

Association of Texas Professional Educators

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Supporting Your Freedom to TeachSM

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Paris ISD teacher wins \$1,000 grant from ATPE

PARIS— Paris Independent School District science teacher Jodi Andoe was selected as the recipient of a \$1,000 Grant for Teaching Excellence award in the secondary category from the Association of Texas Professional Educators (ATPE). Andoe teaches eighth grade science at Paris Junior High School.

Andoe's grant project will focus on implementing a Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) elective course for minority and economically disadvantaged students on her campus. Eighteen of her students have been selected to participate in the pilot program. According to Andoe's grant applications, students in the program will work both individually and as a team to solve problems using an activities, project and problem-based learning approach that aims to make math and science relevant.

By focusing on her students' creativity and curiosity, Andoe believes the program will increase their critical thinking skills and expose them to new opportunities.

"I hope the impact and effectiveness of this project will be evident with a renewed interest in math and science core classes," Andoe wrote in her application. "If one student chooses a STEM career path, the class will have been a success."

The ATPE Grant for Teaching Excellence acknowledges outstanding and creative ATPE members who develop programs or proposals intended to improve the quality of education for the children in their classrooms. Two \$1,000 awards are presented each year, one to an elementary-level applicant and the other to a secondary-level applicant. Recipients are also honored during the ATPE Summit Awards Banquet, which takes place each summer in Austin.

ATPE State Vice President Deann Lee, Paris ISD's state/federal programs director, said Andoe embraces the unique challenge of teaching at-risk students through STEM activities.

"During times of economic crisis like we are experiencing now, it is difficult to provide funds for new projects," Lee said. "ATPE has allowed Jodi to realize her passionate belief that all students can learn challenging curriculum if afforded the same opportunities as other students across the state."

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With more than 100,000 members, the 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.