

Life skills teacher honored by WalMart

Award surprises 25-year teaching veteran

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STAYTON – May 12 was an exciting day for Stayton High School Life-Skills Teacher Janey Dustin.

The teacher of 25 years – six of them spent at Stayton High School – was surprised with WalMart Corporation’s 2006 Local Teacher of the Year Award for her work in the classroom, at the end of Teacher Appreciation Week.



Photo by Kathleen Ellyn

Stayton High teacher Janey Dustin receives flowers and a pineapple from Nathan Kowarsky, assistant manager trainee at WalMart, during an assembly at Stayton High School.

“[The award] was a major surprise on my part,” Dustin said. “I had no idea, and when they announced that I had won, my hands went over my face. Some of my kids said that my face was so red.”

“I was told the nomination came from a parent, so it was pretty exciting,” she said.

Nominations for Teacher of the Year Awards generally come from members of the community, and while Dustin received numerous nominations, it was parent Kathy Hagon’s short letter describing the teacher as “very dedicated to giving special-needs kids an education,” that “secured her win,” said award presenter Training Coordinator Tina Lee of WalMart Store 5368.

Dustin’s work at Stayton High School as Life-Skills Teacher surrounds giving students with varying degrees of disabilities the basic skills they need to live, and sometimes get a job.

As part of the award, Dustin was presented with a \$100 gift card, an impressive \$1,000 for her classroom and a pineapple.

“Pineapples are symbols of friendship and welcoming,” said Dustin of the seemingly odd gift. “I brought [the pineapple] back to my classroom, cut it up and shared it with all of my kids.”

Amid the excitement surrounding her surprise award, Dustin said that, “This is a wonderful place to teach.”

“It’s just been incredible,” she said. “Everyone is so supportive, and the administration is great.”