

NEWS



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For More Information Contact:
Jonathan Burman or Tom Dunn at (518) 474-1201
Internet: <http://www.nysed.gov>

DUANESBURG TEACHER NAMED 2007 BETTER BEGINNINGS AWARD RECIPIENT

Ms. Linda Kelly Armour, a fifth grade teacher in the Duanesburg Central School District has been named the 2007 Winner of the Better Beginnings Award. The award, which is sponsored by the Board of Regents and celebrates the life and career of Helen Bach Moss, a local educator, recognizes elementary teachers who are gifted in finding and nurturing the strengths of each student.

A prize of \$1,000, a framed certificate of recognition, and a book on innovative teaching techniques was presented to Ms. Armour by New York State Education Department administrators during a ceremony held at the Duanesburg Elementary School on June 5. Ms. Cole was selected as the 2007 Better Beginnings Award Winner after consideration of entries submitted throughout the State.

Ms. Armour has taught elementary school for twenty-three years, and her principal, Dr. Kathleen O'Brien, describes her as a teacher who really listens to her students and who has the goal of helping her students become connected to other people and to the world beyond the school. One way she does this is by inviting a variety of people into her classroom to be interviewed by her students. Among these guests, for example, have been a sheepfarmer and an elderly man who had attended a one-room school.

Ms. Armour is best known for the way that she teaches her students that their lives can be meaningful. Recently, for example, she received a grant to make a school garden, and her students both designed the garden and helped to plant it. Her classes have also undertaken projects to make quilts for survivors of Hurricane Katrina (Quilts for Katrina) as well as to raise money for a local farmer whose barn had caught fire (Cash for Cows) and to buy new fishing boats to replace those destroyed in the tsunami of 2005. These projects enable Ms. Armour's students to see the importance of working together and show them that what they do can make a difference.

Runners-up for the award were Ms. Maureen L. Hart, a First Grade teacher at Dodge Elementary School in East Amherst, New York, and Ms. Susan McEnaney, a Remedial Reading teacher at Lake George Elementary School in Lake George, New York.

Applications for the Better Beginnings Award are available in October of each year from the Teacher Development Programs Unit of the New York State Education Department at (518) 486-6042. They are also posted online at <http://www.highered.nysed.gov/kiap/TEACHING/BBA/bbaindex.htm> .