

## News Release

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### Evers commends Presidential Teaching Award recipients

MADISON — State Superintendent Tony Evers commended four Wisconsin educators who recently returned from Washington, D.C., where they received the Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching.

“Congratulations to Lori Baryenbruch, Juan Botella, John Hayes, and Tina Parker,” Evers said. “The Presidential Teaching Award is considered the nation’s highest honor, recognizing outstanding teachers for their contributions to the teaching and learning of mathematics and science. Thank you for your work with our students to inspire a love of science and mathematics.”

Wisconsin’s four teachers were among 213 recipients of the Presidential Teaching Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching representing all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, U.S. Territories, and the Department of Defense Education Activity Schools. A panel of distinguished scientists, mathematicians, and educators selected Presidential Teaching Award recipients from state-level nominees. Applications were evaluated using the following five Dimensions of Outstanding Teaching:

- Mastery of mathematics or science content appropriate for the grade level taught.
- Use of instructional methods and strategies that are appropriate for students in the class and that support student learning.
- Effective use of student assessments to evaluate, monitor, and improve student learning.
- Reflective practice and life-long learning to improve teaching and student learning.
- Leadership in education outside the classroom.

During the Sept. 8 ceremonies, each Presidential Teaching Award recipient received a citation signed by the president and a \$10,000 award from the National Science Foundation.

**Lori Baryenbruch** has been teaching in the River Valley School District since 1990. She currently teaches fifth grade at River Valley Elementary Spring Green and serves as the Administrative Building Coordinator. A standout element of her application for the Presidential Teaching Award was her consistent push for students to explain their thinking and provide evidence. Students are challenged to think like real-world scientists or engineers, solving real-world problems in collaborative teams. Inspired by work as an outdoor educator at

(more)

George Williams College, she has coordinated a 2-3 day outdoor adventure education overnight program for fifth-graders across her district since 1993. Notably, her overarching goal is to help her students “to develop academically, as well as socially.” She earned her bachelor’s degree from the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater and her master’s degree from UW-Platteville.

**Juan Botella** of Madison, has taught physics, earth science, and astronomy at Monona Grove High School for over 10 years. Previously, he was a researcher in oceanography in Massachusetts and Mexico. Botella has presented to science educators both in Wisconsin and across the country, supporting their teaching of weather, climate, and oceanography. In his application he shared a lesson where he pushed students to question their assumptions about gravity and weight. As his principal stated, “Juan has an unending interest in the world around him. He models this for students every day and his enthusiasm is contagious.” Botella earned his bachelor’s degree from the Universidad Autónoma de Baja California, Mexico, and master’s degrees from the Centro de Investigación Científica y Educación Superior de Ensenada and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution.

**John Hayes** has been at Northland Pines High School in Eagle River for 16 years, teaching algebra, Advanced Placement (AP) Calculus BC, and AP Statistics. Experience as an Air Force electronics technician, work in biostatistics at Indiana University Hospital, and as a computer software engineer bring the real-world into his classroom. His AP Statistics students demonstrate their understanding of the relevance of statistics through final research project; middle school students begin computer programming; and students learn about engineering at a free Summer Engineering Camp. Hayes earned his bachelor’s degree in applied mathematics from the University of Wisconsin–Stout and a master’s degree in applied statistics from Purdue University. He is a certified Master Educator Teacher in 6–12 mathematics and is a National Board Certified Teacher in adolescent and young adult mathematics.

**Tina Parker** has been an educator for 15 years and has spent the last two years as a kindergarten through fifth grade interventionist at Southview and Hillcrest elementary schools in the Chippewa Falls Area Unified School District. She previously taught at Sam Davey Elementary School in the Eau Claire Area School District. Parker has a strong commitment to her students with achievement and learning always foremost. “Math talk” is implemented within her lessons, focusing on developing mathematical understanding by all students within a helping community. The inquiry environment she creates in her classroom encourages solving, explaining, questioning, and justifying mathematical strategies. Parker serves as a mathematics coach and district mathematics cadre representative and provides districtwide support to teachers, all while teaching in the classroom full-time. She holds a bachelor’s degree in early childhood education from the University of Wisconsin-Stout and a master’s degree in education with a reading and mathematics specialization from Walden University.

Established by Congress in 1983, the Presidential Teaching Awards program has recognized more than 4,600 teachers for their contributions in the classroom and to their profession.

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**NOTES:** This news release is available electronically at [http://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/news-release/dpinr2016\\_92.pdf](http://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/news-release/dpinr2016_92.pdf). More information about the Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching can be found online at <https://paemst.org/>.