



NEWS RELEASE

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LAUSD SALUTES 21 EDUCATORS AS ‘TEACHER OF THE YEAR’

Winners will be honored at the LA County Teachers of the Year Luncheon in September

LOS ANGELES—The Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) is proud to honor 21 teachers who have been awarded the 2013-2014 LAUSD Teacher of the Year (TOY) distinction. These exceptional educators range from a Japanese language instructor, math/science educators, and special education teacher; to English and choir instructors. All of these award-winning teachers have been recognized for their exemplary and creative teaching, which helps make a difference in the lives of their students, their school and the community.

“Congratulations to these outstanding teachers,” said Superintendent John Deasy, “who use their professional skills, talent, creativity and life lessons to instruct, encourage, push, prod and help students do better and excel.”

This year’s winners are:

- **Andrea Allen** teaches Japanese, English, Reading (remedial) 180 and Drama at the International Studies Learning Center (High School) in South Gate. A resident of Long Beach, she has been a teacher for six years.
 - *“Sugoi! (awesome!) is what you will hear walking into my classroom.”*
- **Sandra Alvarado** teaches History at Hollenbeck Middle School in Los Angeles. A resident of Pico Rivera, she has been a teacher for 14 years.
 - *“Teaching is my life, and teachers are my heroes.”*
- **Michael Todd Beiersdorf** teaches Life Science and Health at the International Studies Learning Center (Middle School) in South Gate. A resident of Pasadena, he has been a teacher for nearly 16 years.
 - *“I am creating scientists and scholars.”*

- **Shawn Boone** teaches English, History, Computer and Creative Writing at Global Studies and Technology (Middle School Community) –Orchard Academies 2C in Bell. A resident of Long Beach, he has been a teacher for 12 years
 - *“My students represent the growth and change of the global community.”*
- **Karyn Buchanan** teaches Humanitas English at Verdugo Hill High School in Tujunga. A resident of La Crescenta, she has been a teacher for 17 years.
 - *“After the assembly Eduardo wrote the following to a poet. ‘I didn’t know how much words mattered until today. You made me believe.’”*
- **Katherine Czujko** teaches Science at Hollenbeck Middle School in Los Angeles. A resident of Altadena, she has been teaching for four years.
 - *“My greatest accomplishment in teaching is reaching the untapped potential stored inside many of my middle school children.”*
- **Tyson Evans** teaches Physical Science at John Muir Middle School in Los Angeles. A resident of Santa Monica, he has been a teacher for 12 years.
 - *“Despite the eyebrows that can be raised when answering the question, ‘What do you do for work?’ I always smile confidently and proudly and say, I am a middle school Science teacher in South LA.”*
- **Collin Felch** teaches Math, Economics and Leadership at the Ambassador School of Global Leadership in Los Angeles. A resident of Los Angeles, he has been a teacher for three years.
 - *“I work this hard and am this dedicated because the teaching profession is not producing products to sell or make a profit. We are helping create and support the leaders of tomorrow.”*
- **Daniel Gettinger** teaches statistics, pre-calculus and algebra I at Huntington Park High School in Huntington Park. A resident of Los Angeles, he has been a teacher for three years.
 - *“I have committed my life to closing the achievement gap.”*
- **Karen Hacker** teaches Special Education at Walter Reed Middle School. A resident of West Hills, she has been a teacher for 11 years.
 - *‘My kids may come to me with a ‘label,’ but I truly believe they leave me feeling they can do anything!’*

- **Wendy Yajaira Monroy** teaches algebra at Narbonne High School. A resident of Los Angeles, she has been a teacher for nine years.
 - *“Walk into my classroom and be prepared to learn. Leave your drama outside. I know math scares you a lot. I don’t expect you to love it, but I expect you to learn it. No matter how difficult it might be, I will not let you give up. Your efforts will pay off.”*
- **Michael A. Morgan** teaches chemistry at Francisco Bravo Medical Magnet High School. A resident of Redondo Beach, he has been a teacher for 25 years.
 - *“I want my students, from very impoverished backgrounds to have the same edge that kids from very elite private schools have.”*
- **Sylvia Ramirez-Mazariego** teaches health at John Muir Middle School. A resident of Los Angeles, she has been teaching for 13 years.
 - *“I find myself just dying for my chance to continue to be out there and make a difference and touch children’s lives.”*
- **Kim Reed** teaches Special Education (SDC SLD) at Carson-Gore Academy of Environmental Studies. A resident of Sierra Madre, she has been teaching for 14 years.
 - *“Fifteen years ago in an armed robbery I survived the gun shot to my head...When I sit or stand in front of my class the students know I am special too. I am one of them. I feel their pain. They also learn that just like I did it, they can too.”*
- **Jacqueline Remillard Gorski** teaches music at Daniel Pearl Magnet High School. A resident of Canoga Park, she has been teaching for 11 years.
 - *“Not every student receives consistent music instruction every year that they are in school. As a music educator, I am sensitive to the vast range of ability and experience levels in my classes. I want each student to do the best that they can.”*
- **Teresa Rivas** teaches general education, kindergarten, (dual language) at Lucille Roybal-Allard Elementary School. A resident of Whittier, she has been teaching for 10 years.
 - *“Teaching is the most gratifying profession in the world. Some students come in not being able to hold a pencil, with negative attitudes about school, and they leave being productive learners who can express their own views, who are bi-literate, and who improved their behavior. Teachers get so much more than just a paycheck.”*

- **Ismael Sanchez** teaches Special Ed (SDP/ED) at 24th Street Elementary School. A resident of Pomona, he has been a teacher for ten years.
 - *“Before you enter my classroom you are to suspend all notions, stigmas and prejudices regarding special education and of the Emotional Disturbance Special Ed. Program.”*
- **Jayme Tao** teaches physical science at John Muir Middle School. A resident of Norwalk, he has been teaching for seven years.
 - *“Teaching science is so much more than teaching the knowledge of facts. It’s about giving the students the tools needed to navigate the world.”*
- **Ronald G. Theile** teaches math/science and music at Mark Twain Middle School. A resident of Santa Monica, he has been a teacher for 16 years.
 - *“Seeing a student overcome their personal and academic challenges is the ‘brass ring.’”*
- **Zulma Tobar** teaches fourth grade at Harmony Elementary School. A resident of Hawthorne, she has been teaching for 10 years.
 - *“Education is a door that I keep open for my students and myself. It’s one that I keep unlocked because I believe anyone can open it regardless of their circumstances.”*
- **Amy Uyeshima** teaches mathematics at Luther Burbank Middle School. A resident of Fullerton, she has been teaching for 10 years.
 - *“My school recently achieved amazing results in our Academic Performance Index score and gained 100 points in one year. These results are directly connected to learning results I see in my classroom every day.”*

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Note to media: Please contact the Office of Communications and Media Relations for Teachers of the Year photos.