

July 27, 2009

## **Maine Teachers Receive Presidential Awards**

### **Science and mathematics teachers Thompson and Spencer will participate in White House ceremony**

AUGUSTA – Two Maine teachers received the prestigious Presidential Award for Excellence for Mathematics and Science Teaching this month. Pamela Thompson, a Grade 3-4 looping teacher at Madison Elementary School and Kimberly Spencer, who teaches Grades 2 and 3 at Yarmouth Elementary School, will receive their awards in the fall at a White House ceremony.

Thompson received the 2008 science teaching award and Spencer received the 2008 mathematics teaching award.

The Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching is awarded annually to the best pre-college-level science and math teachers from across the country. The winners are selected by a panel of distinguished scientists, mathematicians, and educators following an initial selection process done at the state level. Each year the award alternates between elementary and secondary education, going either to science and math teachers in grades K through 6 (as it is this year) or to those teaching in grades 7 through 12.

Pamela Thompson has been teaching for 25 years and has been at Madison Elementary School for five years. Thompson holds a master's degree in education from St. Joseph's College and two degrees from the University of Maine at Farmington. She has been involved in professional development to strengthen links between science inquiry and literacy and serves on the board of the Maine State Science Teachers Association. Thompson lives in Industry, Maine.

Kim Spencer has been teaching for 15 years and is a team leader at Yarmouth Elementary School. She is a recipient of the Yarmouth Teacher of the Year Award and a 2005-06 recipient of a National Semiconductor Science in Action grant. She has been lead teacher at the Yarmouth Math Camp since 2001 and was a presenter at the Promoting Learning for All Students conference sponsored by the University of Southern Maine's Professional Development Center. She received her bachelor's degree from the University of Maine, Farmington.

Winners of the Presidential Teaching Award receive \$10,000 awards from the National Science Foundation to be used at their discretion. They also receive an expense-paid trip to Washington, D.C. for a White House awards ceremony and several days of educational and celebratory events, including visits with members of Congress and science agency leaders.

"There is no higher calling than furthering the educational advancement of our nation's young people and encouraging and inspiring our next generation of leaders," President Obama said in a statement. "These awards represent a heartfelt salute of appreciation to a remarkable group of individuals who have devoted their lives and careers to helping others and in doing so have helped us all."

Maine Education Commissioner Sue Gendron applauded the two educators for their efforts on behalf of Maine students. “Maine is privileged to have talented teachers like Thompson and Spencer. Strong, inspiring elementary instruction is a critical to preparing our students for careers in STEM fields.”

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For more information, visit the Maine Department of Education website:

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