

Penn State's Center on Rural Education and Communities
and
Pennsylvania Association for Rural and Small Schools
announce the 6th annual
Building Community through Rural Education Award

Pennsylvania's rural schools are characterized by their closeness to community. People involved in rural education understand all too well that a strong relationship between rural communities and their schools is vital to ensuring both school effectiveness and community vitality. Schools, as key institutions in rural areas, have crucially important roles to play – not only in community economic development, but also in strengthening the social bonds that hold rural communities together. These roles have grown only more critical at a time when rural schools and communities together face a series of challenges, including shrinking employment opportunities, tightening school budgets and rising out-migration.

Because of this, the *Center on Rural Education and Communities* (CREC) based within the Pennsylvania State University's College of Education, and the *Pennsylvania Association for Rural and Small Schools* (PARSS) announce their 4th annual *Building Community through Rural Education Award*. CREC and PARSS will select one award-winner and two honorable mentions, recognizing rural schools or districts that have distinguished themselves through practices that contribute to the educational experiences for the students they serve, while reaching out to the broader community in which they are located.

This recognition will be presented jointly by CREC and PARSS at the PARSS Annual Meeting in April in State College, Pennsylvania. The efforts of those schools will be highlighted in press releases from Penn State and a feature in the spring CREC newsletter mailed to school districts across the state. In addition, the district will be featured on the websites of both CREC and PARSS to highlight the innovative, community-building practices of Pennsylvania's rural schools. All three schools or districts being recognized will be asked to make a brief presentation at the PARSS Annual Meeting about their efforts to improve education while building community.

The winning entrant will receive a \$500 award and an engraved plaque, and the two honorable mention finalists will each receive \$250 plus an engraved plaque recognizing their work. Each of the schools recognized by the award will be asked to make a brief presentation to the PARSS membership at the Annual Meeting.



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Nomination Form – Submission Deadline: March 19, 2010

Qualifying schools or districts must be “rural” according to Center for Rural Pennsylvania criteria (less than 274 persons per square mile). Schools/districts are encouraged to self-nominate. Complete the following, and return it to Dr. Kai Schafft at Penn State’s *Center on Rural Education and Communities* by post or fax. Nominations will be accepted until **March 19, 2010**, and will be evaluated by a panel made up jointly by CREC and PARSS executive board members at which point two honorable mention awards and a first place award will be chosen. The award recipient will be announced one month before the PARRS Annual Meeting in late April .

- 1) Name of school or district: _____
- 2) Principal/superintendent: _____
- 3) Person making nomination: _____
- 4) Contact information (ph number/e-mail): _____

5) In an attached statement, please describe practices your school/district has engaged in that have both strengthened social and learning environments as well as the community in which your school/district is located. Descriptions of *multiple, overlapping programs* with a school or district are encouraged. **We are particularly interested in how these practices have strengthened education and community in the face of particular challenges faced by your rural community and/or schools.** We encourage you to include **any supporting materials** (e.g. brochures, curricula, multimedia, etc.) that provide additional information about these efforts.

Return by mail/fax to:

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