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Fairfax County Science Teacher Receives \$25,000 Milken National Educator Award

Hayfield Secondary School teacher Elizabeth Galinis today received a \$25,000 Milken Family Foundation National Educator Award during a surprise assembly at the Fairfax County school. The award was presented to her by Superintendent of Public Instruction Patricia I. Wright and Milken Family Foundation Co-founder Michael Milken in the school gymnasium filled with students and faculty members.

The Milken Family Foundation National Educator Awards are designed to recognize and reward elementary and secondary school teachers, principals and specialists who promote excellence and innovation in public education. Galinis is the 39th Virginia educator to be recognized with the award since 1999.

At Hayfield Secondary School, Galinis teaches geosystems courses — including an honors section — to 11th- and 12th-grade students, leads the Advancement via Individual Determination (AVID) college-readiness program and has served as the departmental collaborative learning team leader.

Governor Terry McAuliffe, in a congratulatory letter presented to Galinis, praised the teacher by saying, “You have clearly demonstrated your commitment to promoting excellence and innovation in public education. Your ability to connect with each student in your classroom by making lessons interesting and relevant is remarkable.”

“Galinis is known for the passion she brings to teaching and for how she connects with students by incorporating their interests and experiences into her lesson plans,” Wright said. “In leading Hayfield’s AVID program, Galinis challenges students and helps them develop the skills and study habits they’ll need to succeed in college.”

A classroom instructor since 2007, Galinis was a finalist for Fairfax County Public Schools’ 2013 Teacher of the Year.

Galinis earned her bachelor’s degree in marine science from the University of South Carolina in 2001, a master’s degree in environmental science and policy from Johns Hopkins University in 2007 and a master’s in education, curriculum and instruction from Virginia Tech in 2009.

Educators are recommended for Milken Family Foundation National Educator Awards without their knowledge by a panel appointed by each participating state’s education department. Recipients of the awards are selected on the basis of multiple criteria related to instructional practice, student achievement, accomplishments outside the classroom and leadership.

The Milken Family Foundation National Educator Awards were established in 1985. The awards program is the largest of its kind in the country. Since 1987, the Milken Family Foundation has distributed more than \$64 million in awards to more than 2,600 educators across the country including \$975,000 in Virginia.