merlin's tutelage: 'To understand something, you have to become it.'"

"When we study about farming and ranching, we made stick horses and hold horse races," stated the teacher who keeps a turtle, a bird, a hamster and about 30 frogs in her classroom. "We made chickens and a coop and we collected real eggs every day,"

When her class studies the Idiarod Sled Dog race, she invites real mushers, checkers and veterinarians into her classroom to talk to the children. "We learn the parts of a sled and the vocabulary for mushing dogs. We make all the mandatory gear that mushers must carry." In addition, some of the children have real sled dog races that involve the school and community.

"Children learn through making decisions, by being active participants and owners of their own work," she stated. "They have ideas and opinions that they are constantly forming and reforming. To help students discover their learning I find that talking and discussing get ideas flowing that speak to the child's inner voice. Kids have to talk to think."

The Teacher of the Year's term begins July 1, 1997. The 1996 Alaska Teacher of the Year is Barbara Renoux from Pt. Lay on the North Slope. Alaska's 1995 Teacher of the Year, Elaine Griffin from Kodiak Island, went on to become the National Teacher of the Year.

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Radio Stations: For actualities call the State Agency News Feed: 1-800-478-5669, or in Juneau call 465-5213.