



Irvine Unified School District

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Eastshore Elementary teacher honored as D.A.R.E. Educator of the Year *Bill Brooks recognized for going above and beyond to support police-led program*

IRVINE, Calif. – Bill Brooks of Eastshore Elementary School was honored today as Educator of the Year by the California D.A.R.E. Officers' Association during the organization's annual conference. This year's event, held April 6-8 at the Hyatt Regency Irvine, was sponsored by D.A.R.E. America.

Mr. Brooks, a sixth-grade teacher at Eastshore who has served in his field for 32 years, has worked closely with law enforcement since the 1980s, when D.A.R.E. was introduced locally. Among his many efforts, the veteran educator developed and implemented a comprehensive bicycle safety program that teaches helmet and head-injury prevention, as well as bicycle skills and rules of the road. The interdisciplinary unit, which includes a 30-mile bike ride from the Eastshore campus to Newport Dunes, also incorporates state standards in math, science, social science, art and reading.

"Bill Brooks is an extraordinary leader who has spent more than three decades engaging students with lessons that are both inspiring and unforgettable," said IUSD Superintendent of Schools Gwen Gross. "We are incredibly proud of his recognition by D.A.R.E., which continues to be a tremendous asset for our schools and our community."

The "Educator of the Year" award is presented annually to an individual who goes above and beyond to support the objectives of the D.A.R.E. program by creating activities tied to D.A.R.E. lessons, promoting student engagement beyond the school day, encouraging students to pursue constructive hobbies and participating in community service.

Throughout his career, Mr. Brooks has worked diligently to establish and strengthen bonds between children and police officers. During the summer months, he teaches an Ocean Workshop enrichment program that focuses on ocean science, safety and recreation, including fishing, surfing and body boarding. In an effort to solidify relationships between students and police, Mr. Brooks invites D.A.R.E. officers to participate and assist in teaching the program, creating an experience that is enriching for both the students and their law enforcement mentors.

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IUSD ... providing the highest quality educational experience we can envision.

“The effort and commitment exhibited by Mr. Brooks is an excellent example of how the Irvine Unified School District and the Irvine Police Department work in partnership to provide outstanding support to our community’s youth,” said City of Irvine Mayor Sukhee Kang. “The D.A.R.E. program continues to provide opportunities for dedicated educators, police and community members to collaborate for the benefit of our children.”

D.A.R.E., short for Drug Abuse Resistance Education, is a police officer-led educational program that teaches youth how to resist peer pressure and live productive lives free of drugs, gangs and violence. A component of community policing, D.A.R.E. creates an environment that allows young people relate to officers and to view them as citizens who serve and assist their communities in a variety of ways beyond law enforcement. The program has been widely credited with opening channels of communication between police, students, parents and schools.

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