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**HISD teacher receives state humanities award**

*Feb. 2, 2016* – Mickey Leland College Preparatory Academy for Young Men teacher Rebecca Ryan is among 12 recipients from across the state to receive the 2015 Outstanding Teaching of the Humanities Award.

The award is among several bestowed annually by Humanities Texas — a National Endowment for the Humanities affiliate — to encourage excellence in teaching and recognize Texas classroom teachers who have made exemplary contributions in teaching, curriculum development and extracurricular programming.

More than 450 teachers across the state were nominated for the 2015 awards.

Ryan, who teaches contemporary world cultures to sixth-graders, was presented with the honor on Tuesday, along with a $5,000 cash award and an additional $500 to be used by the school for instructional materials.

“How I teach my class engages students. They never have to ask, ‘Why are we learning this?’” said Ryan, who started at the school in 2011. “The young men in my classroom know the importance of each project, and because they feel connected to the subject matter, these sixth graders value the education and take personal pride in global responsibility.”

Ryan utilizes project-based learning to encourage students to connect classroom knowledge to events in the real world. Ryan also sponsors the school’s World Food Club that provides students with opportunities to experience foreign cultures and cuisines.

Additionally, she has led her students in various extracurricular activities, including the “Be an Upstander: Genocide Prevention Project,” the Holocaust Museum-Houston's “Butterfly Project,” and a class community service trip to Costa Rica.

“Throughout her time here, Ms. Ryan has offered nothing short of excellence in the instruction she provides to students," said Leland Principal Dameion Crook. “Her warm and engaging personality helps her students feel comfortable and safe in their learning environment.”

