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AGI Announces Winner of 2009 Award for Excellence in Earth Science Teaching

Alexandria, VA—Stephen L. Houser, Jr., Gifted and Talented Educator at Providence Spring Elementary School in Charlotte, North Carolina has been named the 2009 recipient of the Edward C. Roy, Jr. Award for Excellence in K-8 Earth Science Teaching.

Mr. Houser, who has taught grades 3-5 for most of his 34-year teaching career, holds an undergraduate degree in geography from the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, and a masters degree in education from University of North Carolina, Charlotte. He is a North Carolina certified environmental educator who currently serves as a Talent Development Teacher, instructing gifted and high ability students in all curricular areas including earth and planetary science topics.

Mr. Houser is active in various organizations promoting environmental and earth science education. He is a life member of the Environmental Educators of North Carolina, a member of the National Science Teachers' Association, a youth director and board member of the national environmental education program Family Nature Summits, and an Educator of Excellence with the North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences.

Diane Adams, principal of Providence Spring Elementary School, says that Mr. Houser is an "education legend here in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools" who is a science educator "24 hours per day, seven days a week, 365 days a year." In addition to the many individual students Mr. Houser has inspired to pursue careers in earth science, he has been active in shaping the curriculum of his school and school district—promoting the development of outdoor classroom sites and opportunities on his school grounds as well as at neighboring schools, coordinating a Science Olympiad program, and serving on his school district's science committee.

In addition to the Edward C. Roy Jr. Award, Mr. Houser has received accolades at the national, state and local levels. These include the 2001 Presidential Award of Excellence in Math and Science Teaching from the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy and is administered by the National Science Foundation, the 2001 North Carolina Wildlife Federation's Governor's Award for North Carolina Environmental Education Teacher of the Year, and Charlotte-Mecklenburg School System's 2001 First Union Ben Craig Teacher of the Year Award and 2006 Arts and Science Council Outstanding Educator Award.

Given annually, the Edward C. Roy, Jr. Award recognizes one classroom teacher from kindergarten to eighth grade for his or her leadership and innovation in earth science education. This award is named in honor of Dr. Edward C. Roy, Jr., who was a strong and dedicated supporter of earth science education.

Mr. Houser will be presented with the Edward C. Roy, Jr. Award at the AGI Past Presidents Dinner, Sunday Sept. 18, 2009 held during the Geological Society of America Annual Meeting in Portland, Oregon.

The American Geological Institute is a nonprofit federation of 46 geoscientific and professional associations that represents more than 120,000 geologists, geophysicists and other earth scientists. Founded in 1948, AGI provides information services to geoscientists, serves as a voice of shared interests in the profession, plays a major role in strengthening geoscience education, and strives to increase public awareness of the vital role the geosciences play in society's use of resources, resiliency to natural hazards, and interaction with the environment.

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