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For immediate release
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**Outstanding Teachers from Yavapai County
to be honored April 28**

Prescott –Outstanding teachers from grades pre-kindergarten through high school will be honored at 6 p.m. Friday, April 28, during the 23rd annual Teacher of the Year Award Ceremony and Banquet at the Prescott Resort.

Organized by the Yavapai County Education Foundation (YCEF), the event brings together educators and their supporters from virtually every community in Yavapai County so their achievements and successes can be acknowledged publicly, said Tim Wiederaenders, YCEF president.

Nominees in different categories—K to fifth grade; sixth grade to eighth grade; cross-grades specialists K to eighth grade; cross-grade specialists ninth to twelfth grade; high school; and the outstanding first-year teacher—will be cited for their excellence in the classroom during the 2016-2017 school year.

The finalists include:

First Year:

Lisa Fuller - Dr. Daniel Bright, Cottonwood-Oak Creek School District
Todd Harris Jr. - Prescott High School, Prescott Unified
Stephen Ross - Bradshaw Mountain High School, Humboldt Unified

From among the following finalists, one will be honored as the Yavapai County Teacher of the Year:

K-5th:

Rachel Chunglo - Abia Judd Elementary, Prescott Unified

Matthew Simper - Granite Mountain Middle School, Prescott Unified
Elizabeth Kreitinger - Territorial Early Childhood Center, Chino Valley Unified

6th-8th:

Rikkie Jensen - Heritage Middle School, Chino Valley
Jeffry Scroggins - Clarkdale-Jerome
Jessica Marks - Glassford Hill Middle School, Humboldt Unified

Cross Grades k-8th:

JoAnn Hayden - Mountain View Elementary, Humboldt Unified
Jennifer Woods - Granite Mountain Middle School, Prescott Unified
Melinda White - Abia Judd Elementary, Prescott Unified

High School:

Emily Gabaldon - Bradshaw Mountain High School, Humboldt Unified
Sandra Upite - Mingus Union High School
Courtney Check - Prescott High School, Prescott Unified

High School Cross Grades:

Sharon Haese - Bradshaw Mountain High School, Humboldt Unified
Andy Hooten - Mingus Union High School
Amanda Chartier - Prescott High School, Prescott Unified

A cumulative total of over \$20,000 in grant money will be awarded to category winners and finalists.

The 55 nominees from across Yavapai County district, charter and private schools were nominated by administrators and school leaders. Those nominated completed a rigorous application and interview process before finalists in foregoing categories were determined.

Also to be honored is Mr. Ray Newton, former Northern Arizona University faculty member. Newton will receive the YCEF Lifetime Achievement Award for his meritorious service to the education community in Yavapai County.

The Yavapai County Education Foundation, a non-profit, non-governmental organization, has as its primary mission the promotion and support of quality education throughout the county, Wiederaenders explained. "The TOY event is a leading-edge program for the YCEF," he said.

The awards dinner also is supported financially by Lamb Chevrolet, Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Arizona, Freeport-McMoRan Copper and Gold and other community and county organizations.