

2006 HONOREE

## Kim Labinger

Thomas A. Edison Elementary, Glendale, CA  
Intermediate Elementary Education • 4th Grade



**Years Teaching:** 20

**Average Class Size:** 32

**Classes Taught Per Day:** N/A

**School's % of ESL Students:** 59%

**School Type:** Public, Large City

**Type of Class:** Self-contained

“My experience growing up in Asia created a special bond that I share with my students who come from 12 different countries, and not a day goes by that someone doesn't find or make a connection with a faraway land they call home. As my students and I immerse ourselves in the history of California, we discover the history of ourselves and our journeys, and these unearthed nuggets of gold find places of honor on a giant wall map that the students themselves draw and add to throughout each year. Self-defeat turns into self-empowerment and students discover something new about themselves and each other. My classroom is an active place where differences are honored and where ideas are presented and challenged in an environment of trust and respect. It is where solutions to problems are sought and celebrated and where the inevitable rough spots are met with the recognition that they, too, are the stuff of learning and growth. It is a place where we often come to the conclusion that we are not so different from each other after all. Teaching is an act of love and courage – an art that carries with it great and grave responsibility.”

“Affecting change in the life of a child is a sacred privilege and not one to be taken lightly. It is not the formulas on the page, the cadence of the words in a book, or the tests at the end of it all



that hold the key to learning. Rather it is a teacher's passion for the subject, the art of delivery, the reciprocity between teacher and taught, and the ability to link lessons to life that unlatches the door, reveals the mystery, and compels the pupil to travel on. Teachers have but a blink of an eye to take a lifetime of study and experience and shape it into lessons to be passed on, hoping the hard-earned treasure will be wisely spent.”

“Success is measured in part by test scores, classroom participation, and projects. Much more important to Kim, however, is the lasting impression of learned material, and evidence that learning how to learn has been accomplished, and, that most of all, there is a desire to pursue knowledge. Often this can't be seen within the confines of one year, so Kim places importance in keeping in touch with students, some well into adulthood. What Kim most measures as success is when former students recall the moments when something they performed, learned, debated, sung, or designed made an impact on their lives.”

– Michael F. Escalante, superintendent,  
Glendale Unified School District

### OTHER HIGHLIGHTS:

California State Teacher of the Year (2005) • Teacher of the Year - Los Angeles County and Glendale USD (2005) • Award for California State Teacher of the Year - Glendale Educational Foundation Recognition (2005) • Educator of the Year - Glendale Lion's Club (2002) • Masonic Recognition Award (2000, 1990) • Who's Who Among America's Teachers (1994) • John Delmonte Teacher of the Year Award - Glendale Chamber of Commerce (1990)