

Ten Outstanding West Virginia Teachers Receive 1999 Arch Coal, Inc. Teacher Achievement Awards

May 5, 1999 12:45 PM ET

Charleston, W.Va. — May 5, 1999 - Ten outstanding West Virginia educators were honored today with 1999 Arch Coal, Inc. Teacher Achievement Awards.

Each winning teacher received a \$2,500 cash award from Arch Coal, which took over sponsorship of the prestigious awards program after it had been sponsored for the past 10 years by Ashland Inc. In an awards ceremony at the state capitol, Arch Coal Vice President David G. Todd was joined by Governor Cecil H. Underwood; David R. Ice, secretary of education and arts for West Virginia; Dr. Henry R. Marockie, state superintendent of education; and Thomas R. Lange, president of the West Virginia Education Association.

The 10 recipients of the inaugural Arch Coal award are:

Katrina M. Andrews
Ritchie County Middle School
Ellenboro, W. Va.

Tanya Jo Barker
Harrisville Elementary School
Harrisville, W.Va.

John Blankenship
Shady Spring High School
Shady Spring, W.Va.

Linda Dlugos
Suncrest Middle School
Morgantown, W.Va.

Mary Lu Hutchins
Steenrod Elementary School
Wheeling, W. Va.

Terry L. Kerns
Bridgeport High School
Bridgeport, W.Va.

Sonya Ferrell Picklesimer
Williamson High School
Williamson, W.Va.

Sarah Jane Slaughter
Emerson Elementary School
Parkersburg, W.Va.

Sandra M. Spies
Winchester Avenue School
Martinsburg, W.Va.

Sharon Steele
Jefferson Elementary Center
Parkersburg, W.Va.

"The teachers we recognize today bring to their classrooms a vision for using innovative methods to reach more and teach more students, an unbridled enthusiasm for their students' potential to learn and a passion for their profession. I am pleased that Arch Coal has continued the proud private-sector tradition of working in partnership with educators to reward the outstanding work done by these teachers," Governor Underwood said. "By investing in education, integrating computers into our curriculum, encouraging innovation in our classrooms, involving private-sector leaders in curriculum planning and emphasizing results from our schools, we are improving education in West Virginia and changing the lives of our students in important and real ways."

"The most important element of a high quality education system is the quality of the teacher in the classroom. It is more evident now in the age of information than ever before that knowledge is our greatest resource; learning, our greatest skill," said Secretary Ice. "I commend the recipients of the Teacher Achievement Awards being honored by Arch Coal for their ability to inspire the quest for knowledge and the love of learning, not only within their students but also within their peers."

"On behalf of the State Board of Education, congratulations to the outstanding teachers being recognized in the Arch Coal Teacher Achievement program," said Dr. Marockie. "They provide a stimulating and nurturing environment while reaching into the lives of children with the message that hope, hard work and achievement pay off. Teachers deserve our respect and support, and these award winners merit this exemplary recognition."

"The West Virginia Education Association (WVEA) applauds Arch Coal, Inc. for its continued support in recognizing and rewarding excellent teachers for a job well done," said Thomas R. Lange, president of the WVEA. "The WVEA thanks Arch Coal for its commitment in focusing public awareness to the vital role teachers play in the lives of their students."

"Teachers stimulate and spark our curiosity, introduce us to career choices, and often recognize our potential long before we even know the meaning of the word. They serve as role models, friends and mentors. Today's 10 winners of our Arch Coal, Inc. Teacher Achievement Awards are not only among the finest educators in West Virginia, but anywhere in the world," said David G. Todd, vice president of Arch Coal. "There is a common thread among our winners. Their classrooms are places of learning and caring for all students."

Nominations for the Teacher Achievement Awards were open to the general public through January 1999. All certified West Virginia teachers currently teaching Kindergarten through grade 12 were eligible. A panel of education experts from West Virginia, Kentucky and Ohio selected the winners, following exhaustive review of application materials provided by the nominees. Nominated teachers had to provide materials which gave information on the nominee's teaching philosophy, their teaching experiences, involvement in their respective communities, as well as letters of recommendations from peers, students, administrators and others.

Arch Coal is the nation's second largest coal producer, with subsidiary operations in West Virginia, Kentucky, Virginia, Illinois, Wyoming, Colorado and Utah. More than 2,500 people are employed at Arch Coal's mining operations in West Virginia, where the company produced 32.7 million tons of clean-burning, low-sulfur coal last year.