



NJDOE News

For More Information Contact the Public Information Office:

Richard Vespucci
Kathryn Forsyth, Director
609-292-1126

For Release: January 4, 2006

LOCAL INTEREST

Acting Commissioner Davy Honors Outstanding Students for Performance on GED Tests and Advanced Placement Exams

Acting Commissioner of Education Lucille E. Davy has honored three New Jersey students for their outstanding accomplishments. The students, their families and their school representatives were feted today at a student recognition luncheon held at Mercer County Community College.

The honored students are:

Eunice Kim, of Wayne, Passaic County and currently a freshman at George Washington University; **Andrew Schlafly**, a senior at Delbarton High School in Morristown; and **Veena Venkatachalam**, a graduate of Governor Livingston High School in Berkeley Heights and currently a freshman at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

"Eunice, Andrew and Veena have challenged themselves to excel at the highest levels," said Acting Commissioner Davy. "I urge them to continue to apply themselves in college, in their careers, and in their communities."

Davy reviewed the accomplishments of the students on Tuesday at a special ceremony held in their honor.

In receiving her high school diploma by taking the tests of General Educational Development (GED) to secure her high school diploma, Eunice Kim was flawless. She achieved a perfect score of 800 on all five GED tests for a total score of 4,000 points.

Rochelle Hendricks, director of the Department of Education's Office of Vocational-Technical, Career and Innovative Programs, said that the GED program continues to be a viable option for out-of-school youth and adults to obtain a high school diploma. She noted that several new GED test centers have opened in New Jersey in the past year. She also noted that with the alignment of New Jersey's passing scores on the GED to the national average, New Jersey has seen a significant increase in the number of candidates tested as well as an increase in the overall passing rates.

Andrew Schlafly and Veena Venkatachalam earned a special distinction as New Jersey's Advanced Placement Scholars for 2005. To qualify for this award, they had to take the greatest number of advanced placement exams while maintaining the highest average scores. Only 102 Advanced Placement Scholars are selected nationally each year.

"We commend Andrew and Veena for taking the toughest courses offered in their schools and for showing such a high level of mastery on the AP tests," said Acting Commissioner Davy. "It is truly an outstanding honor to be the top two advanced placement students from the entire state."

Hendricks noted that the number of AP exams taken by New Jersey students has increased by 37 percent over the past five years. "We will continue to work with partners like the College Board to ensure that many more students can demonstrate these levels of academic achievement, and we will continue to showcase and recognize those outstanding practices, programs and schools that achieve and sustain educational excellence and equity.

Also addressing the recognition luncheon were Maud Dahme, of Annandale, a member of the State Board of Education, and Robert Berezny, GED administrator in the Department of Education's Bureau of Adult Education and Family Literacy / GED.