

## **2008-2009 ISTA ExxonMobil Outstanding Teacher of Science Awardees**

### **Region 1**

**Lisa Brody** is a 6<sup>th</sup> grade science teacher at Park View School in Morton Grove. She is a fourteen year veteran of the teaching profession, having spent the last 11 at Park View School. Lisa's teaching emphasizes the importance of asking, "what if, how come and why" as she is at the forefront of inquiry-based science education. In 2005, Lisa piloted a 9 week "inquiry oriented" science unit from Michigan State University. Lisa was also a pilot teacher for "Investigation and Questioning our World through Science and Technology" (IQWST), a National Science Foundation funded 5 year pilot and field trial program. Throughout the years, researchers have used her classroom for evaluating aspects of science curriculum. Video clips of her teaching in her classroom are being used at Northwestern University as prime examples of what "to do" in utilizing the inquiry approach to science education. A professor from Northwestern University states, "*Ms. Brody has been developing into an instructional leader in her community, bringing new ideas and teaching practices to others in her school, as well as to teachers in other locations.*" Through Lisa's dedication, her school has developed a close working relationship with the American Association for the Advancement of Sciences, Project 2061. Additionally, she has provided lesson implementation and curriculum design to Horizon Research. This year, Lisa presented two township-wide workshops to over 50 teachers and administrators stressing the importance of inquiry in science education. One teacher at the workshop exclaimed, "*What we saw was amazing. You didn't tell the information you wanted the kids to know, you guided them so they would figure it out for themselves.*" Lisa's commitment to utilizing inquiry in the science classroom and her commitment to share her expert knowledge with others are among many of the many reasons she is an outstanding teacher of science! Congratulations, Lisa!

**Lynne Hubert** is an elementary school science facilitator at Joseph Sears School in Kenilworth. Lynne also currently serves as an ISTA Director for Region 1. As a science facilitator, Lynne spends her days teaching in every K-5 science classroom at her school each week. In her teaching, Lynne provides science curriculum support to teachers, implements differentiated instruction and facilitates hands-on activities. According to her colleagues at Sears, Lynne "provides hands-on activities and opportunities for the children to problem-solve and explore the world around them." Lynne is committed to science at her school, which is evident by her many activities and accomplishments. Not only is Lynne involved with Science Olympiad and Sears Science Club, but she also pioneered the successful Sears Science Night. Collaborating with parents is also a strong suit for Lynne as she provides monthly articles for her school's newsletter and worked with parents to create a butterfly garden on school grounds. In addition to her other accomplishments, Lynne is also a successful grant writer, winning a \$2,000 grant to support the purchase of a Weather Bug system for Sears School. According to her administrator, "Lynne's dedication to her teachers' and students' learning can be seen everyday in the classroom as she truly brings the sciences to life." Lynne is also committed to sharing her experiences with other science teachers across the state via presenting at past ISTA conferences on the topic of science book clubs. Lynne's dedication to science education is one of the many reasons she is an outstanding teacher of science. Congratulations, Lynne!

## **Region 2**

**Carol Schnaiter** is a K-4 science teacher at Amboy Central Elementary School in Amboy. Carol has held a variety of teaching assignments from middle school special ed to self-contained third grade. However, as a 28 year veteran of the teaching profession, her passion has always been science education. Carol's current teaching assignment allows her to spend her entire day teaching science to all of the K-4 students in her school. Carol inspires her students and as her administrator states, "*she is a teacher who will go the extra mile.*" This is evident by her commitment to undertaking additional science-inspired projects at her school. Among them, Carol founded a science club that allows students to explore topics not discussed in class and conduct a variety of experiments including polymers, sound, air and solubility. Carol's science club was featured in the Amboy News in February of this year and the article stated, "*the club allows students time to explore activities and have fun with science concepts.*" Carol also organized a Science Olympics competition at her school which encouraged problem solving and team building. This past December, Carol won a \$1000 grant for taking second place in the Junior Pest Investigator Mission Impossible Class Project, a national contest sponsored by Orkin. To win the grant, Carol's elementary students discovered and implemented greener alternatives to pest management. One of her Amboy colleagues has commented, "*Carol's teaching has earned for us a distinction other schools only dream about.*" Undoubtedly, Carol's passion for science education and her commitment to enhancing the study of science at her school is one of the many reasons she is an Outstanding Teacher of Science. Congratulations, Carol!

## **Region 4**

**Amy Kincaid** is a fourth grade science teacher at Shiloh Elementary School in Hume. Some of you may have met Amy as she has presented at the ISTA annual conference for the past three years. Amy has been a teacher at Shiloh Elementary for 5 years and is very committed to science education at her school. According to her administrator, "*Amy has a true love for science that I believe was created when she was still a student here at Shiloh.*" Amy wrote in her application that it was her "dream" to come back to her hometown as a teacher after she graduated from college. In her teaching, Amy stresses to students that "everything in the world is related to science." She utilizes a variety of methods including data collection, inquiry and hands-on work. Amy is also the coach of the elementary Eco-team, a group of students that competes regionally to increase knowledge of their local environment. In Amy's classroom, technology takes a lead roll as her elementary students use computers, SMARTboards and digital cameras daily. A colleague at Shiloh commented in regards to technology, "*when any of the teachers have a question, Amy often comes to their aide.*" Amy's utilization of technology in the classroom and her ability to make students understand that science exists outside of the classroom are among the many reasons Amy is an Outstanding Teacher of Science. Congratulations, Amy!

## **Region 6**

**Charles Simer** is a 6<sup>th</sup> grade science teacher at Woodlawn Grade School in Woodlawn. Charles wrote in his application that science is “*suffering from a lack of interest and students need to become interested in science through hands-on activities.*” As such, Charles strives to utilize hands-on activities in his classroom on a daily basis. He mentions that taking this approach in his classroom has really made his students excited about learning science. Last year Charles was asked to speak at a science conference for all 8<sup>th</sup> grade students in Jefferson County and his hands on science experiment was recognized by the local chamber of commerce. Charles has a great relationship with his students and is an inspiration to other teachers. His administrator states, “*Charles makes you ask yourself, am I passionate about my subject, am I grabbing hold of my students’ imaginations, am I the teacher that I could be?*” Charles successes in science have been published several times from The Sentinel Newspaper to the Mt. Vernon Register News. In 2008, the American Geological Institute honored Charles with the NAGT Outstanding Earth Science Teacher Award Honorable Mention for Illinois. Additionally, Charles regularly demonstrates best practice as a teacher. A colleague wrote, “*Charles will not only succeed in any school, classroom or program to which he is part of, he will make each of them better.*” Charles’ ability to get kids excited about science is one of the many reasons he is an Outstanding Teacher of Science. Congratulations, Charles!