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Auburn Riverside High School Administrator Named 2005 Assistant Principal of the Year

Assistant Principal Nola Wilson wins top honors from peers statewide

SEATAC – Auburn Riverside High’s Nola Wilson makes no apologies about her primary mission: helping students succeed. Today, her peers celebrated her as the recipient of the 2005 Washington State Assistant Principal of the Year award at the Assistant Principals Conference, held at the Seattle Marriot Hotel in SeaTac.

Each year, the Association of Washington School Principals awards a middle school or high school assistant principal who demonstrates success in three areas: collective leadership, personalization of the learning environment and curriculum instruction and assessment. Wilson was selected from more than 20 other statewide nominees for this year’s honor.

For the past 12 years, Wilson has served students in the Auburn School District, working to personalize their educational experiences one student at a time. And while the assistant principalship may be considered by some to be a stepping stone to other administrative posts, Wilson says she revels in her charge as a “tough love counseling administrator.”

“Helping a freshman prosper through his first year, encouraging an angry young man to prosper in the face of alcoholism, supporting the prosperity of a family torn by the strains of adolescence and having a high school dropout return to share her newfound prosperity are some of the many reasons I do what I do,” wrote Wilson in her nomination application.

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“Students who have lost their beliefs at the age of 15 have no reason for an education,” wrote Wilson. “I believe my purpose as an AP is to be an example of a prosperous life and to teach others to see prosperity in their own lives.”

Bruce Phillips, principal of Auburn Riverside High, says Wilson is able to see the big picture while providing practical support to students on a personal level. Her positive attitude and upbeat personality make it easy for students and staff to approach her on a variety of issues.

“Nola is an educator who understands that success is enhanced when you develop quality relationships within the school community. She preaches this belief and models it for students and staff daily,” said Phillips. “When I first met Nola ten years ago, she played a huge role in creating our new high school. Today, Nola’s personality and beliefs are interwoven into the fabric of our school culture and community.”

Wilson has spent the past 18 years working in education, the last 12 of which as an assistant principal in the Auburn School District. She has been an assistant principal at Auburn Riverside High since 1993. Before transitioning into school administration, Wilson taught business education at Auburn High. She holds a master’s in educational administration from National University in Sacramento and a master’s in education from California State University, Chico. She also holds a bachelor of science degree in business education from California State University, Sacramento.

The National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) State and National Assistant Principal of the Year Program annually honors a single winner from each of the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and the Department of Defense Education Activity (DODEA) schools. From that pool of outstanding administrators, one national winner is chosen.

This year’s state award is presented by the Representative Council of the Washington Association of Secondary School Principals (WASSP), a component of the Association of Washington School Principals. Assistant principals at the middle and high school level alternate nominating duties for this honor each year.

In order to be recognized as a state Assistant Principal of the Year, honorees must demonstrate success in the following areas:

Collaborative Leadership

- Implements strategies for improving teaching and learning by putting programs and improvement efforts into action
- Involves teachers and other staff members in achieving the goals of the school
- Functions effectively as a member of the school’s leadership team
- Is committed to continued professional growth
- Demonstrates and fosters creativity and imagination in bringing about positive change
- Establishes partnerships with community groups to strengthen programs and support school goals

Personalization

- Assists in ensuring the school climate is positive and reflects high staff and student morale

- Teaches, coaches, and helps others (students and colleagues)
- Involves the community in the life of the school and uses community resources for students

Curriculum Instruction and Assessment

- Facilitates the flexible use of time for increased student achievement
- Observes, supervises and evaluates teachers and instructional programs that result in effective learning for all students
- Assures that the local assessment of students is multifaceted and rigorous while complying with state mandates

All state and national winners will be honored this spring at a black-tie event in Washington, D.C. During their stay in the nation's capitol, the honorees will participate in professional development and networking activities with their peers. The national winner will be awarded \$5,000, which can be used in their school or for personal professional development. Virco, Inc., the nation's leading manufacturer of educational furniture, is the sole sponsor of the NASSP State and National Assistant Principal of the Year Program.

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About Association of Washington School Principals (AWSP)

The Association of Washington School Principals is a professional association serving principals and assistant principals. Formed in 1972, the Association now includes more than 3,400 members from public and private elementary, middle and high schools statewide. The mission of AWSP is to support principals and assistant principals and the principalship in the education of all students. For more information on the Association, visit the AWSP Web site at <http://www.awsp.org>.

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