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Two Maryland Educators Receive Nation's Highest Distinction for Math and Science Teaching

Anne Arundel and Baltimore City Teachers Among 102 National Presidential Award (PAEMST) Recipients

BALTIMORE, MD (February 28, 2022) – Two Maryland educators are among 102 teachers across the Nation to receive the Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching (PAEMST), the United States' highest distinction for teaching in science, technology, engineering, mathematics, and/or computer science.

Joanie Gulden, a Title I mathematics teacher at Glen Burnie Park Elementary School in Anne Arundel County, and Melissa Thompson, a Project Lead the Way (PLTW) and science teacher at Arlington Elementary School in Baltimore City, are Maryland's most recent PAEMST recipients.

In a press release announcing the PAEMST award recipients, President Biden said, "The dedication these individuals and organizations have demonstrated to prepare students for careers in STEM fields, during what has been a difficult time for teachers, students, and families, plays a huge role in American innovation and competitiveness. The work that teachers and mentors do ensures that our Nation's children are able to unlock — for themselves and all of us — a world of possibilities."

"Our administration is proud to honor the outstanding contributions of Joanie Gulden and Melissa Thompson and congratulate them on achieving this distinguished national recognition," said Governor Larry Hogan. "Your drive, dedication and commitment in delivering an excellent education to the next generation of Maryland students is admirable and I extend my deepest gratitude for your extraordinary work in the classroom and education community."

The Awards Program recognizes honorees for their contributions to teaching and learning, along with their ability to help students make progress in science, technology, engineering, mathematics, and/or computer science. In addition to honoring individual achievement, the program also showcases the highest standards of STEM teaching.

Awardees receive a certificate signed by the President of the United States; a \$10,000 award from the National Science Foundation (NSF); and a trip to Washington, D.C. The teachers attend a series of recognition events, participate in professional development opportunities and discuss how to improve STEM education with policymakers.

“The Maryland State Board of Education proudly celebrates this distinguished honor bestowed upon our State’s educators,” said State Board of Education President Clarence Crawford. “We thank Joanie and Melissa for their fierce commitment to fostering success among Maryland students.”

“As we emerge from a pandemic that has highlighted the creativity and dedication of our teachers, it is especially important that we recognize the outstanding work of our Presidential Award winners and their success in accelerating student learning,” said State Superintendent of Schools Mohammed Choudhury. “MSDE is incredibly proud of Maryland's math and science Presidential Award recipients Joanie Gulden and Melissa Thompson. We celebrate their knowledge, expertise and ability to engage their students - these teachers are the top of the top in their fields, and among the very best in the nation.”

Each year, PAEMST applications are reviewed at state and national levels by prominent mathematicians, scientists, mathematics/science education researchers, district level personnel and classroom teachers. Nominees are then sent to The White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) for final selection.

Congress established the Awards in 1983. The President may recognize up to 108 exemplary teachers each year. NSF’s Directorate for Education and Human Resources administers PAEMST on behalf of OSTP. Awards alternate between elementary (Kindergarten – 6th grade) and secondary (7th – 12th grade) teachers each year.

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