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Press Release

COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE

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Anchorage Teacher Wins Milken Educator Award

ANCHORAGE -- Jenna White, a physical education teacher at Orion Elementary School on Joint Base Elmendorf Richardson in Anchorage, has received a Milken Educator Award, a prestigious national recognition. White, who was honored in a surprise ceremony this morning at her school, will receive \$25,000.

White teaches students the skills students need to succeed in life: goal-setting, team-building, reaching for your personal best and giving back to the community, the Milken Family Foundation said in a statement.

"I am pleased that the Milken Family Foundation once again has honored an Alaska educator with a prestigious Milken Educator Award. Congratulations to Jenna White!" said Alaska Education Commissioner Mike Hanley in a statement. "I am particularly pleased to see recognition for a physical education teacher. Ms. White's achievements demonstrate the importance of modeling healthy practices in school and the value of a complete education."

White shows students that physical fitness is an essential part of their lives. She transformed Orion's gym into an obstacle course, adding a climbing wall and incorporating themes like the holidays, the Olympics, and the Iditarod into her lessons. With White's help, students develop an expertise in many diverse skills such as juggling, cross-country skiing, ice-skating, fitness testing, gym hockey and Native skills. She also collaborates with the military to create activities based on real boot camp.

White's Human Ladder and River Crossing lesson brings students together in an effort to build teamwork, communication and problem-solving skills. She works with her students to set goals and offers unlimited support both during and after hours. She also maintains five sets of data for all of her students so she can gauge their progress and areas needing extra help. Her comprehensive website displays the students' various activities and charts their growth.

In addition, White encourages her students to be active outside of the classroom. Recently, she organized a challenging 26-mile bike ride for fifth graders that was so

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popular it's become an annual tradition. She also organizes a very popular Staff vs. sixth-grade basketball game and involves students in numerous community fundraising activities. According to Orion's teachers and staff, the social and emotional gains made during P.E. are evident elsewhere. The successes that students experience in P.E. give them the confidence and resilience they need to persevere and try harder, both academically and socially.

For more information about the Milken Educator Awards, visit www.MilkenEducatorAwards.org or call MFF at (310) 570-4775. Follow the awards at www.facebook.com/milkeneducatorawards, www.twitter.com/milken, and www.youtube.com/milkenaward.

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