

Teacher of the Year goes to Coventry educator

Julie Lima Boyle, a Coventry High teacher, admits she's still learning

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COVENTRY — Yesterday afternoon, Governor Lincoln Chafee and Education Commissioner Deborah A. Gist came to Coventry to announce the 2012 Teacher of the Year.

This year's winner was Julie Lima Boyle, a high school English teacher at Coventry High School. Boyle, a former student in Coventry herself, has been with the school for 13 years.

"We are here because our goal at the Department of Education wants to ensure that every single student leaves our high schools ready for success in college, careers and life. For us to do this, we need everyone in our community working together," said Gist.

She commended the district on increased scores in science, mathematics and reading.

"Of course, it also takes outstanding teachers and we want to make sure that we have an excellent teacher in every single classroom in our state. And we know that you have great teachers right here in Coventry High School.

That is actually what we are here to celebrate today," said Gist.

In August, Boyle was nominated to represent the district of Coventry and she then proceeded to the state level. The Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) narrowed the nominations to a group of six and then narrowed to a group of three teachers in October.

One of Boyle's students, Tom Scappini, spoke at the ceremony on Wednesday afternoon.

"Mrs. Boyle's unique style brings out the best in every one of her students. She is very generous and loves to reward hard work. She is incredibly personable and works with multiple classes of 20 or more students," said Scappini.

She brings a clever, modern spin to a British literature and a variety of other subject matters, he said.

Her approach makes the subject accessible to "even the most reluctant of Shakespeare folk," Scappini added.

And what Scappini attributed as Boyle's most admirable trait as a teacher is that she admits she is still a student.

Principal Michael Hobin shared the same views.

"She would say that she is still learning. She says that she's a student and works to study, learn more and improve," Hobin told The Times. "She has a lot of energy and enthusiasm and is really



Paul Spetrini-Daily Times

Julie Lima Boyle shows off her Teacher of the Year award. Boyle is an English teacher at Coventry High School.

a bright light at the school."

Hobin explained that Boyle helped the school raise their NECAP [New England Common

Assessment Program] scores, with 89 percent of students scoring in a 3 and 4 range in reading. According to Hobin, these figures are

characterized as proficient and distinguished.

"She has really been in charge of that," he said. "I give her credit to helping to move the school forward."

Furthermore, the students "absolutely adore her as a teacher," said Hobin, citing their appreciation for Boyle from the numerous letters that she has tucked away in her teaching portfolio.

"She gets everyone of them to do their very best work," he said. Hobin later added that "I couldn't be prouder to be the principal of the Teacher of the Year for our state."

At the ceremony, Boyle stood and said that she was searching for words, which says a lot for an English teacher.

"I am just in awe of the idea that I now represent 15,000 hard-working teachers in the state of Rhode Island," she said.

She quoted Michelangelo on his 88th birthday as saying the Italian phrase, "ancora imparo." Translated, it means "I am still learning," said Boyle.

According to RIDE, Boyle was presented with a \$10,000 scholarship opportunity from Johnson & Wales University and a Technology Classroom package from SMART Technologies. As the Rhode Island Teacher of the Year, she will now proceed as a candidate to the national competition.