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## **Fairfax Educator is 2012 Virginia History Teacher of the Year *Second West Springfield High Teacher Selected for Honor***

The Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) and the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History today recognized Fairfax County educator Brian Heintz as the 2012 Virginia History Teacher of the Year. Heintz teaches Advanced Placement United States History as well as Virginia and United States History at West Springfield High School in Fairfax County. VDOE history specialist Betsy Barton presented the award today during a ceremony at the school where Heintz has taught since 2007.

Heintz has participated in two Teaching American History Grant programs to foster excellence in history instruction in Fairfax County. His research into the history of Laurel Grove School, a one-room school founded by former slaves in Franconia in the 1880s, and his development of lesson plans weaving the history of the school into the broader study of the Reconstruction and Jim Crow eras, was supported by grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities.

"Brian Heintz creates enthusiasm for the study of history by showing his students how the great events and movements of the past helped shaped their own communities," Superintendent of Public Instruction Patricia I. Wright said. "He equips his students with the research skills they need to make their own discoveries and contributions to the historical record."

The West Springfield High teacher was one of 17 nominees for the award and was selected for the honor by a committee of educators and historians from James Madison University, the University of Virginia, the Virginia Historical Society and the Library of Virginia.

Heintz received a \$1,000 honorarium from the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History and a plaque for his achievement and is the commonwealth's nominee for the National History Teacher of the Year Award to be announced later this year. In addition, the West Springfield High School library will receive a collection of history books and reference materials from the institute.

Heintz is the second West Springfield High teacher to be honored as the commonwealth's top history teacher. James Percoco, who also teaches Virginia and United States History at the school, was named 2010 Virginia History Teacher of the Year.

Founded in 1994 by Richard Gilder and Lewis E. Lehrman, the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History is a nonprofit organization devoted to the improvement of history education.

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