

I was the 2004 Kansas Teacher of the Year and one of four finalists for The National Teacher of the Year. Because of my recognition and honors I am a lifetime member of KEEN. KEEN stands for The Kansas Exemplary Educators Network. We have two conferences a year that connect us with hundreds of our fellow teachers from across the state. We also get the opportunity to listen to award winning presenters and learn directly from KSDE the latest and best tips for effective teaching. There are literally several thousand educators currently in KEEN. I can email any one of them for help, ideas or guidance about a lesson. This is truly an invaluable resource for educators today.

If the KTOY program and KEEN are all taken away it will create a large amount of money to award a small number of teachers. It will also handicap and destroy a learning network that is thriving and making a difference in Kansas classrooms. It will leave us even more alone than I can imagine. KEEN has made me a better person and a better teacher because of the professional educators it has connected me to.

While serving as the 2004 KTOY I was able to travel over 20,000 miles to speak at schools and inspire students and train teachers. These presentations changed my soul. I was constantly asked to share about what I REALLY believed about students and education. It reinforced in me everything good about teaching children and shaping the future. This was an amazing journey in professional development, teaching and learning. I can't imagine not having a KTOY for our state to invite to schools across Kansas.

Below is a list of some of my awards and honors. You can see that after I was inducted into KEEN, My career took off. All the ideas! All of the great people! It was a renaissance of learning for me AND my students.

In my opinion, if you make the changes proposed in HB 2378, You will be giving a much larger financial reward to a few teachers. You will also take about immeasurable professional development and growth opportunities from several thousand current teachers in the State of Kansas. Not to mention all of the future KEEN members who will never get a chance to connect with their peers from across our state.

Idea: If you really want to make a unique award for our state, I suggest you ask each Representative and each Senator to donate \$100 towards the KS Government Education Award. This would be a sizable cash award. It would also be 100% YOURS! So... you could use it any way you wanted. A formal Dinner etc... I would even suggest you have each Representative and each Senator donate their money in the name of a teacher from their own past that changed their lives! How cool would that be to get a note from a politician that says thanks for what you do each day in your classroom and that the money I donated to you is in honor of Mrs. Wilbur Or Mr. Kincade.

I was told when I was named KTOY 2004 that our states recognitions program was one of the best in the nation. I did not believe them until I went to Washington D.C. for my National Teacher of the Year Awards. Many states work with our KSDE to copy our awards program. My heart breaks when I think of eliminating everything we have gained.

When I was traveling across our state I talked about the "Great State of Kansas." We truly are an amazing state. I don't want to see us take so many steps backwards with this Bill. I want to see us keep breaking new ground, forging new paths and making a difference for all the children of our great state.

I'm sorry I was unable to be with you this week. We have had a death in the family and my schedule with final exams is difficult to say the least. Please know you can reach me by cell or at home anytime. IF... you would have any interest in me taking a personal day to come be with you and sit and talk out a plan for a new Legislative Teaching Award.... I would be honored to do so.

Home - 913-583-1120

Cell - 816-509-6744

Thanks for all your hard work and effort on behalf of my fellow teachers and our students.

Keil Hileman

Museum Connections Grades 6-8

Honors Archeology Grades 11-12

Explore... Empower... Excel...

Monticello Trails Middle School Museum

6100 Monticello Road Shawnee, KS 66226

913-422-1100 Ext. 5233 Fax 913-422-4990



2013 American Teacher: Heroes in the Classroom Book – 1/50 Featured Teachers from across our nation – **Three from Kansas! All in KEEN!**

2012 Education Excellence Award - University of Kansas / Performance Software

2011 Featured National Teacher – One of Three - NBC Education Nation – Teaching Watched by 53 Million People

2011 Dolly Parton Chasing Rainbows Award Winner

2008 U.S. Department of Education Teacher Ambassador Fellow – First Initiating Class

2007 National Outstanding Teacher of American History Award - Daughters of The American Revolution

2006 American Civic Education Teacher Award

2004 Finalist for National Teacher of the Year– One of four finalists

2004 NEA – National Teacher of Excellence Award - One of five finalists

2004 NEA / NFIE - Horace Mann Award Winner - One of five finalists

2004 Kansas Teacher of the Year

-- DeSoto Education Foundation - Special Museum Projects Grant -- 2000

-- Teacher's Touching The Future – EPCOT / Celebration School Tour - 2000
Awarded by DeSoto Unified School District 232
Sponsored By Hollis & Miller Group – Architecture Firm

--Risk Taker Award, Monticello Trails Middle School, DeSoto, KS, 1997

--University of Kansas; Air Force ROTC, Arnold Air Society, 1987-1989

--Shawnee Mission North High School; National Honor Society—1986

--Boy Scouts of America, Eagle Scout Award-- 1984