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Riverside County Superintendent of Schools Kenneth Young congratulates third-grade teacher Ashley Hayball at Amelia Earhart School for International Studies Wednesday as one of four Riverside County Teachers of the Year for 2014. (Click photos for larger images.)

2014 Riverside County Teachers of the Year selected

Riverside County Superintendent of Schools Kenneth Young made surprise visits on Wednesday, May 22, 2013, to sixth-grade teacher Jessica Pack's classroom at James Workman Middle School in the Palm Springs Unified School District as well as third-grade teacher Ashley Hayball's classroom at Amelia Earhart School of International Studies in the Desert Sands Unified School District to announce that they were selected to be among the four 2014 Riverside County Teachers of the Year.



The announcements Wednesday were part of a series of surprise visits across the county to the four Teacher of the Year recipients as schools and students are finishing up the school year and getting ready for summer break. Pack and Hayball join second-grade teacher Lori Fox at DeAnza Elementary School in the San Jacinto Unified School District who received her surprise visit Monday morning ([press release](#)).

"Students will tell you it makes all the difference in the world when a teacher believes in them and helps them to do their best. They thrive on a combination of recognition, appreciation and encouragement. We



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are very fortunate that Riverside County has excellent teachers who demonstrate these characteristics each day," said Superintendent Young.



Pack, Hayball and Fox were selected from among their 18,000 colleagues in Riverside County. They will represent the county in the upcoming 2014 California State Teacher of the Year competition. The final Riverside County Teacher of the Year will be announced next week as Superintendent Young makes the remaining visit.



State winners will be announced in late October 2013, and one state winner will enter the United States Department of Education National Teacher of the Year 2014 contest. The National Teacher of the Year will be announced in May 2014.

In the news . . .

KESQ News Channel 3, May 22, 2013
Local educator named Riverside County middle school teacher of the year.
[Watch video »](#)



Jessica Pack graduated from Washington State University magna cum laude and became a teacher at James Workman Middle School in 2005. She teaches sixth-grade language arts, social studies and video production.

She is a member of Computer Using Educators, the California Teachers Association, and the Kappa Delta Pi education honor society. She was teacher of the year for James Workman Middle School and Palm Springs Unified, won a DigiCom Film Festival classroom grant, and was honored at the California Student Media Festival in 2010.

Her students are "reading detectives, investigative reporters, budding historians and movie producers," she said. "They are innovators who seek creative solutions, debaters who support their thinking with evidence, and authors of original content that is shared with the world via my professional blog, a classroom Vimeo channel, and our class website."

Nominators said, "Mrs. Pack is persevering, deeply conscientious, professional, and hard working. She takes pride and ownership in the students and successes of James Workman Middle School."

Ashley Hayball attended Wittenberg University in Springfield Ohio. She has a Gifted and Talented credential from the University of Californian, Riverside, and a master's degree from Chapman University.

She started teaching 17 years ago and has worked for Desert Sands Unified since 2002. She was the Amelia Earhart and Desert Sands Unified teacher of the Year, and the International Baccalaureate Educator of the Year in 2012. "I strive to instill two things in all learners who pass through my classroom," she said. "A notion that they matter in this world, and an insatiable love for reading."

Nominators commended her for helping increase student academic achievement scores on state tests, building a creative school climate, including the first father/daughter dance, but also for being the kind

of teacher who will dress in costume and perform skits to recognize student success. They noted, "She is innovative, creative, and respected by her peers, students and parents."

The Riverside County Teachers of the Year completed an arduous application process requiring the candidates to spend time reflecting on and carefully defining their teaching philosophy. The county teachers of the year are selected on the basis of nominations by teachers, principals, and school district administrators throughout the county. Applications are then submitted to the County Office of Education, where an outside selection committee reviews the applications on each district candidate and selects the four finalists. The selection committee then conducts on-site classroom visitations for each finalist before the county superintendent announces the Riverside County Teachers of the Year.

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