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Two Local Educators Appointed to MO State Council

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**Congressman Jason Smith Names Appointees to Congressional Award Council
Smith Appoints two local educators to the Missouri State Council for the
Congressional Award**

Cape Girardeau, Missouri - Congressman Jason Smith has named two educators from the 8th Congressional District to represent him on the Missouri State Council for the Congressional Award. Jennifer Woods, principal of South Iron Elementary School and Scott Dill, superintendent of Poplar Bluff Schools, will offer their input in the process of recruiting candidates for the Congressional Award.

"The Congressional Award is the highest award Congress can give to a young person," explained Smith. "I am delighted to have these two dedicated community members representing me on the Missouri Council. The commitment and successes Jennifer and Scott have made in improving the lives of the thousands of students they have had the opportunity to work with and better is truly remarkable. I am honored that in addition to their current positions, they are willing to continue those efforts through additional means such as the Congressional Award program."

Youth between the ages of 14 and 23 are eligible to register for the awards program. They commit to achieve the required hours of community service and to set and accomplish goals of personal growth, exploration and physical fitness. Based upon the achievements, bronze, silver and gold medals are awarded. To register, go to

Candidates select an adult mentor to help them and keep a scrapbook of their journey.

"Students who plan to take part in the A-plus program, become Eagle Scouts, participate in FFA, Future Business Leaders of America or the National Honor Society will already be on track to do what the Congressional Award program requires," said Smith. "However it is open to all students interested in bettering themselves and their communities and serves as the official way Congress can celebrate the commitment and time these students put forth."

Candidates pledge to give hours of community service such as volunteering at a homeless shelter or mentor a younger student. Additionally, they may also pledge to improve their physical fitness by taking part in a program of exercise or develop a project of personal exploration, such as specialized study of a specific topic or taking a trip to learn about another culture. Overall the purpose of the program is to foster personal development by setting goals and discovering new talents and abilities.

"They're involved in their own personal growth and achievement, but also involved in what goes on in their schools and their communities," said Dill, who is beginning his 20th year in education. "I would think this kind of award would open doors for these students."

Dill is beginning his first year in Poplar Bluff after serving as superintendent for nine years in Houston, Mo.

"This is a wonderful way to encourage our youth to challenge themselves and award their efforts," said Woods. "The earlier the students become aware of the award, the better the chance they'll be able to do all that's required to achieve it."

There are 50,000 young people throughout the nation working toward the Congressional Award. All 8th district medals will be awarded by Congressman Smith at a state or local ceremony. Gold medalists are invited to Washington D.C. for another ceremony that honors their achievements.

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