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Garlough Environmental Magnet School principal named 2010 Science and Mathematics Principal of the Year

(Mendota Heights, Minn.) --- Principal of Garlough Environmental Magnet School (GEMS) Susan Powell has been named the 2010 Science and Mathematics Principal of the Year. The award is co-sponsored by the Minnesota Elementary School Principal’s Association (MESPA) and the Science Museum of Minnesota to recognize the vital role that principals play in fostering lifelong science and math literacy.

The award is offered in alternate years to specialty and general education school principals. This year the award was offered to specialty schools: environmental, math, or science specialty/magnet schools. The award committee was struck by several exemplary math and science literacy practices when reviewing Powell’s nominations: that she has exponentially increased achievement in reading and math, that all students go outside for academic learning a minimum of twice a week, and that three times a year all GEMS families are engaged in whole school inquiry projects.



Powell received two nominations for the award: one from her peer Mary Bowman, Principal at Somerset Elementary in Independent School District 197; and the other from Kathleen Lundgren, Magnet Facilitator for West St. Paul Schools and former Minnesota Department of Education Science Specialist.

In her application nominating Powell, Mary Bowman stated: “GEMS isn’t about growing tree huggers, it is about developing young, enthusiastic scientists, committed to life long learning using our natural environment as the integrating force.”

Powell believes that this recognition is truly a reflection of the environment of the school as a whole. “I think that this is a testament to a fantastic staff,” says Powell. “This award is more about the transformation we’ve gone through as a school to reach this level of achievement.”

Dr. Eric Jolly, President of the Science Museum of Minnesota, presented the award on Thursday, February 4, during the annual MESPA Institute Awards Program. Powell received a plaque of recognition as well as \$400 worth of school programming from the Science Museum.

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