

# Three Teachers Selected for National Awards by the VFW

Feb 25, 2015

Kansas City, Mo. - Each year for the past 16 years, the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S. (VFW) has recognized three exceptional teachers for their outstanding commitment to teach Americanism and patriotism to their students.

The Smart/Maher VFW National Citizenship Education Teacher Award recipients are selected from entries submitted by local VFW Posts in the U.S. and overseas. The entries detail a local teacher's act of promoting civic responsibility, flag etiquette and patriotism in the classroom.

There are three categories of competition: elementary school (K-5), middle school (6-8) and high school (9-12).

Ann Parker Komara, a fifth-grade teacher at Ottobine Elementary School in Dayton, Va., was named the winner at the elementary school level. At the middle school level, Melinda Hamilton, a seventh grade social studies teacher at River Bend Middle School in Claremont, N.C., was named the winner. Craig Blackman, a history teacher at Indian River High School in Chesapeake, Va., was selected at the high school level.

Each teacher receives a \$1,000 award for their professional development and another \$1,000 for their school. In addition, all three teachers receive an all-expense-paid trip to Pittsburgh, Pa., where the awards will be presented during the 2015 VFW National Convention, July 18-22.

Kevin Jones, director of VFW Programs, commented, "Civic-mindedness is a very important trait that takes cultivation through experiences to develop. This year's award recipients have worked to ensure their students gain a sincere understanding of American principles; an understanding that will certainly serve them well in the future."

*Photo Caption: (Left to right) Ann Parker Komara, Melinda Hamilton, Craig Blackman*

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