



Media Release

Laura Cummings, Sunset Beach Elementary School, Haleiwa, Hawaii (Honolulu County Schools) recognized for Excellence in Energy

For Immediate Release – June 15, 2021

Manassas, Virginia – The NEED Project is pleased to announce the 2021 recipient of the Bob Thompson Excellence in Energy Award is Laura Cummings of Sunset Beach Elementary School in Haleiwa, Hawaii (Honolulu County Schools).

The Bob Thompson Excellence in Energy Award was created by NEED in memory of long-time NEED teacher and staff member Bob Thompson. Bob was a dedicated teacher, friend, and proponent of science and energy education. His time at NEED enriched many, encouraged all, and improved the way we present and teach about energy in our curriculum and training workshops. Bob was a good friend to many here at NEED and he and his spirit live on in our work. Because of this, NEED established the Bob Thompson Excellence in Energy Award that is given each year to a teacher who exemplifies Bob's childlike wonder of science, technology and energy.

The award includes a \$1,000 cash grant to the teacher to use as he/she chooses in the classroom and an all-expenses paid trip to the NEED National Energy Conference for Educators. The award will be presented at the National Energy Conference hosted in Albuquerque, New Mexico, July 18-22, 2021.

Laura certainly encompasses the NEED mission of Kids Teaching Kids. She embraces teaching beyond the textbook and has students apply concepts to real life scenarios. Her students have conducted energy audits to present their energy saving findings to administration and teach their skills to other classes throughout the school. Going beyond the classroom, Laura has hosted numerous school community energy carnivals where her students educate their peers and community members about energy and energy saving tips. Her students have also participated with The Blue Planet organization writing "postcards from the future" to state legislators about renewable energy.

Laura's nomination from her vice principal highlighted her dedication and passion to lifelong learning and engaging with her community. She's been a speaker on ThinkTech Hawaii, an internet program dedicated to raising public awareness and providing a platform for civic engagement and has continued her energy education through NEED workshops, Hawaii Energy partnership, and courses through Island Energy Inquiry.

A nomination from former student, Elizabeth O'Shea, shares, "The knowledge I gained in her class vaulted me in the direction of becoming more involved in sustainable and renewable energy. Ms. Cummings is a pioneer in enlightening and fostering ideas in her students and I'm incredibly grateful that I was able to have the experience of being her student."

Congratulations to this great energy educator!

For more information about the NEED Project and the Bob Thompson Excellence in Energy Award, please contact Mary E. Spruill at (703) 257-1117 or mspruill@need.org.

<https://www.NEED.org>

<https://www.need.org/educators/distinguished-service-bob-thompson-awards/>

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