

Kris Jarboe, Elkhorn Elementary School Mathematics Intervention Teacher, wins national award



PAEMST award winner Kris Jarboe pictured here observing Eboni Summerour and Trendon Sewell, as they work on differentiated number chart puzzles.

Kris Jarboe was honored on October 9, 2009 at the Kentucky Council of Teachers of Mathematics annual awards banquet in Paris, KY during which Commissioner Holliday presented her with a plaque and congratulated her for the esteemed distinction of receiving the **US President's Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching**.

According to the White House Press Release, "There is no higher calling than furthering the educational advancement of our nation's young people and encouraging and inspiring our next generation of leaders," President Obama said. "These awards represent a heartfelt salute of appreciation to a remarkable group of individuals who have devoted their lives and careers to helping others and in doing so have helped us all."

Kris Jarboe's current position as a mathematics intervention specialist at Elkhorn Elementary is funded by the Kentucky Department of Education and allows her to focus full-time on helping students gain a more solid foundation in numeracy. During her tenure at Elkhorn Elementary since 2001, Jarboe has been part of a team creating continual gains in mathematics. In the 2008/2009 school year intervention students gained at least 1.5 grade levels in mathematics.

Recalling her early years of teaching she found that many students had surprising gaps in their mathematical knowledge. "I couldn't believe that over half of the 5th graders could neither add nor subtract two-digit numbers. They definitely couldn't multiply!" she declared. Jarboe then explained her evolving mission, "I really became motivated to start moving kids forward mathematically. At first, my teaching practices weren't all that different from how I was taught in elementary school, but I became committed to trying to help kids understand math rather than just memorize random facts and formulas. I also wanted to help them make a connection between what they were learning and how it would be used in their lives."

Jarboe further reflected that, "My very favorite part of teaching is the moment when a student or class 'gets it.' The moment that a student successfully overcomes a challenging concept is the best part of this job. That's when learning takes place. They don't just get the benefit of knowledge, they also intrinsically gain confidence in themselves."

Jarboe mentioned her involvement in the **Kentucky Center for Mathematics (KCM)** programs as contributing to her success. According to Jarboe, "**KCM has provided intensive professional development opportunities and strong support that have helped me, since June 2006, not only become a better mathematics teacher, but also a more knowledgeable and confident individual.** As a member of the Mathematics Intervention Teacher (MIT) Community, I've had the opportunity to learn and subsequently implement student-centered instructional strategies that specifically address early numeracy."

KCM – facilitating teacher growth for state-wide student success in mathematics: Coaching/Intervention/Adult Education

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