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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MARYLAND EDUCATOR NAMED NATIONAL TEACHER OF THE YEAR

FREDERICK COUNTY'S MICHELLE SHEARER TO BE HONORED IN WHITE HOUSE CEREMONY

BALTIMORE (May 2, 2011) – Maryland Teacher of the Year Michelle Shearer yesterday was named the winner of the nation's top teaching honor: National Teacher of the Year.

Ms. Shearer, a chemistry teacher at Urbana High School in Frederick County, was named the Maryland winner last October. She was named a finalist in January, competing against teachers from Florida, Illinois, and Montana.

President Barack Obama will honor Ms. Shearer in a special White House ceremony tomorrow, where all 50 State Teachers of the Year will gather to share in the spotlight.

“Michelle is a model educator, working tirelessly each and every school day to bring science to life for her students,” said Dr. Nancy S. Grasmick, State Superintendent of Schools. “Science, technology, engineering and mathematics—the STEM disciplines—require effective instruction for students to excel. Michelle’s work in this area has been exemplary. Throughout her career, working with both gifted and disabled students, she has set high standards and expected outstanding results. The results have come, and her students are richer because of that success.”

With today’s announcement, Ms. Shearer becomes the second Maryland teacher in the last five years to be awarded the honor. Kimberly Oliver Burnim, a Montgomery County kindergarten teacher, was named National Teacher of the Year in 2006.

Maryland’s public schools have become the nation’s most honored public school system. *Education Week* in January cited Maryland as the nation’s top system for the third straight year. The College Board in February named Maryland the top system in the nation for Advanced Placement success, also for the third consecutive year.

Advanced Placement success played into Ms. Shearer’s honor today. She is the 2009 Maryland recipient of the Siemens Award for Advanced Placement Teaching, and believes that “chemistry is everywhere, and thus chemistry is for everyone.” Fluent in American Sign Language, she also has taught at the Maryland School for the Deaf, serving as Content Area Leader and coach of the 2005 National Champion Academic team.

(more)

Maryland Public Schools: #1 in the Nation



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Ms. Shearer has taught in Maryland's public school since she began her career in education 14 years ago. From 1997-2002, she taught all levels of chemistry and started the Advanced Placement Chemistry. Enrollment in the rigorous AP chemistry program has jumped eight-fold. She is passionate about promoting STEM programs for all K-12 students, sparking interest in fields such as biotechnology which have helped grow the State's economy.

Ms. Shearer earned her B.A. in chemistry from Princeton University and her M.S. in Deaf Education from McDaniel College. She grew up in Wilmington, Delaware, and is the daughter of retired chemist Dr. Phillip Meredith and retired elementary school music teacher Beverly Meredith. She lives with her husband George, an AP physics teacher at Urbana, and their daughter, Carly, in Wolfsville, MD.

The National Teacher of the Year Program, sponsored by the ING Foundation and Target, is a project of the Council of Chief State School Officers in partnership with the University of Phoenix and People to People Ambassador Programs.

The Maryland Teacher of the Year Program is sponsored by Comcast, the Maryland Automobile Dealers Association, McDonald's Family of Greater Baltimore, and Northrop Grumman Electronic Systems. Platinum sponsors are Bank of America, Lockheed Martin, Verizon-Maryland, and Whiting-Turner Contracting Company.

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