

NEWS RELEASE

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Nichols Elementary math and science teacher named 2010 Mississippi Teacher of the Year

Jackson, Miss, - Brad Shonk, a fourth grade math and science teacher at Nichols Elementary School in Biloxi, was named the 2010 Mississippi Teacher of the Year today at a luncheon held in Jackson. The Teacher of the Year program is sponsored by the Mississippi Department of Education and the Mississippi Teacher Center.

Shonk has served as a teacher since 1999 and has enjoyed spending additional time with students who need to have more time to learn. For the past eight years, he has worked as an after-school tutor working with failing and at-risk students. He has dedicated most of his career helping students who need the additional help to achieve.

Shonk brings passion, energy and a work ethic that is second to none to his teaching career. He is inspired by people who go above and beyond in everything that they do. His style of teaching ensures mastery of the work because he works with students in proportion to how much help they need. He believes that time is the great equalizer in education.

“Some students can learn a problem in one try,” said Shonk.

“Some students may need several days of instruction to learn a specific skill. As a teacher, I do not want to be the reason that my students are not learning.”

Shonk’s teaching skills uses the power of repetition because, if a concept is continually repeated, the student has a greater chance to learn the skill. He also uses index cards as he moves around the classroom to write down specific names and skills of a student who may be struggling. At the end of class, Shonk will prepare specific math problems for the student to take home and spends extra time with that student the next day to make sure they understand the concept.

In his spare time, Shonk is heavily involved with Biloxi First United Methodist Church and has served as a missionary to help rebuild homes in North Carolina. He is a recipient of the 2009 Beverly Briscoe Rotary Club Biloxi Schools Teacher of the Year Award.

Melinda Kopp (Congressional District 1), Chickasaw County School District was named 2010 Mississippi Alternate Teacher of the Year.
Other Congressional District finalists include: Chelsa Rash (Congressional District 2), Cleveland School District and Liz Garner Michael (Congressional District 3), Meridian School District.

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