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Shaker teacher among those honored at White House event

President Barack Obama on Wednesday honored a teacher with the Shaker Regional School District for excellence in math and science education.

Fourth-grade teacher Teresa Minogue, who teaches at Canterbury Elementary School, received the 2010 Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching, an award for pre-college-level science and math teachers who demonstrate excellence in their profession.

President Obama named more than 80 science and math teachers as recipients of the award and Minogue was among them when they received their awards in the White House East Room.

"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," Obama said in a statement released before the ceremony. "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."

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

Minogue has taught at Canterbury Elementary School since 1982. Currently she teaches fourth-grade in a self-contained classroom and is responsible for teaching science, language arts, social studies and mathematics.

She has a bachelor's degree in elementary education from the College of Santa Fe and a master's degree in education, specializing in gifted and talented education, from Notre Dame College. She is pursuing an M.Ed. with Leslie University. She has an Experienced Educator's Certificate from the N.H.

Department of Education.

"Whether it's improving our health or harnessing clean energy, protecting our security or succeeding in the global economy, our future depends on reaffirming America's role as the world's engine of scientific discovery and technological innovation," Obama said, according to a White House transcript of his speech. "And that leadership tomorrow depends on how we educate our students today, especially in math, science, technology, and engineering."

Winners were selected by a panel of scientists, mathematicians and educators who followed an initial selection process at the state level. Each year the award alternates, going either to science and math teachers in kindergarten through sixth grade or to those teaching in grades seven through 12.

"The quality of math and science teachers is the most important single factor influencing whether students will succeed or fail in science, technology, engineering and math," said Obama. "Passionate educators with issue expertise can make all the difference, enabling hands-on learning that truly engages students — including girls and underrepresented minorities — and preparing them to tackle the grand challenges of the 21st century such as increasing energy independence, improving people's health, protecting the environment, and strengthening national security."

According to school administration, Minogue creates an engaging learning environment featuring hands-on, interactive lessons and multimedia technology and uses portfolios to document students' growth. To meet the needs of visual, kinesthetic, and auditory learners, she integrates a wide assortment of teaching techniques.

Shaker Superintendent Michael Cozort said the district is delighted and proud of her in earning the award.

"These awards go out to people who mentor students in science," said Cozort. "She has not only mentored students, but also her colleagues during her time here."

Cozort said Minogue is very deserving of the award and she is passionate about teaching and improving her teaching abilities.

Mary Morrison, principal of Canterbury Elementary School, said Minogue has contributed significantly to the science departments between the two elementary schools by facilitating the Science Curriculum Committee for the district and bringing science understanding to other teachers in the district.

"She has done an outstanding job putting together the science program for the district which started just a few years ago," said Morrison. "She is a bright,

hardworking educator who is always looking to improve herself and the curriculum."

Minogue has developed curriculum materials and portals to facilitate interactive training in standards-based science instruction for kindergarten through fourth grade teachers. She also helped develop and implement the standards-based report card for the district.

"We're all very proud of her," said Morrison. "She has worked hard and certainly deserves to be recognized for this award."

Her colleagues say Minogue loves teaching and is intent on instilling in her students a deep appreciation of learning and investigation. She sets high standards for herself and her students and believes that every teacher has an obligation to work beyond the classroom.

"I feel deeply honored to be a recipient of the Presidential Award for science," said Minogue in a prepared statement. "I'm very grateful to be recognized for all my hard work to improve science literacy in my district. No other award acknowledges the importance of science literacy in the elementary grades, and I'm proud to have been chosen to receive such an honor. This prestigious award not only honors me, but also the Shaker Regional School District, where considerable effort has been made to improve science education districtwide."

Colleagues said Minogue's work has impacted the way students view science and analyze the world around them. They have seen a transformation in the level of enthusiasm for science at the school — among both students and teachers — under her leadership.
