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Sequoia Middle School teacher Tammy DeVries is one of 10 educators across the nation selected as a finalist for the Escalante-Gradillas Prize for Best in Education, an award that shines a spotlight on educational leaders who exemplify the values, high expectations and characteristics of renowned Garfield High School teacher Jaime Escalante and its former principal, Henry Gradillas.

said DeVries, a Fontana Unified graduate who has taught more than 3,000 students over her 18-year career as a science teacher at her and her parents alma mater.

most renowned educators is a bonus. But most of my satisfaction comes from the kids who come back

The winner and runners-up for the prize will be announced Wednesday, Oct. 26.

Ms. DeVries has helped set the standard of what it takes to be an exceptional educator, acting as an example to her peers and inspiring her students to achieve excellence

Lorena Corona said. oud to call Ms. DeVries, a product of Fontana Unified, one of our own and we commend her for staying in her community and making a positive difference to everyone she

profound connection to her town has shaped the way she teaches and connects with her students, capturing the attention of researchers at Claremont Graduate University who recommended her for the award.

They were looking at teachers who work in low-income areas and having great success with student

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DeVries uses detailed instruction and engages in hands-on learning to ensure students have a grasp on the material. She also expects all students to maintain a B- or better. However, she credits the personal connection she makes with students as the biggest contributor to their success.

