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Association of Texas Professional Educators

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Round Rock third-grade teacher wins Elementary Educator of the Year Award

AUSTIN – Round Rock Independent School District teacher Rachael Brunson was honored July 19 with the Association of Texas Professional Educators (ATPE) Elementary Educator of the Year Award. Brunson, a 16-year education veteran, was presented with the award plus a \$1,000 check during the 2013 ATPE Summit Awards Banquet held at the Austin Convention Center.

“Teachers saved my life,” Brunson wrote in her award application. “Without the guidance of a handful of caring teachers, I would have never made it ... Many people think that outstanding teachers have some sort of almost magical quality. It’s not magic, it’s heart.”

Nearly 1,000 people celebrated the achievements of public school educators at the banquet, at which numerous awards were presented to educators who demonstrate exceptional and innovative skills in their respective education fields.

Brunson, a third-grade teacher at Elsa England Elementary School, was one of three finalists for the award in the elementary category. ATPE’s Educator of the Year Award Committee was impressed with Brunson’s teaching philosophy, communication and leadership skills, how she has implemented technology tools in her classroom and her commitment to teach her students about real-life issues including child hunger.

Brunson plans to serve as a mentor to new teachers through ATPE’s Teacher Support Program during the 2013-14 school year.

“One of my greatest assets as a teacher is my ability to connect with and motivate students, parents, colleagues and community members,” Brunson said. “Students and staff can sense that I truly care for them, and they can sense my excitement and passion for education.”

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The Association of Texas Professional Educators is the preeminent educators' association 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.