Presidential Innovation Award for Environmental Educators: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Announces Jackie Scott (Horace Mann Arts and Science Middle School - Little Rock, Arkansas) as Region 6 Winner

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The United States Environmental Protection Agency ("EPA") announced that Mrs. Jackie Scott has been named a 2023 Presidential Innovation Award for Environmental Educators ("PIAEE") winner for Region 6.

Mrs. Scott teaches at Horace Mann Arts and Science Middle School in Little Rock, Arkansas.

PIAEE is described as an EPA program recognizing outstanding K-12 teachers who employ innovative approaches to environmental education and use the environment as a context to engage their students.

Selected teachers are stated to:

- Provide informal hands-on environmental education to students
- Advance students' knowledge of real-world environmental issues
- Bring creative ways into the classroom to teach their students about the environment

EPA conducts the PIAEE award program in partnership with the White House Council on Environmental Quality.

Region 6 of EPA encompasses the following states:

- Arkansas
- Oklahoma
- Louisiana
- Texas
- New Mexico

The stated basis for awarding Mrs. Scott the PIAEE is her work during the pandemic in 2020. She is stated to have "come to the rescue" after the school science fair was canceled. Her efforts included helping students conduct their research and create the school's native plant garden as a substitute activity.

Mrs. Scott created a special notebook to guide students as they researched plant species, ideal placement, soil quantities, and other issues. Her teachings are stated to be a crossover of science, math,

and art providing practical knowledge that is not confined to a single field. Further, the EPA press release notes :

. . . Above all, Mrs. Scott emphasizes the importance of using science wisely and sustainably—students created their garden after thorough research on sustainable mulch, the importance of planting native species, and environmentally friendly agricultural practices.

The work is noted to have benefited both individual students and the community since a few of her students are stated to have historically struggled with reading and communication. The personal projects are stated to have given the students a sense of pride in their responsibilities and matured behavior.

A link to the EPA news release and a description of the basis for Mrs. Scott's award can be found here.