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GILA COUNTY, ARIZONA**

Mart of Young and Flores of Globe named 2016 Gila County Teachers of the Year

GILA COUNTY (Wednesday, May 18, 2016) — Gila County School Superintendent Linda O'Dell is happy to announce that Mrs. Erika Flores of Globe and Mr. Kevin Mart of Young have been selected as the 2016 Gila County Teachers of the Year.

This year's panel of judges carefully reviewed all nominations before interviewing the top five finalists and selecting two winners, Flores representing an elementary school and Mart representing a middle and high school.

Flores has been teaching in the Globe Unified School District for four years, starting at High Desert Middle School as a 6th grade language Arts teacher and later transferring to Copper Rim, where she currently teaches first grade. Flores is a strong believer that, "Teaching is not just about academics." According to Flores, "Teaching should include personal growth, helping students become their own person, and guiding them in the direction to become a contributing member of society. (...) There is no substitution for showing genuine interest in each child."

Mart is the science teacher at Young Public School for grades three to twelve, teaching general science, biology, physical science, physics, and earth science. "It is my belief that my unwavering excitement for science is the contagion that permeates the classroom. (...) By reaching and engaging all of my students in the process of learning, somehow science becomes a part of their lives; it becomes a real understanding and awareness. It is this bringing science alive in the minds of students that I feel is my greatest contribution and accomplishment, because it promotes curiosity and the desire to seek more knowledge, to discern and analyze, classify, qualify, quantify and interpret the world around them."

In addition to their passionate commitment to the teaching profession, both Flores and Mart sponsor extra-curricular activities for students and are actively involved in a variety of community events and organizations.

Superintendent O'Dell congratulates Flores and Mart on being selected by the judging panel for this prestigious honor. "The Gila County Teacher of the Year program provides an opportunity to acknowledge outstanding teachers in our region. Day after day, Gila County teachers strive to provide experiences that support student success and academic growth. Our Teacher of the Year program provides an opportunity for us to recognize and thank teachers for their commitment to our young people," she explained.

Superintendent O'Dell would also like to congratulate the top finalists for 2016: Claudia Bertoldo of the Miami Jr./Sr. High School Preschool Program, Barbara Warren of Tonto Basin Elementary School, and Brian Young of Payson High School. Your service does not go unnoticed! Finally, Dr. O'Dell would like to thank everyone who nominated a Gila County teacher for this award which serves to honor the hard work and dedication of our communities' educators.