COE, Texas Instruments to recognize STEM teachers this fall

With the growing emphasis placed on preparing students for the global, high-tech workforce, a new facet has been added to the Santa Clara County Teacher Recognition Celebration.

This year, the annual gala that recognizes distinguished teachers from across Santa Clara County will honor up to five outstanding STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) teachers. Through the generosity of Texas Instruments, the STEM honorees will receive cash awards of $1,000 each.

Recipients will also have the opportunity to attend and present at a STEM professional development event at the Santa Clara County Office of Education, which produces the Teacher Recognition Celebration.

The Texas Instruments STEM Teaching Awards will honor STEM teachers in grades seven through 12 who consistently demonstrate quality instruction, inspire interest and enhance student achievement in STEM subjects.

School principals who would like to nominate a teacher for the award should complete a nomination form, and the teacher nominee must also complete an application questionnaire.

By June 8, principals must submit their nomination form and the teachers’ questionnaire as a packet electronically or by mail to 1290 Ridder Park Drive MC 243 San Jose, CA 95131.
position is compounded by a large dose of uncertainty.

Making matters even more uncertain this year is that the governor has staked education funding on the passage of a temporary tax increase measure on the November ballot, which as we all know, has no real certainty of passing.

As Sacramento Bee columnist Dan Walters recently wrote: “If California voters and politicians had set out to create the most convoluted, irrational school finance system possible, they could not have done a better job.”

Earlier this month I was interviewed by KCBS Radio about the State budget, and I was asked what I would say to teachers whose jobs have been threatened and to those considering becoming a teacher.

My advice to them is the same that I’ve given to staff at the COE: Hang in there with us. All indications are that in the long term, education funding in California will improve. It’s going to take a bit more time and patience, but I’m convinced we’ll get there eventually.

May 18 candidates forum covers education funding, policy

The COE, League of Women Voters and several other community groups are sponsoring a May 18 candidates forum in anticipation of the next month’s primary election.

The forum will feature a special focus on education funding and policy, information about redistricting and new open primary rules, as well as candidates for state Senate and Assembly in the June 5 primary election.

The event begins with a 6:30 p.m. reception, followed by the forum from 7 to 9:30 p.m. at Cupertino Community Hall, 10350 Torre Ave.

May 21 is the last day to register to vote for the June 5 election. Visit the Santa Clara County Registrar of Voters’ website to learn more about how to register, find polling places, and check election results.

'A Look at Learning' showcase draws crowd

About 200 educators dedicated to improving the instruction of English learners attended the recent "A Look at Learning" annual showcase.

Held at the COE late last month, the event featured the "The Equity and Access District Partner Award," which for the second consecutive year went to the Campbell Union Elementary School District.

"A Look at Learning" is a collaborative professional development system designed and developed by COE staff to support instructors of English learners.

To learn more about the showcase and view the presentations and storyboards, visit the "A Look at Learning" website, and scroll down to "A.L.L. Showcase-2012." Watch a video of testimonies from collaborators, and check out a photo gallery from the showcase.

The system last fall was awarded the prestigious "Golden Bell" award from the California School Boards Association. It was also featured in a recent episode of "Head of the Class," the COE’s online news program.
Congresswoman visits Head Start site

Students enrolled in the Santa Clara County Head Start program received a recent visit from a member of Congress.

The children greeted Rep. Zoe Lofgren with songs in three languages when she visited two classrooms at the Cinderella Head Start location at Arbuckle School in the Alum Rock Union School District earlier this month.

The congresswoman also attended a parent and community meeting, and learned more about local nonprofit Somos Mayfair’s work to build community leadership.

COE celebrates classified employees

Six school employees from districts throughout Santa Clara County received special recognition this month for their vital roles in creating school environments that promote student achievement, safety and health.

Learn more about the contributions of the county’s 2012 Classified School Employees of the Year.

Districts countywide submitted employee nominations, along with letters of recommendation for each nominee, to the COE.

A judging panel reviewed the nominations and selected one employee from each of six categories to represent the county in the state Classified School Employee of the Year program.

The California Department of Education announced statewide winners of the award this month.

Board honors employee, student

Here’s a summary of other actions taken by the Santa Clara County Board of Education at its May 2 and 16 meetings:

- Recognized Richard Reid as the May Employee of the Month
- Celebrated the accomplishments of Hugo Naranjo, a student enrolled in the COE’s Migrant Education program
• Participated in a proposed 2012-13 budget study session
• Adopted a new anti-bullying board policy

The Board of Education is the elected governing body of the COE. Its seven members serve four-year terms and are elected by different regions of the county. Learn more about the members, and view their meeting schedule, agendas and minutes.

SCCSBA honors four school district programs

The Santa Clara County School Boards Association recently honored four local school districts for creating programs that significantly affect student success.

Check out COE-produced videos about the programs that received Glen W. Hoffmann Awards:

- East Side Union High School District, Teacher Instructed Programs on Saturdays (TIPS)
- Gilroy Unified School District, Elementary Engagement and Achievement Initiative
- Milpitas Unified School District, Literacy Support Specialist Program
- Mountain View-Los Altos Union High School District, LUCHA/El Cafecito

Also, a photo gallery of the April 25 award ceremony is available.

Now in its 28th year, the award pays homage to Hoffmann, who served as Santa Clara County Superintendent of Schools from 1967 to 1984.

A committee of school administrators and board members score entries from county school programs. Awards are given to only those programs which receive the highest scores.

Since 1852, the Santa Clara County Office of Education has provided vital services and resources to the county’s 31 K-12 public school districts and more than 250,000 students. The COE strives to provide advocacy and leadership on education issues, student programs that are models of excellence, and indispensable services to schools and community partners. The COE takes pride in being a premier employer and a champion for children, schools, and community.
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