



Arkansas Department of Education

Division of Elementary and Secondary Education

Johnny Key, Secretary

Dr. Ivy Pfeffer, Deputy Commissioner

August 4, 2020

CONTACT: Kimberly Mundell

PHONE: (501) 683-4788

kimberly.mundell@arkansas.gov

Neil Oatsvall Named 2020 Arkansas History Teacher of the Year

LITTLE ROCK — Neil Oatsvall, a teacher at the Arkansas School for Mathematics, Sciences, and the Arts, has been named the 2020 Arkansas History Teacher of the Year by the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History.

The institute, which promotes the knowledge and understanding of American history through educational programs and resources, honors one K-12 teacher from each state, the District of Columbia, Department of Defense schools, and U.S. territories each year. One of these winners will be named the 2020 National History Teacher of the Year this fall.

"As a student, I always enjoyed learning about Arkansas, American, and world history," Arkansas Department of Education Secretary Johnny Key said. "Not only did I appreciate learning about our ancestors, I realized that learning about our past is essential to paving a positive future. Mr. Oatsvall is one of the many critical educators who help our young students do just that. I congratulate him on being named the 2020 Arkansas History Teacher of the Year and know his students greatly benefit from his expertise, passion for history, and commitment to education."

Oatsvall is a history and social science teacher at ASMSA, where he also serves as chair of the Humanities and Fine Arts Department. He completed his undergraduate work at the University of North Carolina in Asian studies and history and received a master's degree in history from North Carolina State University and a doctorate in history from the University of Kansas. Oatsvall has published articles in various publications including *Agricultural History*, *Environment and History*, and *Gastronomica: The Journal of Critical Food Studies*. His book manuscript is under advanced contract with the University of Alabama Press.

Oatsvall will receive a \$1,000 award, and his school will receive a core archive of American history books and Gilder Lehrman educational materials.

Nominations for the 2021 History Teacher of the Year are now open. Students, parents, colleagues, and supervisors may nominate K-12 teachers for the award by visiting <https://bit.ly/2XsbEbp>. The deadline for 2021 nominations is March 31, 2021.

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