

Association of Texas Professional Educators

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Third-grade teacher wins Elementary Educator of the Year

AUSTIN – T.M. Clark Elementary School third-grade teacher Veronica Stapper of Portland, Texas was honored as the Elementary Educator of the Year July 21 by the state's largest educators group. Stapper, who has 17 years of teaching experience, was presented with the honor during the 2011 ATPE Summit Awards Banquet hosted by the Association of Texas Professional Educators at the Austin Convention Center.

"I am honored and humbled to receive this award in honor of all of the outstanding elementary teachers in the state of Texas who teach with passion and love for students," Stapper said. "I am truly thankful for this award and for being a member of the most outstanding educator organization in Texas. Being respected by my peers from all over Texas for positively impacting the lives of our future leaders and doing what I love is a wonderful feeling."

Stapper has taught at T.M. Clark Elementary in Gregory-Portland ISD for 13 years. She taught second grade for seven years before deciding to teach third grade. She also serves on her school's technology and reading committees.

Stapper was one of three finalists for the award. Myra Cantu, a third grade section leader at Evans Elementary School in Corpus Christi ISD, and Debra Stolpa, a language arts teacher for gifted fifth grade students at Miller Intermediate School in Alief ISD, were the other finalists.

Nearly 1,000 people celebrated the achievements of public school educators at the banquet where awards were presented to educators in administrator, associate, elementary and secondary teacher, and special services categories.

Attendees at the four-day ATPE Summit also had the opportunity to attend professional development workshops, participate in the organization's annual governance meeting, the ATPE House of Delegates, and new state officers for 2011-12.

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The 116,000-member Association of Texas Professional Educators is the largest educators' group in Texas and the largest nonunion educators' group nationwide. Its membership consists of classroom teachers, para-educators, administrators, college students and retired educators. ATPE is committed to advocating for better benefits for all educators, promoting a collaborative work environment and the right of educators to choose the association they feel represents their interests, and providing the best education possible for all Texas school children.