



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**March 31, 2017**

## **Bob Williams Named to National Teachers Hall of Fame**

JUNEAU – Bob Williams, a longtime Mat-Su mathematics educator, is the first Alaskan to be inducted into the National Teachers Hall of Fame in Emporia, Kansas. He was selected by a national committee of educators, business leaders, and Hall of Fame members.

“I am overwhelmed with gratitude to my colleagues and my wonderful Algebra I, Geometry, and AP Calculus classes,” Mr. Williams said. “They played a large part in this award. It’s an honor to be the first Alaskan inducted. In my new role, I will work hard to make sure I am not the last. Being an Alaskan teacher is an awesome experience.”

Mr. Williams and four other inductees will be honored by ceremonies in Washington, D.C. in April and in Emporia in June. Inductees are permanently represented in the Hall of Fame by plaques and a framed biographical sketch. During their first year inductees also are represented by a display about their careers.

“Bob will be a tremendous asset to our Hall of Fame and we are excited to finally have someone representing Alaska in the NTHF Family of Educators,” said Carol Strickland, Executive Director of the National Teachers Hall of Fame. “It took 26 years, but you sent us a good one!”

Born and raised in Palmer, Mr. Williams has taught mathematics at Colony High School and Palmer High School, Houston Junior/Senior High School, Nome Beltz Junior/Senior High School, the New York City public schools, and in Gambia as a Peace Corps volunteer. He has mentored 19 Alaska teachers early in their career. Mr. Williams now serves as Director of Educator and School Excellence at the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development.

“When it comes to teaching Alaska students, Bob Williams is extraordinary,” added Tim Parker, President of NEA-Alaska. “Thousands of math students have benefited from Mr. Williams’ enthusiasm over his 29-year career. In his new position with the Department of Education and Early Development, he brings a focus on what works in the classroom.”

“We are excited to have Mr. Williams at the department,” said Alaska Education Commissioner Dr. Michael Johnson. “His long experience as a teacher who was dedicated to his students’ success makes him a perfect fit to support educator and school excellence statewide.”

In the classroom Mr. Williams is known for a high-energy teaching style -- even leading students in cheers and dances to reinforce a mathematical concept -- that generates enthusiasm for learning and motivates students to achieve excellence.

“Learning calculus for the first time is really frustrating and confusing, since you basically have to learn a new language of math,” said Colony High School student Cathelyne Powers. “Mr. Williams gave us a big support system though. He would come in an hour before school started on days before tests, to host extra review sessions.”

Mr. Williams has been a Teacher of the Year for Colony High School, the Mat-Su Borough School District, and Alaska. In 2009 he received a Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics Teaching from the National Science Foundation. In 2010 he won the Horace Mann Award for Excellence in Teaching from the NEA Foundation. Mr. Williams was one of 20 teachers nationwide selected as an Aspen Teacher Leader Fellow for 2012-2013.

See <http://www.nthf.org>. Mr. Williams can be reached at [bob.williams@alaska.gov](mailto:bob.williams@alaska.gov) or 907-465-2857.

###

