

DISTINGUISHED SECONDARY SCHOOL SCIENCE TEACHER AWARD: 2002

KATHRYN R. GEMMER

Johnson City, Tennessee

Kathryn R. Gemmer was the recipient of the prestigious 2002 Tennessee Academy of Science Distinguished Science Teaching Award. Ms. Gemmer, a biology and physics teacher at University School, Johnson City, Tennessee, received the award on November 15, 2002 during the Tennessee Academy of Science Annual meeting on the campus of East Tennessee State University, Johnson City, Tennessee.

The Tennessee Academy of Science initiated the awards program in 1977 to recognize excellence in secondary science teaching. This award is given annually to one science teacher in Tennessee who has made significant contributions to science teaching and learning. In addition to the award and a trip to the TAS annual meeting, Ms. Gemmer received a plaque and a \$500 cash award.

Ms. Gemmer has made many contributions to science education. Her service to teaching is long-term and outstanding. She is widely recognized as an individual who demonstrates excel-

lence in her science teaching. Her efforts and hard work have been instrumental in planning and implementing innovative and exemplary science programs in her school. For example, she actively involves her students in the Tennessee Junior Academy of Science and other science competitions. She has written proposals to gain external funding for implementing an outdoor field laboratory, nature station, and integrated environmental curriculum. She also has served on many science education committees and task forces.

Ms. Gemmer is recognized for her abilities to create effective learning environments for her students to become actively involved in inquiry and problem solving. She provides opportunities for her students to ask thought provoking questions about the world and engages her students to answer them. She incorporates the use of "hands-on minds-on" and process-oriented activities for the benefit of students' prior knowledge construction and learning.