

WASHINGTON, DC- Congressman Steny H. Hoyer (D-MD) today attended a reception on Capitol Hill to honor the recipients of the Milken Education Award, including two from Maryland.

“I am delighted to be here today to recognize two remarkable teachers from my state,” Hoyer said. “Alexander C. Jaffurs, a calculus teacher at Patuxent High School and Kelly Smith, an English teacher at Dulaney High School, are each making invaluable contributions to the educational welfare of our communities.”

The Milken Education Foundation provides public recognition and financial rewards to elementary and secondary schoolteachers, principals and other education professionals who are furthering excellence in education. Conceived by Lowell Milken in the early 1980s, the Milken Educator Awards, called the “Oscars of Teaching” by Teacher Magazine, is the largest teacher recognition program in the United States.

“Teachers are the most important people in our society,” Hoyer said. “On a daily basis, they bring the dedication, passion, and caring nature that serve as a guiding force in helping our children develop into healthy, happy, and successful adults.”

Since taking charge of the school's Advanced Placement calculus program at Patuxent, Jaffurs has helped boost student scores on the AP test from 67 percent to 93 percent. In addition to encouraging success at the very top, Hoyer says Jaffurs has reached out to a broad coalition of students and faculty. “As both the math department chair and an AP consultant teacher, Alex has promoted staff development and provided extra instruction and encouragement for struggling ninth graders.”

Smith works with colleagues in her department, as well as teachers in science and social studies, to infuse critical reading, thinking and vocabulary skills across multiple areas of daily instruction. She helped develop Students Organized for Academic Success (SOAR), a program that provides support and assistance to challenged students who have demonstrated potential for academic success.

“Here in Washington, we talk a lot about big picture ways to improve student achievement,” Hoyer said. “The best way to accomplish this goal is to get more high quality teachers like Alex

and Kelly into our classrooms, especially those with the highest need.”

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