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May 5, 2010

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**Teachers from Florida, Nevada and Wisconsin
Receive American Civic Education Teacher Awards**

WASHINGTON — Teachers from Florida, Nevada and Wisconsin are recipients of the 2010 American Civic Education Teacher Awards, recognizing their exemplary work preparing young people to become informed and engaged citizens.

The ACETA winners are: Jackie Viana of Hialeah Gardens Middle School in Hialeah Gardens, Fla.; Milton Hyams of Incline High School in Incline Village, Nev.; and Tamara Johnson of Kettle Moraine High School in Wales, Wis.

The awards are given annually to elementary and secondary teachers of civics, government and related subjects who have demonstrated exceptional expertise, dynamism and creativity 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.

Charles N. Quigley, Executive Director of the Center for Civic Education, praised Viana, Hyams and Johnson for their dedication to teaching young people the responsibilities of citizenship in our democracy. "It is an honor to recognize teachers who are so enthusiastic about imparting the fundamental values and principles of our constitutional system of government," he said.

Lee Hamilton, Director of the Center on Congress, lauded the awardees for "helping students develop the knowledge and skills they need to work within the political system to make their communities and their nation better." In presenting the awards, Hamilton said, "We call public attention to the fact that many teachers across the nation are doing an excellent job molding the civic character of America's youth."

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Dennis Van Roekel, President of the National Education Association, said, "The awardees should be commended for their commitment to improving student learning and for leading by example to enhance the professionalism of civic education, which is essential to the preservation and improvement of a representative democracy."

The ACETA winners receive an all-expenses-paid trip to Washington, D.C., in July to participate in an educational program that includes observing floor sessions and 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.

The three awardees share a passion for explaining the work of government in an engaging way, and helping young people see that what goes on in Washington is relevant to their lives.

In her self-portrait essay, Jackie Viana wrote, "By the time students leave high school, they should be equipped with the tools to become active citizens of their community and country. Living in a democracy is a true blessing. I try to help my students appreciate that, not take it for granted. Nearly all my students are children of immigrants, or immigrants themselves, who came to this country in pursuit of freedom. I want to make young people aware that they have a patriotic duty to understand and sustain our democracy."

Milton Hyams wrote, "My teaching of twelfth grade civics is a journey for students to understand the significance of their role in the fabric of American citizenship and the complex relationship between rights and responsibilities. I view my classroom as a learning community where ideas are shared, respected, and built upon; where knowledge, experience and learning are valued...As a civic educator, I recognize that it is my duty to promote civility of discourse, open-mindedness, the disposition to compromise, and compassion....My goal is that students learn their role as active, thoughtful, informed, empowered citizens, participants in the dialogue of who we are as a people."

Tamara Johnson wrote, "One of the most important factors in a high-functioning democracy is an educated populace. I have dedicated my career to this principle, and it is more like a mission than a job for me....I provide my students with the means to critically think through complex problems and to develop their own political philosophies." She takes pride that her students "have gone on to become legislative aides, civil servants, attorneys, officers in the military, candidates for public office...and active and productive citizens of all stripes, who understand the structure of our government, are politically literate and critically think through problems, in small part because of taking my class."

2010 ACETA Winners

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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. In addition to a two-page self-portrait essay, applicants must submit three letters of recommendation — two from teaching peers and one from their school principal. Applications and materials for the 2011 awards will be available online in January.

With the recognition this year of Viana, Hyams and Johnson, the ACETA program has now honored 15 teachers since the awards were first given in 2006. The previous ACETA recipients:

Nate Breen — Cheyenne Central High School, Cheyenne, Wyo.
Sally Broughton — Monforton Elementary School, Bozeman, Mont.
Christopher Cavanaugh — Plainfield High School, Plainfield, Ind.
Cheryl Cook-Kallio — Irvington High School, Fremont, Calif.
Mary Ellen Daneels — Community High School, West Chicago, Ill.
Barbara Simpson Ector — Cleveland Middle School, Cleveland, Tenn.
Kevin Fox — Arcadia High School, Arcadia, Calif.
Julie Kuhnhein — Highlands High School, Fort Thomas, Ky.
Galelyn McElroy — Central High School Magnet Career Academy, Louisville, Ky.
Donna Paoletti Phillips — Robert Frost Middle School, Rockville, Md.
Sarah Ann Richardson Turpin — Clemson Elementary School, Clemson, S.C.
Gregory Walsh — Falls Church High School, Falls Church, Va.

To learn more about ACETA, visit the Web sites of the sponsoring organizations.

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 NEA (www.nea.org)

The National Education Association is the nation's largest professional employee organization, representing 3.2 million elementary and secondary teachers, college faculty, education support professionals, retired educators and students preparing to become teachers.