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Baesler Congratulates Math, Science Teaching Excellence Award Winners

BISMARCK, N.D. – Superintendent of Public Instruction Kirsten Baesler congratulated two North Dakota teachers for winning Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching, which is the nation's highest honor for math and science teachers in grades kindergarten through 12.

Scott Johnson, who teaches at Century High School in Bismarck, and Cynthia Nelson, an instructor at Central High School in Grand Forks, are among 108 teachers nationwide who received the annual award this year. The honorees are from all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, U.S. territories, and Department of Defense schools.

Nelson has taught mathematics at Central for 30 years. She is now teaching algebra, precalculus, probability and statistics, and discrete mathematics, which is used in the study of computer programming languages and software development.

She graduated magna cum laude with a bachelor's degree in mathematics education from Minot State University, and holds a master's in mathematics education from the University of North Dakota.

Johnson, a former teacher at West Fargo High School, has worked for the past 16 years teaching chemistry, anatomy and physiology at Century High School in Bismarck. He is the president-elect of the North Dakota Science Teachers Association.

Johnson has a bachelor's degree in science education from Concordia College in Moorhead, Minn., and a master's degree in education from the University of North Dakota.

Johnson and Nelson will receive a \$10,000 award from the National Science Foundation and a certificate signed by the president. They will also receive an expenses-paid trip to Washington, D.C., to attend recognition events and teacher training seminars.

More than 4,300 teachers have been honored since the award was authorized by Congress in 1983. The awards are administered by the National Science Foundation on behalf of the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy. Winners are chosen by a panel of educators, mathematicians and scientists.

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