



BLUE VALLEY SCHOOLS
COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT
15020 Metcalf Ave.
Overland Park, KS 66283-0901
913-239-4000

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: January 26, 2010

Two Blue Valley teachers win first year teaching award

The Kansas State Department of Education recently named two new Blue Valley teachers as recipients of the Kansas Horizon Award because of their dedication to helping their students achieve success.

Megan McMillian, resource teacher at Cottonwood Point Elementary (CPE), and Alisa Stevenson, eighth grade social studies teacher at Pleasant Ridge Middle (PRM), are this year's honorees. Both are in their second year of teaching.

The Kansas Horizon Award program identifies and recognizes exemplary first year teachers who perform in a way that distinguishes them as outstanding. The Kansas State Department of Education honored 32 Kansas teachers with the award this year.

McMillian received her bachelor's degree from Benedictine College. She worked at Indian Valley Elementary (IVE) during her first year of teaching and was nominated by IVE principal Marilyn Shetlar for the Horizon Award. This school year, she is teaching at CPE.

"Megan is a strong advocate for her special needs students," Shetlar said. "She takes a personal interest in every student she works with and helps them realize their potential."

Jill Smith, principal at CPE, echoed those sentiments.

"We are very fortunate to have Megan this year at CPE. She has those natural teaching abilities with students that usually come from years of teaching experience," Smith said. "She is always looking for new strategies to help support her students and to help herself grow professionally."

Stevenson received her bachelor's degree from the University of Utah and her master's degree from Rockhurst University.

Stevenson's principal Diana Tate said that Stevenson is one of the finest educators she's worked with. Tate said one of the best things about Stevenson is that she makes the excellent job she does look easy and she does it all with a smile on her face.

"She develops lessons that are interactive and meaningful to students. In her social studies class, she doesn't just tell them about the events of history, she reenacts the events - often with the students participating and immersed in both the time and place of the event," Tate said. "She builds rapport with students and understands their world; she treats them like young adults and expects the very best effort from them...and they give it to her! They respect her because she relates to them and works tirelessly to help them see their place in our community, in our country and in our world."

CONTACTS: Communications Department, (913) 239-4347