High Desert Middle School teacher receives national teaching honor

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Karen Stiner is awarded the Albert Einstein Distinguished Educator Fellow and will head to D.C.

Karen Stiner, a math teacher at High Desert Middle School, has been awarded the prestigious Albert Einstein Distinguished Educator Fellowship and will spend the 2007-2008 academic year in Washington D.C.

Karen Stiner Stiner will work on projects related to providing pre-professional and professional advancement opportunities for the nation's students and teachers of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. She has been assigned to the Office of Workforce Development for Teachers and Students at the Department of Energy headquarters.Stiner says she is looking forward to the experience but will greatly miss her students and colleagues in Bend. â€œTwo elements of teaching have special relevance for me,â€• said Stiner, who was a recipient of the Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching in 2005. â€œFirst, I believe firmly that all students have the capacity to learn far more than we might ordinarily think. Secondly, I believe that cooperative learning can serve as one of the most powerful vehicles for communicating math concepts to students.â€•Applicants for this fellowship go through a rigorous selection process, which includes a series of interviews with government officials in Washington D.C. Those selected must show an inquiry-based and innovative teaching style; evidence of sustained professional growth in their subject matter; professional involvement and leadership; excellence in teaching science, mathematics, or technology; communications skills essential to service in a public policy environment; and knowledge of national, state and local policies that affect education. Past Einstein Fellows have been involved in drafting federal legislation and influencing national policy to improve education in the United States, designing and implementing science, math, technology, and engineering programs, and creating Web-based science education programs. About the Einstein Distinguished Educator FellowshipThe Albert Einstein Distinguished Educator Fellowship Act was signed into law in November 1994. The law gives the Department of Energy responsibility for administering the program of distinguished educator fellowships for elementary and secondary school mathematics and science teachers. Selected teachers spend up to one year in a congressional office or a federal agency. Agencies that have participated include: the Department of Energy (DOE), the National Science Foundation (NSF), the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the Department of Education (ED), National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). Fellows provide their educational expertise, years professional of experience and personal insights to these offices. For more information, visit http://www.scied.science.doe.gov/scied/Einstein/about.htm.