IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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TSU Alumna Receives Prestigious Science Award

Texas Southern University alumna and HISD science teacher Nikki Skinner has been awarded the 2010 Texas Medical Association (TMA) Ernest and Sarah Butler Award for Excellence in Science Teaching. Ms. Skinner is the recipient for Elementary Science.

“This award is a very great honor not just for me but for all my students who are so very excited to come into my class each day,” said Skinner.

Ms. Skinner is currently teaching at Almeda Elementary School where she continually finds new and creative ways to teach her students about science, and she enjoys every moment.

“It's my joy to expose my students to the fundamental concepts in science. I learn from them as I watch them discover connections, ask questions, and test hypotheses,” said Ms. Skinner. “My reward is when the student who didn't understand finally comprehends, it is the ultimate "ah ha" moment.”

Ms. Skinner earned her bachelor’s in Elementary Education from Texas Southern University and received her Master of Arts in Science Education from Western Governors University. Last year, she was recognized by her peers at Almeda Elementary as the school’s Teacher of the Year.

“Science is not just a series of facts but an exciting process. The job of a science teacher is to teach the facts but keep the wonder. Students learn to document their experiences in words, diagrams, and pictures of their own, creating a mosaic that has personal educational meaning for them individually”, said Skinner. “The scientists, doctors, and engineers of tomorrow are sitting in a fifth grade class today, and teachers play a critical role in helping them realize their potential.”

The TMA Ernest and Sarah Butler Awards for Excellence in Science Teaching, The award, created in 1990, honors educators who share their energy and enthusiasm for science through creative and innovative methods. TMA created the award 20 years ago to reward excellent science teaching in hopes of encouraging young students to become physicians. Each recipient will receive $5,000 and their schools will receive a $2,000 for the science curriculum.

Ms. Skinner will receive her award at TMA's annual conference to be held on Friday, April 30, in Fort Worth.