

MOBILE - Congressman Jo Bonner, R-Alabama, today issued the following statement congratulating Ms. Linda Jones on her selection as a recipient of the 2004 Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching:

“I would like to take this opportunity to offer my heartiest congratulations to Ms. Linda Jones of Fairhope Elementary School for being selected as a recipient of this very prestigious honor. Ms. Jones is indeed a credit to the state of Alabama and to the many hardworking men and women who work tirelessly to support the education of America’s schoolchildren,” Bonner said.

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To paraphrase Oliver Wendell Holmes, the greatest teacher makes others believe in greatness, and they leave a lasting mark on the lives around them.

I am proud and honored to join with Linda's family, friends, and colleagues in congratulating her on this remarkable accomplishment.”

The Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching was established in 1983 to recognize outstanding science and mathematics teachers, kindergarten through 12th grade, in all fifty states and each of the four U.S. jurisdictions. Today, the White House award is recognized as the nation’s highest commendation for elementary and secondary math and science teachers.

This year’s winners were selected from more than 600 nominees. After an initial selection process at the state level, a national panel of distinguished scientists, mathematicians, and educators reviews the extensive application packets of each state’s finalists and makes their recommendations on teachers who will receive a Presidential award.

According to recent surveys, Presidential awardees tend to be more highly educated and are more likely to be involved to a much greater degree in their professional fields, whether serving on a school or district curriculum committee, receiving grants, or providing professional development for others. In the case of applications submitted by science instructors, the awardees are more likely to place greater emphasis on objectives related to the nature of science (e.g. learning to evaluate arguments based on scientific evidence) than their peers.

In the applications submitted by math teachers, these professionals are more likely to emphasize mathematics reasoning as well as computation skills and algorithms and procedures.

Each of the 2004 Presidential awardees will receive a \$10,000 grant for their school and a trip to Washington, D.C., to attend the award presentation ceremony and participate in award week activities. These activities include attending a hearing of the House Science Committee on Thursday, April 14, at which several of the winners will offer testimony.