



Arkansas Department of Education

Johnny Key, Commissioner

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Jessica Brown Named 2019 Arkansas History Teacher of the Year

LITTLE ROCK — Jessica Brown, a teacher at Parkers Chapel High School in the Parkers Chapel School District, has been named the 2019 Arkansas History Teacher of the Year, an award presented annually by the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History.

Each year 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. The National History Teacher of the Year will be announced in October from the pool of state winners.

"This prestigious award represents one of the highest honors a history teacher can receive," Arkansas Department of Education Secretary Johnny Key said. "I commend Ms. Brown for her dedication to history and for helping her students learn and appreciate the past. Not only does Ms. Brown share the importance of learning with her students, she does so in a way that is engaging and educational. I thank her for her hard work and congratulate her for this high honor."

Brown has been an American history and psychology teacher at Parkers Chapel High School since she began teaching 12 years ago. Recently, her students produced a documentary on the Japanese internment in Arkansas titled *Forgetting Ourselves*. This documentary was produced as part of a civic engagement project for the Arkansas Declaration of Learning program, which gives educators the opportunity to create innovative units and lesson plans using historical objects and art from state and national museums.

Brown also inspires her students to recognize the power of student voice and action in changing communities and the world and uses historical events and their implications as a vehicle for critical thought and engagement.

In addition to a \$1,000 award Brown will receive, her school will receive a core archive of American history books, Gilder Lehrman educational materials, and recognition at a ceremony in Arkansas.

Nominations for the 2020 History Teacher of the Year awards are now open. Students, parents, colleagues, and supervisors may nominate K-12 teachers for the award by visiting <https://www.gilderlehrman.org/content/national-history-teacher-year>. The deadline for nominations is March 31, 2020.

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