

Victor Worthington Among 15 Finalists Vying for Six \$100,000 Educational Grants from Farmers Insurance

Rochelle, Illinois (September 17, 2015) – Farmers InsuranceSM announced today that Victor Worthington of Rochelle Middle School in Rochelle has been named a finalist as part of the company's Thank America's Teachers Dream Big Teacher Challenge, awarding teachers for their ideas to help create a lasting and positive impact on their classrooms, schools, and communities.

Local Farmers agent Mark Gillis surprised Worthington with a visit to his school to share the news about being one of only 15 finalists in the running for one of six \$100,000 Dream Big Teacher Challenge grants from Farmers.

"I am so excited to have the honor of surprising Victor Worthington with the news that he is one step closer to winning a \$100,000 grant through Thank America's Teachers," said Mark Gillis, a local Farmers Insurance agent. "I invite the Rochelle community, the state of Illinois, and the entire nation to vote to help make Victors' proposal a reality."

Each teacher's proposal went through a competitive review process, and Worthington's proposal about developing a cutting edge STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Math) technology program for students was selected to move on to the voting phase of the Dream Big Teacher Challenge.

In April 2015, Rochelle was hit by a devastating EF4 tornado destroying many homes and farms in the area including the homes of several staff members from Rochelle Middle School. This district continues to face reductions in State aid. If Worthington were to win the \$100,000 Dream Big Teacher Challenge grant, he will use the money to develop a cutting edge STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Math) program for students that ties classroom learning to technology and mentorship from local business and agricultural leaders.

Beginning October 1, the finalists' proposals will be available for public voting at www.ThankAmericasTeachers.com. Everyone can vote for any of the 15 teacher proposals, but a person can only vote once for the same teacher proposal per day. Up to six \$100,000 educational grants will then be announced in December to the two proposals with the highest vote count per three geographical zones which include the Western Zone, Central Zone, and Eastern Zone.

In addition to voting, the public can visit www.ThankAmericasTeachers.com at any time to share their thanks for teachers who made a difference in their lives, and learn more about the program.

Launched at the 2015 Farmers Insurance Open in San Diego, California, Thank America's Teachers features an actual yellow school bus that is traveling coast-to-coast delivering opportunities to say thank you to teachers who give their time, talent and knowledge to ensure that our nation's children become smarter and better prepared for the future.

Through Thank America's Teachers, Farmers will give away more than \$1,000,000 to educators in 2015 and the public will help determine who receives the grants at www.ThankAmericasTeachers.com. Farmers will award 180 grants valued at \$2,500 throughout the year, in addition to the six \$100,000 Dream Big Teacher Challenge grants.

Farmers Insurance Group of Companies is a leading U.S. insurer group of automobiles, homes and small businesses and also provides a wide range of other insurance and financial services products. Farmers Insurance is proud to serve more than 10 million households with over 19 million individual policies across all 50 states through the efforts of over 50,000 exclusive and independent agents and approximately 22,000 employees. Farmers Insurance Exchange, the largest of the three primary insurance entities that make up the Farmers Insurance Group of Companies®, is ranked No. 264 on the 2015 Fortune 500 list of largest companies.

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