



P R E S S R E L E A S E

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BCIU Teacher Wins National Teacher of the Year Award

Cindy Mock, a service consultant and teacher of the visually impaired for the Berks County Intermediate Unit, was recently recognized with a national Teacher of the Year award. The award was presented by the Council for Exceptional Children Division on Visual Impairments at its international conference in Boston on April 3, 2008.

Ms. Mock, who was nominated for the award by a colleague, Ms. Megan Marnien, was recognized for her leadership as a teacher and leader in working with children who are blind or have vision loss. She was cited as being an advocate for children with visual impairments and their families and for being a mentor to student teachers and other professionals in the field. Ms. Mock develops relationships with community professionals, including eye doctors, in order to gain support for the children in the program.

“Cindy is constantly finding new ways to educate parents, colleagues, specialists, and teachers throughout the community on how to teach children with visual impairments,” said Ms. Marnien, service consultant for BCIU’s Early Intervention (EI) program. “She goes above and beyond to best meet the individual needs of every child she serves. Her wealth of knowledge on how to teach children with visual impairments is endless.”

Both her colleagues and supervisors have noticed Ms. Mock’s knowledge, caring nature, and dedication to her students.

“Cindy has endless energy and she really cares about her students and their families. She works diligently with them (the families) in specialized classrooms or with students in community early care and education sites,” said Mia Pietsch, project administrator, EI. “She is extremely knowledgeable and provides creative, practical, and functional strategies and accommodations that support students’ participation in their educational program. Many colleagues value Cindy’s support and expertise and they recognize that the ideas and strategies she offers improves the quality of programming for all students.”

After graduating from Kutztown University with a degree in elementary education and vision, Ms. Mock taught for one year at the BCIU in the early 1990s. She spent the next 13 years at the Overbrook School for the Blind in Philadelphia before returning to the BCIU in 2005.

“I was completely surprised, not only by winning the award, but for being nominated. I didn’t have any idea that I had been nominated,” said Ms. Mock. “It’s a nice feeling, and I am happy to represent vision teachers. I love my job, and I hope I can continue to work to enhance and develop the BCIU Early Intervention vision program.”