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THREE TEACHERS RECEIVE NATIONAL AWARD FOR CIVIC EDUCATION EXCELLENCE

SAN FRANCISCO — Three teachers from California, Illinois and Tennessee are the recipients of the 2007 American Civic Education Teacher Awards, recognizing their exemplary work preparing young people to become informed and engaged citizens.

Selected in a nationwide search, the ACETA winners are Mary Ellen Daneels of Community High School in West Chicago, Ill., Barbara Simpson Ector of Cleveland Middle School in Cleveland, Tenn., and Kevin Fox of Arcadia High School in Arcadia, Calif. The educators were presented their awards Friday, October 5, at the **We the People: Project Citizen** national conference before 450 civic educators.

The awards are given annually to elementary and secondary teachers of civics, government and related subjects who have demonstrated special expertise in motivating students to learn about the Constitution, Congress and public policy.

ACETA is sponsored by the Center for Civic Education, the Center on Congress at Indiana University and the National Education Association.

“For our democracy to succeed, each new generation must understand the principles on which America was built,” said NEA President Reg Weaver. “These three teachers show extraordinary skill at making civics and history come alive for their students, giving them the knowledge they need to take an active role in shaping our nation’s future.”

Lee Hamilton, director of the Center on Congress, praised Daneels, Ector and Fox for their commitment to “explaining the work of government in an engaging way, helping young people see that what goes on in Washington is relevant to their lives.” In presenting the awards, Hamilton said, “we also call public attention to the fact that many teachers across the nation are doing an excellent job molding the civic character of young people and training them to assume the obligations of citizenship.”

Charles N. Quigley, executive director of the Center for Civic Education, said, “It is an honor to recognize three teachers who are so dedicated to giving their students a firm grasp of the fundamental values and principles of our constitutional system of government.”

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The ACETA winners received an all-expenses-paid trip to Washington in July to participate in an educational program that included observing committee hearings in Congress, meeting members of Congress and other key officials, and visiting sites such as the National Archives and the U.S. Supreme Court.

Each year the ACETA program selects and showcases three teachers whose students represent the diversity of the American public and private school systems. Applicants must be full-time classroom teachers of grades K–12. There is no fee to apply. Applications and materials for the 2008 awards will be available online in January.

About the Center for Civic Education (www.civiced.org)

The Center for Civic Education is a nonprofit, nonpartisan educational organization dedicated to fostering the development of informed, responsible participation in civic life by citizens committed to values and principles fundamental to American constitutional democracy.

About the Center on Congress (www.centeroncongress.org)

The Center on Congress is a nonpartisan educational institution established in 1999 to help improve the public's understanding of Congress and to encourage civic engagement.

About the National Education Association (www.nea.org)

The NEA is the nation's largest professional employee organization, representing 3.2 million elementary and secondary teachers, higher education faculty, education support professionals, school administrators, retired educators and students preparing to become teachers.

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