



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
Wednesday, June 27, 2018  
[www.sde.idaho.gov](http://www.sde.idaho.gov)

**Media Contact:**  
Kelly Everitt  
Communications specialist  
208-332-6818  
[keveritt@sde.idaho.gov](mailto:keveritt@sde.idaho.gov)

## **Treasure Valley math, science teachers earn presidential awards**

(BOISE) – Two Idaho teachers are among 140 math and science teachers across the nation selected to win Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching.

Lynnea Shafter teaches special K-5 STEM classes at Barbara Morgan STEM Academy in Meridian, and Susan Darden teaches 6<sup>th</sup> grade general mathematics at Galileo STEM Academy in Eagle. Darden also teaches a history class.

The PAEMST program, administered by the National Science Foundation (NSF) on behalf of the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP), recognizes outstanding teachers for their contributions to the teaching and learning of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM).

“This award is an honor to receive and I am humbled to be in the family of past and present awardees,” Shafter said. “This acknowledgement gives me the confidence to advocate for STEM education in Idaho and the U.S.”

Darden described the award as “an honor and a privilege because I work with so many awesome and dedicated teachers.” She said that she hopes to use the recognition “to advocate for high-quality public education in Idaho.”

Darden, Shafter and the other winners will travel to Washington, D.C., later this year for an awards ceremony where each will receive a citation signed by President Donald Trump and a \$10,000 award from the NSF. They also will participate in discussions on STEM and STEM education priorities led by OSTP and NSF.

Established in 1983, PAEMST is the highest award kindergarten through 12th grade mathematics and science teachers can receive from the U.S. government. The award alternates each year between teachers in grades K-6 and those who teach in secondary education

"On behalf of the White House I am honored to express the nation's gratitude for the tireless dedication that these men and women bring to educating the next generation of scientists, engineers, and mathematicians," said Michael Kratsios, deputy assistant to the president for technology policy. "Each day more and more jobs require a strong foundation in STEM education, so the work that you do as teachers and mentors helps ensure that all students can have access to limitless opportunities and the brightest of futures."

Awardees represent schools in all 50 states, Department of Defense schools and schools in the U.S. territories.

Nominees complete a rigorous application process that requires them to demonstrate their excellence in content knowledge and ability to adapt to a broad range of learners and teaching environments.

A panel of mathematicians, scientists and educators at the state and national levels assesses the applications before recommending nominees to OSTP. Teachers are selected based on their distinction in the classroom and dedication to improving STEM education.

For information about the annual nomination and application process, visit <http://www.paemst.org>.

###

**Reporters, editors:** Thumbnail photos of both winners are attached. Susan Darden can be reached at [Dardensue@msn.com](mailto:Dardensue@msn.com) or 208-869-8522, and Lynnea Shafter can be reached at [shafter.lynnea@westada.org](mailto:shafter.lynnea@westada.org) or 208-761-7681.)