

Portsmouth Daily Times: ORVJCF teacher honored

Ryan Scott Ottney 9-13-11

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FRANKLIN FURNACE — Mary Latorre taught English for three years at the Ohio River Valley Juvenile Correctional Facility (ORVJCF) in Franklin Furnace. Just days after the facility was closed because of state budget cuts, Latorre has been selected by the Correctional Education Association of Ohio as its 2010 Region III Teacher of the Year.

Each year the Correctional Education Association of Ohio (CEAO) sponsors a Teacher of the Year award ceremony. Nomination forms are sent to members from the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction, Department of Youth Services, Ohio jails, Community Based Correctional Facilities, and participating universities and colleges. The five highest-scoring nominees become semi-finalists, and an interview panel questions each candidate.

Latorre was chosen as the CEAO Teacher of the Year, and she will represent Ohio at the National Correctional Education Association Region III Conference. She will compete against other state Teacher of the Year winners from Region III Chapters in Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, Ohio and Wisconsin.

Latorre has spent the last three years as an English teacher at the ORVJCF in Franklin Furnace, which was closed Sept. 10. She also teaches juvenile males at Tecumseh High School in the Buckeye United School District, which is part of the Ohio Department of Youth Services.

“I believe that students play the game by the rules teachers set up. If I set clearly articulated high standards, whether for behavior or academics, my students may gripe about them, may actively resist them and may believe the standards are impossibly high,” Latorre said. “However,

if I also continually assure them, 'You can do this,' the majority will eventually rise to the challenge. They may not be happy about it, they may not reach the standard for a long time or maybe not at all; but they will never be in doubt about what the standard is."

She graduated from Youngstown State University with a B.S. degree in Education, and she did student teaching in an inner city school in Youngstown. She has taught in a junior high with many migrant students in south Texas, taught in a rural district in central Ohio, and taught for two years in a British Curriculum School in Qatar.

In addition to Latorre, the CEAO 2010 Teacher of the Year Runner-Up was Leslie Scheper; and finalists were Gwen Williams, Thomas Brandon and Mary Ann Ruscin.