



DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE EDUCATION ACTIVITY

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Irene Dugdale Lee Named Teacher of the Year

ARLINGTON, VA – Dr. Joseph Tafoya, Director, Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA), today announced the selection of Irene Dugdale Lee of Department of Defense Dependents Schools (DoDDS - Pacific, DDESS – Guam) as the 2005 DoDEA Teacher of the Year.

Lee, a 32-year education veteran, is a music teacher at Seoul American High School, Yongson, South Korea. Originally a middle school teacher in South Dakota, Lee taught elementary school in Taegu, Korea, and Stuttgart, Germany, before returning to Seoul in 1983.

“We’re very proud of Ms. Lee and her accomplishments,” Tafoya said. “She creates a dynamic environment that fosters enthusiasm and growth in our young musicians.”

In selecting Lee as the 2005 DoDEA Teacher of the Year, the panel cited her excellence and commitment to outstanding musical education. Lee was the driving force behind the Korean American Youth Symphony Orchestra that allows performance opportunities for SAHS students while helping them gain an appreciation for Korean musical traditions. She is also recognized as a strong supporter of all extra curricular activities and currently serves the first of a two-year term on the Far East Activities Council; the Pacific Area's governing board for all extra curricular activities.

Lee hails from De Smet, S.D., the model for Laura Ingalls' *Little House on the Prairie* and credits her small town upbringing and large family for her no-nonsense work habits in the classroom, "One of our big family rules is to take care of yourself while you care for others."

Lee said she believes that her role as a music educator "is to teach student musicians, using standards-based lessons, the skills necessary to discover the power of self-expression through music." Lee commends her music students for "not accepting average as their high water mark" and upholding the SAHS motto, "Striving for Excellence in Music Performance."

During her years of teaching, Lee has developed a strong commitment to the importance of arts education, and believes that "every student entering my classroom has the potential to be a virtuoso and deserves the opportunity to develop his or her musical talents."

The purpose of the DoDEA Teacher of the Year program is to recognize and promote excellence in education. Teachers may be nominated by a peer, administrator, parent or student. Nominees complete application packets, which are then submitted to the appropriate DoDEA District Office. A panel assembled by each DoDEA District Superintendent selects a District Teacher of the Year. A second panel at DoDEA Headquarters then selects the DoDEA Teacher of the Year from among the candidates submitted by each district. Upon selection, the DoDEA Teacher of the Year is eligible to compete for the title of National Teacher of the Year.

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