

At the Teacher of the Year awards ceremony, Lynsee felt overwhelmed and humbled to hear the firsthand accounts from her students on how she inspired them. She thanked God and believes He makes teachers special in Heaven, crafting them with hands to serve in an array of capacities and to be ready at any moment for anything.

Lynsee is currently a fifth-grade teacher of writing and social studies in Suwannee County. She has been instructing students for the past 14 years in grades ranging from second to eighth. At the University of Florida, she earned a bachelor's degree in advertising and holds a master's degree in curriculum and instruction from Florida Gulf Coast University. While working as a substitute teacher, she fell in love with educating children and became certified through a transition-to-teaching program in Florida.

I express my best wishes to Lynsee for her dedication to her students and look forward to hearing of her continued success in the years ahead.●

TRIBUTE TO CATHY FELTY

● Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, today I recognize Cathy Felty, the Bay County Teacher of the Year from Margaret K. Lewis School in Panama City, FL.

Cathy is the media guru at Margaret K. Lewis School, running the media center and striving to inspire her students to reach their full potential. According to her colleagues, the media center is the heart of Margaret K. Lewis School, and Cathy is its heartbeat. Many years ago, Cathy interned at an elementary school, and at the time, it was not what she was looking for. When a position opened up at Margaret K. Lewis, however, it turned out to be the best thing that ever happened to her. She loves her job and focuses on doing what is best for her students.

After winning this award, Cathy took a flight in an adversary T-38 aircraft, becoming the first teacher to do so. While she considers herself a thrill-seeker, she was more focused on how to share this unique experience with her students. She plans to use her flight as an opportunity to work with students, teaching them about flight and the military. Her desire to incorporate personal experiences into her lesson plans demonstrates why she was named Teacher of the Year. In sum, she is always thinking of how to better the lives of her students.

Cathy has worked at Margaret K. Lewis School for 21 years and has been a pioneer for the creation of the school's media center. She specializes in helping and advocating for students with cognitive disabilities.

I would like to extend my best wishes to Cathy for her dedication to teaching for more than two decades. I look forward to hearing of her continued success in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO LENORA HENDERSON

● Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, today I honor Lenora Henderson, the Washington County Teacher of the Year from Chipley High School in Chipley, FL.

When Lenora began teaching chemistry, she quickly learned that her students became bored with lectures. They were more interested and performed better when they were doing more than just listening. She saw they loved being out of their seats, talking, and trying to figure things out on their own. As a result, she designed her lesson plans to include such activity.

Over the past few years, she developed a curriculum with the hopes of eventually flipping her classroom. Flipping means she has removed lectures from part of the curriculum and reserved that time for higher-order thinking skills and project-based learning.

Her regular and honors chemistry classes are partially flipped, while her advanced placement chemistry class is completely flipped. Her students use livescribes and a livebinder to retrieve background information before coming to class to discuss assignments. This allows more time in class for them to complete individual hands-on activities, laboratories, and cooperative learning activities.

Lenora was excited to receive the Teacher of the Year recognition, saying she has been waiting for a long time, but stated in her acceptance speech she knew this would happen on God's timing, not her own. Her faith plays a key role when it comes to teaching. She has been with the Washington County School District for 12 years.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Lenora for all of the hard work she does for her students. I extend my best wishes to her and look forward to hearing of her future endeavors.●

TRIBUTE TO JOAN KENNETT

● Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, today I honor Joan Kennett, the Walton County Teacher of the Year from South Walton High School in Santa Rosa Beach, FL.

Joan was in shock and humbled after she was named Teacher of the Year. She considers it an honor and privilege to represent every teacher and student in Walton County. She is a mentor to other teachers and an advocate for developing best classroom practices.

In the spring of 2017, Joan's students scored 97 percent and ranked fifth Statewide on the biology State test. She has also been awarded grants from Walton Education Foundation and the National Defense Industrial Association ACCEerator Program to enrich students in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

Besides helping her students in the classroom, Joan also assists with var-

ious school organizations. Joan motivates student leaders within the school and community as the Student Government Association sponsor and helps with projects such as the Senior Citizen Prom.

Joan earned her bachelor of science degree from Kennesaw State College and received her gifted credentials from West Georgia State College. She has taught in Georgia, Indiana, and Florida, and has now taught biology for 27 years, with 5 years at South Walton High School.

I congratulate Joan for receiving this important recognition after decades of teaching. I express my best wishes to her and look forward to hearing of her continued success in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO AMANDA MCGHEE

● Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, today I honor Amanda McGhee, the Calhoun County Teacher of the Year from Blountstown High School in Blountstown, FL.

As a teenager, Amanda felt that high school was a place with caring teachers who took the time to teach the content while maintaining discipline and, at the same time, asking about your sick brother or sister at home. She thought these teachers seemed to know everything about their students and admired their notion to care for students.

She is inspired every day to bring this same feeling of connectedness, hope, and a passion for learning to her students. She seeks to pass along what was given to her and seeks to validate, teach, and inspire the next generation.

Amanda's colleagues say she teaches her students the foundational skills and then acts as a facilitator that nurtures their ideas to create video game apps, build robots, create videos, use 3D printers, and fly drones to record video. She also teaches her students strategies for critical thinking and involves them in project-based learning that allows them to apply their mathematical skills.

Amanda has been a teacher at Blountstown High School for more than 10 years. Currently, she teaches advanced placement science, along with experimental science, digital media, and aerospace technologies in conjunction with Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University.

I would like to thank Amanda for her hard work to provide students with a successful learning environment. I extend my best wishes to her and look forward to hearing of her continued success in the coming years.●

TRIBUTE TO LYNN MONGIARDINI

● Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, today I honor Lynn Mongiardini, the Charlotte County Teacher of the Year from Sallie Jones Elementary School in Punta Gorda, FL.

Lynn received the Teacher of the Year award because of her dedication

to her students to equip them with the necessary skills needed to achieve success in both the classroom and real world. She is a member of the district core team responsible for the roll out of the comprehensive literacy framework. Her passion is finding ways to improve students' thinking around academic and social challenges by actively contributing to the growth mindset in professional learning communities and its philosophies.

As both a parent and a teacher, Lynn understands the needs of her students and their families. She uses this understanding to create a nurturing classroom environment that fosters the highest level of learning.

Lynn has been teaching in Charlotte County schools since 2006. She has served as an educator for the second, third, and fifth grades at Peace River Elementary, Myakka River Elementary, and currently at Sallie Jones Elementary School.

I extend my best wishes to Lynn for her hard work and dedication to her students and look forward to hearing of her continued success in the upcoming years.●

TRIBUTE TO MARTIN O'HORA

● Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, today I honor Martin O'Hora, the Highlands County Teacher of the Year from Avon Park High School in Avon Park, FL.

Martin says he has always wanted to be a teacher thanks to his parents, who served as teachers for more than 30 years. Their dedication to teaching helped guide him to becoming a teacher himself, and he knew how important it is for students to have a positive influence in their lives.

Martin's colleagues and students attest to his commitment as a teacher and coach by noting he is someone they can always come to for advice and help. Martin received this important recognition because he fulfills and exceeds all that is expected from teachers.

Martin has been at Avon Park High School since 2014, teaching exceptional student education and algebra before his current resource position at the school, while also coaching the boys basketball team. He started teaching in the district in 2011 at Hill-Gustate Middle School.

I would like to extend my best wishes to Martin for his hard work and look forward to hearing of his continued success in the years ahead.●

TRIBUTE TO SARAH ANNE ELIZABETH ORAVEC

● Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, today I recognize Sarah Anne Elizabeth Oravec, the DeSoto County Teacher of the Year from Arcadia, FL.

Sarah received the Teacher of the Year award for her exemplary enthusiasm, innovative teaching approaches, and genuine concern for education.

Her dedication to achieving excellence has earned her an enviable rep-

utation as an excellent teacher and coach who truly cares about people and is generous with her time. Sarah demonstrates the highest level of professional commitment and competency in her work with students and colleagues.

Sarah has been a valued teacher in the DeSoto school district for more than 3 years and 5 months as the District ESOL Instructional Coach. Her positive attitude, hard work, and respect for children is a true asset to DeSoto County.

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to Sarah and look forward to hearing of her continued success in the years ahead.●

TRIBUTE TO CATHERINE TINSLEY PEEL

● Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, today I commend Catherine Tinsley Peel, the Holmes County Teacher of the Year from Ponce de Leon Elementary School in Ponce de Leon, FL.

After Catherine won the Teacher of the Year award, she noted that, when new challenges arise daily in the educational field, she approaches them with excitement and suspense. She has a passion to help students in her hometown to become the best academically and socially.

Knowing she can help students inspired her to become a teacher, and each time she receives a handwritten note, card, or illustration saying they appreciate her, she considered it proof that she is doing her job correctly. While teaching requires many demands, she would not trade it for anything because she gets to make a difference in children's daily lives.

Catherine is a fourth grade teacher at Ponce de Leon Elementary school. She is a Ponce de Leon High School alumni who has taught first and third grades, but has now found her home teaching fourth grade.

I congratulate Catherine for her hard work and commitment to teaching her students. I express my best wishes to her and look forward to hearing of her future endeavors.●

TRIBUTE TO HEATHER PHILLIPS

● Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, today I commend Heather Phillips, the Okaloosa County Teacher of the Year from Bluewater Elementary School in Niceville, FL.

Heather knows that being an educator is never predictable, and she thrives on the ever-changing nature of her profession. Heather was humbled to be considered among such an immensely talented group of educators and considers it an honor to represent her school, and district, as its Teacher of the Year.

She loves seeing the world through the eyes of children and allows their energy to influence her focus on what truly matters. Her teaching experiences in Japan and Hong Kong helped her appreciate diversity, and she works

to implement these experiences in the classroom.

Heather is a 15-year educator who currently teaches fourth grade. She is an active member of her church in Niceville and enjoys being part of the community.

I am pleased to congratulate Heather for her dedication to teaching her students. I extend my best wishes to Heather and look forward to learning of her continued success in her future endeavors.●

TRIBUTE TO CHELSEA SMITH

● Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, today I honor Chelsea Smith, the Hamilton County Teacher of the Year from Hamilton County Elementary School in Jasper, FL.

Chelsea believes it is important to show her students that she cares about them being successful as individuals. Her students come to her from various socioeconomic backgrounds and academic capabilities, but they all seek success.

According to Chelsea, her educational philosophy is based on teaching students to learn how to deal with frustrations in order to break the learning barrier. Her students can then work on academically improving oneself to become proficient. Implementation of enrichment opportunities should be incorporated to challenge students once they have achieved mastery of grade level skills.

Chelsea says each student has a different mindset for what success means. It is her responsibility to seek out the individual and determine what he or she needs in order to be triumphant. Her students begin class by knowing they will search for whatever opportunity today's class will bring in order to achieve individual success. Every day, once all students are in her classroom, she counts to three, and they recite the quote: I am important. I am intelligent. I will do my best. I will seek opportunity over obligation.

Chelsea has a bachelor's of science degree in elementary education and a master of education degree in education leadership education and training management/instructional technology. She has taught fifth or sixth grade since 2013.

I am pleased to recognize Chelsea for her dedication to providing her students with the opportunity to be successful. I extend my best wishes to her and look forward to hearing of her continued success.●

TRIBUTE TO FIRST SERGEANT TERRY WALKER

● Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, today I honor 1SG Terry Walker, the Jefferson County Teacher of the Year from Jefferson K-12 Somerset School in Monticello, FL.

Terry has been a valued member of the Jefferson County School District for 9 years as the Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps instructor. He is a