

LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Office of Communications & Media Relations
333 South Beaudry Avenue, 24th Floor
Los Angeles, CA 90017
(213) 241-6766
(213) 241-8952 fax
www.lausd.net



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

September 23, 2011
#11/12-037

THREE LAUSD EDUCATORS AWARDED L.A. COUNTY 'TEACHERS OF THE YEAR' DESIGNATION

Los Angeles – Recognized for their dedication and contribution to student achievement, three Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) educators were named Los Angeles County Teachers of the Year (TOY) for 2011-2012 during a ceremony held today in Universal City.

Rachel Haserjian from West Adams Preparatory High School, **Zachary Weiss** from the Burbank Learning Complex, and **Terry Little** from Ascot Avenue Elementary School were honored with the annual award that recognizes classroom excellence. They are now in the running for the California Teacher of the Year Award. A total of 16 classroom teachers were announced as the 2011-12 Los Angeles County Teachers of the Year by education officials, representing the profession's "best of the best" in the largest honors competition for K-12 educators in the state.

"I am thrilled that these teachers are being recognized for their accomplishments and dedication in the classroom," said LAUSD Superintendent John Deasy. "Everyday, teachers use their unique skills to make a difference in a youth's academic life. Teachers plant the seeds for students to prosper and achieve their dreams and goals."

With 80,000 teachers countywide, the field was narrowed down to 60 candidates that represented the education community's exemplary leaders, of which Haserjian, Weiss and Little were chosen. Contestants were required to do interviews and submit essays, lesson plans and other materials to judging panels comprised of educator peers. The 16 Los Angeles County winners will automatically advance, along with other county finalists around the state, to the California Teachers of the Year competition this fall. The National Teacher of the Year contest is scheduled next spring.

Weiss has been teaching mathematics for 11 years at the Luther Burbank Learning Complex in Los Angeles. Little, an 18-year educator, is a fourth-grade teacher at Ascot Avenue Elementary School. Haserjian has been an Advanced Placement (AP) calculus teacher at West Adams Preparatory High School for four years.

(more)

The LAUSD has a rich history of award-winning teachers. Five LAUSD teachers have won the prestigious California Teachers of the Year award.

- In 1976, **Carole Billone**, a special education teacher from Marlton School for the deaf
- In 1985, **Evaline K. Kruse**, an English teacher from Audubon Junior High School
- In 2006, **Kelly Jean Hanock**, an English Language Arts teacher at James Monroe High School
- In 2008, **Lewis Chappellear**, an Engineering Design teacher at James Monroe High School
- In 2009, **Jose L. Navarro IV**, a Social Studies and U.S. History teacher at Sylmar High School

Most noteworthy is Lewis Chappellear from Monroe High School who, in 2008, was named one of four nominees for the National Teacher of the Year competition.

In recent years, some notable honors have been awarded to LAUSD educators for their excellence in teaching. **Tamara Garfio** won the 2010 Milken National Educator Award of \$25,000 for her exceptional body of work as a leader in education. Virgil Middle School biology teacher **Roberto Gonzalez** won the \$25,000 Milken Educator Award in 2009 for his outstanding work in the classroom. **Margaret “Peg” Cagle** from Lawrence Middle School was honored with the 2005 Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching. **Michael Sabin**, also from Virgil Middle School, was recently recognized as the 2011 Outstanding Middle Level Social Studies Teacher of the Year. Earlier this year, math teacher **Scott Kemple** from Verdugo Hills High School won the first-ever Jaime Escalante Advanced Placement (A.P.) Math Award. Another math wizard, educator **Michael Morgan** from Francisco Bravo Medical Magnet was recently named the Southern California Teacher of the Year by the American Chemistry Society. In 2010, **Robert Schechter**, a special education resource teacher at Sunny Brae Elementary School, was honored with a PBS Teachers Innovation Award.

###