FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 9, 2015

TWO ALABAMA TEACHERS RECOGNIZED FOR EXCELLENCE IN MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE TEACHING

Recipients to receive awards in Washington, D.C., later this summer

Montgomery, Ala. – Two Alabama educators are among the 108 mathematics and science teachers who have been selected to receive the prestigious Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching (PAEMST).

Marla Hines, a physical science teacher at Vestavia Hills High School in the Vestavia Hills City School System, and Sarah Lowman, a science teacher at Tanner High School in the Limestone County School System, will each receive a $10,000 award from the National Science Foundation to be used at their discretion.

"These teachers are shaping America’s success through their passion for math and science,” President Barack Obama said in a statement released by the White House. “Their leadership and commitment empower our children to think critically and creatively about science, technology, engineering, and math. The work these teachers are doing in our classrooms today will help ensure that America stays on the cutting edge tomorrow.”

The Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching is awarded annually to outstanding K-12 science and mathematics teachers from across the country. The winners are selected by a panel of distinguished scientists, mathematicians, and educators following an initial selection process done at the state level.

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Each year the award alternates between teachers teaching kindergarten through 6th grade and those teaching 7th through 12th grades. The recently named awardees teach 7th through 12th grade.

Hines has taught 10th grade physical science at Vestavia Hills High School for six years, and previously taught at Spain Park High School and Bessemer Academy. In her classroom, Hines, who was Alabama’s 2012 Secondary Teacher of the Year, focuses on developing a community of learners who work together to master chemistry and physics content.

She said receiving the Presidential Award is a reminder that every day is an opportunity to strive for excellence as she facilitates her students’ academic growth.

“I believe that ‘excellence’ is a very elusive word. Every day, I should be better than the day before – that’s what my students deserve,” Hines said. “Continual reflection allows me to model professional growth for my students, which establishes a mindset that we learn from each other and that real learning never ends.”

Lowman, an educator for 20 years, taught high school science for the past 10 years. Last year, she was granted a leave of absence from Tanner High School to be a biology content specialist for Alabama Science in Motion. As an ambassador of hands-on science, her impact expanded from a single classroom to over 100 teachers in 34 high schools that serve 7,700 students.

“Along with being the most prestigious honor awarded to science teachers, the Presidential Award means that I conveyed a passion for learning and teaching science to others,” Lowman said. “This award confirms that demonstrating diligence in my craft, having high expectations for students, caring for students, and using research-based teaching strategies works for learners of all ability levels and backgrounds.”

In addition to the $10,000 award, Hines and Lowman will go to Washington, D.C., this summer for an awards ceremony, as well educational and celebratory events and visits with members of President Obama’s Administration.

Click here to learn more about the honorees and the Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching Recognition Program.

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