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News Release

Alamosa's Esmeralda Martinez Named 2009 Educator of the Year

The Office of Language, Culture and Equity at the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) today announced Alamosa School District Teacher Esmeralda Martinez as the 2009 Educator of the Year.

Martinez is an English-language acquisition teacher at Polston Elementary School (6935 State Highway 17) in the Alamosa School District, where she has taught for 12 years.

"She is an unflagging advocate for bilingual students in her building, in her district, in her community and at the state level," said Mary Valerio, director of CDE's Migrant Education Program in the southwest region.

Martinez launched "Lectura en mi Familia," a program for parents that prepares them to assist their children with academics at home and provides them with information about college and other community offerings. Parents in the program also attend sessions provided through Adams State College on parenting skills, and literacy and language development.

Martinez will be honored at about noon on Wednesday, April 22 during a luncheon at the 2009 English Language Acquisition (ELA) Academy at the Doubletree Hotel (3203 Quebec St.) in Denver.

About the Award

The Language, Culture and Equity "Educator of the Year" program is in

its second year. Districts from around the state are asked to nominate educators who they feel are deserving of this award. The Language, Culture and Equity office and its advisory council review the nominees and make a final selection.

About the Academy

The theme for the third annual ELA Academy is "Leadership for Academic Success." The academy provides an opportunity for English-language acquisition directors from around the state to access professional development from leading national researchers. The 2009 ELA Academy is co-sponsored by the Office of Language, Culture and Equity and the BUENO Center at the University of Colorado, Boulder.

For more information, contact Mark Stevens, 303-866-3898, or Megan McDermott, 303-866-2334, in the CDE Office of Communications. To sign up for the CDE e-mail news service, please visit <http://www.cde.state.co.us/Communications/index.html>.

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