

# Teacher gets national recognition

Tuesday, 22 June 2010

By MELANIE MOORE

[mmoore@cableone.net](mailto:mmoore@cableone.net)

BLACKFOOT — A local teacher received a major national award last week.

Vicki Chase, the Blackfoot School District gifted and talented facilitator for 6-8 grade students, received the Patricia Behring National History Day Teacher of the Year Award and \$10,000 last week at the National History Day Contest in College Park, Md.

Chase has been a teacher for 19 years, and 16 of those years she has taught National History Day. She has taught in the Blackfoot School District for three years.

In order to be nominated for the award, Chase was nominated by a colleague. She then submitted a resume, letter of recommendation and an essay outlining how she uses History Day in the classroom and how it benefits her students. She was chosen as the Idaho History Day Teacher of the Year, qualifying her for the national competition.

Chase's students participate and compete in the National History Day Contest. The students choose a historical topic related to an annual theme. They then conduct primary and secondary research to develop a project. The students either write a paper, or create an exhibit, performance, documentary or web site based on their topic.

This year, 14 of Chase's 41 students qualified for the state competition, with two advancing to the national tournament.

Chase said the project allows her students to choose something they are interested in, and the competition helps motivate them to create a great project. Chase supports her students in any way possible, recalling several very late nights over the years.

"It's truly astonishing what they can accomplish," Chase said.

All the students do research including browsing libraries, archives and museums, but also conducting oral history interviews and contacting experts on the topic they choose.

"They have to dig in," Chase said. "The more interesting things you find, the more exciting it becomes." Being selected as the top National History Day teacher of the year was a surprise for Chase. She recognized the efforts of the teachers she competed against for the award, and was humbled to have received the top honor.

"They are the cream of the crop of history teachers," Chase said. "It's kind of beyond my wildest dreams."

Last Updated ( Wednesday, 23 June 2010 )