

**Press Release for Hampden, Hampshire, Franklin Counties
Pioneer Valley Excellence in Teaching Awards Program
2009**

The Pioneer Valley honored outstanding teachers in thirty-eight school communities in the Hampden, Franklin and Hampshire Counties. One hundred forty-four teachers were honored for their professionalism and their excellence in teaching practices, his/her own professional development, demonstration of collaboration and cooperation, reaching above and beyond the required teaching job, and other outstanding qualities.

This was the seventh year this program honored outstanding teachers. Close to 900 teachers from three counties have been honored over seven years.

Sponsors in Hampden County include: The Irene E. & George A. Davis Foundation, the Harold Grinspoon Charitable Foundation, MassMutual Financial Group, Myers Bros & Kalicka, P.C., Pride Stores & Stations, The Reminder, Southworth Paper Company, The Springfield Republican, STCU Credit Union, Westfield State College Foundation, WGBY Channel 57, Channels 40 & 22, Big Y, The Log Cabin Banquet & Meeting House, and the local YMCAs.

The first Celebration of teachers in Hampden County took place on Tuesday, April 28th, 2009 at the Log Cabin in Holyoke. Teachers in the communities of East Longmeadow, Hampden-Wilbraham Regional School District, Ludlow, Martin Luther King Charter School, Monson, New Leadership Charter School, Palmer, Pathfinder Regional High School, Robert Hughes Charter School, and Springfield were honored.

The second Celebration took place on Thursday, May 7th, 2009 at the Log Cabin in Holyoke. Teachers from the communities of Agawam, Chicopee, Holyoke, The Holyoke Charter School, The MacDuffie School, Northampton, The Pioneer Valley Christian School, Sabis International Charter School, Southwick, Westfield, West Springfield, & Willie Ross School for the Deaf were honored.

The third Celebration was held on Thursday, May 14th, 2009 at the Log Cabin for Hampshire and Franklin Counties. Teachers were honored from the school districts of Amherst-Pelham Public and Regional School Districts, Belchertown, The Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Springfield, Easthampton, Frontier Regional-Union #38, Gateway Regional, Granby, Greenfield, Hadley, The Hampshire Regional Schools, Hatfield, The Jewish Schools of Western MA, the Orange Public Schools, Smith Vocational & Agricultural High School, South Hadley, and Ware Public Schools.

The sponsors for the Hampshire and Franklin Counties include: Big Y Foods, The Channing Bete Company, Country Bank, The Harold Grinspoon Charitable Foundation, Log Cabin Banquet and Meeting House, Meyers Bros & Kalicka, Southworth Paper Company, the Republican, the Daily Hampshire Gazette, STCU Credit Union, Westfield State College Foundation, the Workers Credit Union of Athol, Wright Builders of Northampton, and the YMCAs of the local communities.

Each honored teacher received two tickets to the Celebration at the Log Cabin & Meeting House in Holyoke, an award of \$600, an engraved plaque, a membership to a local YMCA for three months, a gift certificate from Westfield State College to be used for graduate or under graduate work or a workshop at the CENTER, an invitation from WGBY to take an online course with credit from Westfield State College, a letter of commendation from the Governor, and other gifts.

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