



# Natural Resource Excellence in Teaching Award

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Photo by DAVID SMITH

Since 2004, the **San Antonio Livestock Exposition, Inc. (S.A.L.E.)** has partnered with the **Texas Wildlife Association Foundation** to help fulfill the mission to expand and deploy new conservation education programs across the state of Texas. Through this partnership, S.A.L.E. and the Texas Wildlife Association's Conservation Legacy programs have educated over 1.1 million Texans about our state's diverse, abundant wildlife, natural resources, as well the importance of good land stewardship. TWA's Conservation Legacy programs include a wide range of educational programs, from public events such as the San Antonio Stock Show and Rodeo to classroom presentations, hands-on field investigation days, land management field days and webinars.

For many years, S.A.L.E. has generously funded the **Natural Resource - Excellence in Teaching Award** for teachers who demonstrate the use of innovative techniques and curricula to promote natural resource literacy among students. Teachers selected for the award have also articulated the importance of conservation to the future of Texas and its citizens, equipping future decision-makers with critical thinking skills necessary in the understanding of natural resource issues.

Six teachers were awarded \$2,400 each for the 2014-2015 school year. Sarah Anderson at St. John Paul II Catholic High School in New Braunfels said she will use the award to enhance and expand field investigation opportunities for the ecology classes to learn more about land management from professionals

Mary Beth Bauer from Our Lady of the Hills Regional Catholic High School in Kerrville said that she will use her award

to specifically enhance opportunities for her students to learn about the natural resources in situ.

"The majority of our students are more urban than rural, and many of them have very few opportunities to spend time in the natural environment, either due to lifestyle or to lack of free time," Bauer said.

Don Harris from Tom Moore High School in Ingram will use his award this year to complete and maintain a deer-proof native range plot on the high school campus where students will learn about native grasses, forbs and browse plants. This will give students direct access to learn and study the plants.

Mary Stone from Tivy High School in Kerrville will purchase basic equipment for her classes that will provide a pathway to student-centered learning with hands-on activities along an established riparian zone.

"This opens up opportunities for a fresh curriculum that will promote resource literacy and the importance of conservations of Texas land and water resources," said Stone.

Sherri Michael from Three Way Elementary in Stephenville will use her \$2,400 award to help complete their Garden 111 project, enhance other outdoor spaces for students and facilitate relative teacher training. Michael said that creating a rainwater catchment system on campus for the Garden 111 and creating an outdoor classroom are priorities. Once they have completed this project, Michael said that they will submit it for certification as a Schoolyard Habitat through the National Wildlife Federation.

Carla Weaver from Travis Elementary in Houston will use her award money to enhance learning experiences at the



Pictured are the Excellence in Teaching Scholarship Recipients and S.A.L.E., Inc. Volunteers (l-r): Beth Bauer, Our Lady of the Hills Regional Catholic High School; Cody Davenport, S.A.L.E. President; Mary Stone, Tivy High School; Tina Altgelt Haynes, S.A.L.E. Vice President; Keith Martin, S.A.L.E. Executive Director and CEO; Don Harris, Ingram Tom Moore High School; Jackie Simmonds, S.A.L.E. Scholarship Committee Chairman; Joe Soules, S.A.L.E. Chairman of the Board; and Sarah Anderson, St. John Paul II Catholic High School.

second grade Campout Forest Festival by purchasing binoculars and GPS units for geocaching activities. Some of her award money will also be used to secure speakers and presenters for the event, and it will provide funds for camping supplies for families, enabling all students' families to attend the event regardless of financial status.

"This campout and the Forest Festival is something special that our second graders will remember forever," said Weaver.

Thank you to S.A.L.E. for this great partnership for the past 11 years. It is facilitating natural resource literacy within schools across the state, creating tangible relationships between the outdoors and essential academic skills. It is recognizing teachers for their willingness to go above and beyond to provide meaningful learning experiences for students. This coalition is vital to the success of the TWA mission. ♻️

