

## Local Teacher Recognized for Creativity in the Classroom

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Mrs. Cynthia Stahr, a fourth grade teacher at Oakville Elementary School, is being recognized for her creativity and success in the classroom as a Disney Teacher Award Nominee. Mrs. Stahr joins an elite group of teachers from across the country who have been recognized by their communities. As the next step in the awards process, Mrs. Stahr is now submitting an application to be considered for the 2006 Disney Teacher of the Year Award.

"I was so excited and honored to be nominated for this prestigious award," said Mrs. Stahr. "I have spent my entire career trying to making learning a stimulating and rewarding experience for my students. It means so much to me that a student has nominated me for this award. The students are why I do what I do and to know someone thought I was exceptional enough to choose me for this honor makes it all worthwhile."

Since 1989, Disney Teacher Awards have been presented to teachers who construct learning environments where students and teachers alike explore, imagine, and engage in a variety of stimulating ideas and experiences. Specifically, the program honors those teachers whose approaches exemplify creativity in teaching and who inspire a joy of learning in their students.

"Sixteen years ago, we started celebrating local heroes by establishing the annual Disney Teacher Awards to celebrate and honor America's finest educators," said Terry Wick, vice president, Disney Worldwide Outreach. "This nomination process shows thousands of teachers across the country how much their work means to their students, colleagues, and communities."

In addition to letters of recommendation, Mrs. Stahr will submit an application that includes several professional reflection essays describing her classroom and approach to teaching, the impact of high stakes testing, how she approaches collaboration in her school and career and an event that shaped her as a teacher. A committee comprised of education experts from around the country will then review the nominee applications and select the 2006 Disney Teacher Award Honorees.

The Honorees will be announced in late spring and celebrated at a red-carpet Awards Gala in July. During the Gala, four Honorees will be selected as Outstanding Teachers and one will be named the 2006 Disney Teacher of the Year. In addition, the Honorees each receive \$10,000, a \$5,000 grant for their schools and a six-day professional development institute with their principals at the Walt Disney World Resort. At the institute, teachers share ideas to refine their innovative teaching approaches and learn how to engage other teachers to build an effective collaborative teaching culture at their schools.

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