

News Releases

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DeKalb Teacher Selected to Participate in AP Program Reading

DeKalb High School Social Studies teacher Judy Stafstrom was selected to participate in the annual reading and scoring of the College Board's Advanced Placement exams in AP Government and Politics. In June, Stafstrom spent seven days in Fort Collins, Colorado reading and scoring exams from students across the nation.

According to the College Board, approximately 2.3 million examinations in 20 disciplines were evaluated by more than 8,000 readers from universities and high schools. To qualify as readers, teachers must have taught AP Government for at least three years. Stafstrom will teach her fifth AP Government class this spring semester.

Readers spend about a day and a half on training, then meet in groups of six or seven readers. A group of readers read answers to only one essay question. There is a table leader who trains the readers on the question, and then each reader reads exams all day with a break for lunch. "Each reader reads probably 1,000 exams," Stafstrom said.

The AP Reading is a unique forum in which academic dialogue between secondary school and college educators is fostered and strongly encouraged. Stafstrom said meeting other educators and College Board members was a wonderful benefit from the experience. "The Reading draws upon the talents of some of the finest teachers and professors that the world has to offer," said Trevor Packer, Executive Director of the Advanced Placement Program at the College Board. "It fosters professionalism, allows for the exchange of ideas, and strengthens the commitment to students and to teaching. We are very grateful for the contributions of talented educators like Judy Stafstrom."

Stafstrom said she will use the reading experience to improve her teaching of AP Government and Politics this year. "When you learn how they score," she said, "you know how they develop the rubrics."

"We are extremely fortunate to have teachers such as Judy Stafstrom teaching our AP classes," said DeKalb principal Lindsey Hall. DeKalb High School currently offers eight Advanced Placement classes and anticipates adding AP Spanish in the next two years. "This program offers students the opportunity for our students to be exposed to a rigorous academic environment that requires hard work, higher level thinking skills and the opportunity to take AP tests in May that can earn college credit for these students. Our guidance counselors actively encourage all students to take AP classes, as these classroom experiences prepare our students for the college classroom. We recently received word from NIU that last year's seniors who are enrolled at NIU who took AP classes earned a cumulative total of 130 hours of college credit through the AP exams they took in May of 2006."