



## NEWS RELEASE

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 22, 2007

### FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

Julie Johnson Thompson  
Office: 683-4786 Cell: (501) 580-6508  
Email: [julie.thompson@arkansas.gov](mailto:julie.thompson@arkansas.gov)

### CONWAY TEACHER WINS MILKEN NATIONAL EDUCATOR AWARD

CONWAY – When Corey Oliver attended the school-wide assembly at 2 p.m. Monday at Bob Courtway Middle School, he thought the entire faculty and student body had turned out to see Arkansas Education Deputy Commissioner Dr. Diana Julian on her tour of the state's schools. As it turned out, the assembly was for him.

Oliver is a winner of a 2007 Milken Family Foundation National Educator Award, which includes an unrestricted financial prize of \$25,000. Up to 100 educators across the country are being recognized for their outstanding work with the awards at surprise ceremonies this fall.

In addition to Dr. Julian, Michael Milken, co-founder of the Milken Family Foundation, helped present the surprise award.

"The Milken National Educator Award is one of the finest recognitions available to teachers," Dr. Julian said. "In addition to the sizable cash award, the professional opportunities that come with this recognition are both valuable and exciting."

In addition to today's emotional event, all Milken National Educators will be recognized at a national gala and awards ceremony in the spring. National Educator Award winners also become members of the Milken Educator Network, a coalition of educators who provide expert resources and serve as partners to network members and policymakers as they help cultivate and expand innovative programs in their classrooms, schools and districts.

Milken Family Foundation Chairman and Co-founder Lowell Milken created these awards in 1985 to recognize, celebrate and attract the highest caliber school professionals. Since the program's inception, more than \$54 million in cash prizes have been awarded to 2,100-plus educators. In Arkansas, the Foundation has awarded \$1.5 million to 60 recipients since the program began.

"Excellence must not be the exception in our schools, but rather the norm," Lowell Milken has said.

Oliver is an example of that excellence, Milken said today.

Oliver, an eighth-grade English teacher, received both his bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of Central Arkansas. He received his National Board Certification in 2006 and belongs to the National Council of Teachers of English and the Arkansas Council of Teachers of English and Language Arts.

In recommending Oliver to be named a Milken National Educator, his principal, Jerry Whitmore, said that Oliver's "strengths are really his teaching techniques. He knows how to get and keep the interest level of his students; he knows how to keep them engaged and on-track. ... He is just a great teacher ... [who] teaches from the heart."

--ADE--

***The Arkansas Department of Education strives to ensure that all children in the state have access to a quality education by providing educators, administrators and staff with leadership, resources and training.***