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Fairfax Educator is 2013 Virginia History Teacher of the Year *Sunrise Valley Elementary Teacher Selected for Honor*

The Virginia Department of Education (VDOE), the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, History and Preserve America today recognized Fairfax County educator Katie Blomquist as the 2013 Virginia History Teacher of the Year. Blomquist teaches at Sunrise Valley Elementary School in Fairfax County. VDOE history specialist Betsy Barton presented the award today during a ceremony at the school where Blomquist has taught for six years.

Blomquist, a fourth-grade Virginia Studies teacher, has served as the Social Studies lead then cluster lead teacher since 2006. In 2012, she was honored as the Virginia Council for the Social Studies Teacher of the Year and was featured in a video highlighting the Fairfax County School Board's achievement goals.

"Katie Blomquist demonstrates her love of history by actively engaging her students in the learning process through the use of primary sources, historic documents and stories of the past," Superintendent of Public Instruction Patricia I. Wright said. "In her artifact-filled classroom, she promotes a deeper understanding of the past through high-level questioning, animated discussions and creative activities."

The Sunrise Valley Elementary teacher was one of 16 nominees for the award and was selected for the honor by a committee of educators and historians from the Library of Virginia, the University of Virginia, the Virginia Historical Society and Virginia Union University.

Blomquist received a \$1,000 award from the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, History and Preserve America and is the commonwealth's nominee for the National History Teacher of the Year Award to be announced later this year. In addition, the Sunrise Valley Elementary School library will receive a collection of history books and reference materials from the institute.

Blomquist is the 10th educator to be honored as the commonwealth's top history teacher.

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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