



Rauner celebrates history education

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SPRINGFIELD – As hundreds of the state’s best students competed in Illinois History Day, Gov. Bruce Rauner honored one of the state’s best teachers by presenting the Governor’s Award to K.G. Yaunches of Carlyle Junior High School.

The annual award recognizes a teacher and school that display exceptional dedication not only to Illinois History Day but also to instilling a love of history and learning in students. Yaunches has done that for years, patiently showing his students how to delve into history, learn its lessons and share them with others.

Carlyle Junior High students consistently perform well in the Illinois History Day program, competing at the regional and state level in writing papers, creating exhibits, building websites, directing documentaries and giving performances.

“I am inspired by teachers like K.G. Yaunches, who invest countless hours into educating our future leaders,” Rauner said. “His dedication is proof that students do well when they have teachers who care.”

Yaunches has taught history, constitution and political science for 21 years. “He captivates students with his historical story-telling and prompts them to think deeply about political issues that influence our country today,” said Dustin Bilbruck, the Carlyle Junior High principal.

His involvement goes beyond the classroom. Yaunches also leads the Pledge of Allegiance over the intercom each day, teaches students to raise, lower and properly fold the flag and organizes the annual Veterans' Day Program in which nearly 100 local veterans visit the school.

Gov. Rauner presented the award at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum, which coordinates the program in partnership with the Chicago Metro History Fair, a program of the Chicago History Museum.

Roughly 850 students reached the state finals. The winners there will go on to compete at National History Day in Washington.

The student history contest began about 60 years ago in Illinois, with students submitting research papers to draw a top prize. Exhibits were added to the contest about 10 years later and now it includes a broad array of student activities.

The Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum (located at 212 N. Sixth St., Springfield) is dedicated to telling the story of America's 16th president through old-fashioned scholarship and modern technology.

The library holds an unparalleled collection of Lincoln books, documents, photographs, artifacts and art. The museum uses traditional exhibits, eye-catching special effects and innovative story-telling techniques to educate visitors.

It also has some 12 million items pertaining to all aspects of Illinois history, making the library one of the nation's leading institutions for genealogy and history research.

For more information, visit www.presidentlincoln.illinois.gov or follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).