

## **Alumni Pride: Top teacher touts education**

**by Natalie Johnson - Thursday, June 14, 2012**

<http://www.uwosh.edu/today/19488/alumni-pride-top-teacher-touts-education/>

For University of Wisconsin alumna Leah Lechleiter-Luke '92, the entire state has been her classroom in recent years as she has represented Wisconsin and the nation as a top educator.

The English and Spanish teacher at Mauston High School is one of five UW Oshkosh alumni who will receive the Distinguished Alumni Award at a reception and dinner Oct. 12, at Reeve Memorial Union. The event is open to the public.

Lechleiter-Luke has a bachelor's degree in secondary education /English from UWO as well as a master's in secondary education from Viterbo University.

She began her teaching career at Brookwood Junior /Senior High School in Ontario, Wis., and has been at Mauston since 1999, where she has advised the National Honor Society, Link Crew (student-to-student peer mentoring), Spanish Club and Key Club.

In spring 2009, she received a Kohl Fellowship Award from the Herb Kohl Educational Foundation. That fall, she was named Wisconsin High School Teacher of the Year. Then she was selected from a pool of five finalists to represent Wisconsin teachers in the National Teacher of the Year Program, sponsored by Council of Chief State School Officers.

During her year as Wisconsin State Teacher of the Year, she traveled the nation learning about and speaking on behalf of public education.

In 2011, she was selected by the U.S. Department of Education to be a Classroom Teaching Ambassador Fellow for one year.

"In this capacity, I have convened listening sessions for the Department of Education (DoED) across Wisconsin, Minnesota and Illinois, facilitated presentations at a national Labor Management Conference, assisted with the first-ever Race to the Top Convening in Washington D.C., written blog posts for the DoED, presented Blue Ribbon Schools Awards and accompanied senior DoED staff members as they toured K-12 school facilities and listened to presentations by wrap around services, such as United Way," she said.

Although her recent success has been rewarding, Lechleiter-Luke is most proud of having been named the 2006 Wisconsin-Upper Michigan Key Club Advisor of the Year.

"My work as Wisconsin Teacher of the Year and Teaching Ambassador Fellow and advocating for the profession through media interviews pales in comparison to the work I do with kids," she said.

She credits UWO with providing her with a strong foundation to succeed.

“I was unmotivated and an underachiever in high school—I nearly did not apply to college. As an undergrad, I learned to believe in myself and in my potential. Early successes gave me the drive to reach for bigger things,” she said.

For more information about the alumni awards dinner or Homecoming 2012, please contact the Alumni Relations office at (920) 424-3449 or email [alumni@uwosh.edu](mailto:alumni@uwosh.edu) for information.

Read more:

- [2012 UWO alumni award winners named](#)
- [Alumna gathers local input for Department of Education](#)
- [Alumna named Teaching Ambassador Fellow](#)
- [Alumni featured in statewide ad campaign](#)