

# News Release

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**Electric Cooperatives  
of Arkansas**

## **Hampton teacher named Rural Teacher of the Year**

**Little Rock, Ark.** — Sept. 16, 2011 — Mindy Brinkman, a math teacher at Hampton High School, is the 2011 Rural Teacher of the Year. The designation is presented by the Arkansas Rural Education Association and sponsored by the Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas.

Brinkman, who holds a bachelor's degree in mathematics and a master's degree in gifted and talented education, has taught since 2001. She joined the staff at Hampton High School in 2009, where she teaches geometry, eighth- grade mathematics and college algebra.

"A few of the most vital qualities that a teacher should cultivate are responsibility, respect and a love for learning," she said. "One of the greatest joys of teaching mathematics is watching a student realize that they really can succeed in mathematics."

She was instrumental in the creation of a pre-school day mathematics tutoring program at Hampton High School. Brinkman and other mathematics instructors meet with students to provide tutoring when needed. The program is entering its second year.

According to Brinkman, it is difficult to take the time in class to help a struggling student when everyone else is ready to keep moving. She simply asks students that need assistance to attend a tutoring session. "Most students respond positively to this and do indeed show up for tutoring," she said.

Hampton High School Principal Glenn Johnston, a second generation educator, said that Brinkman has the "teacher's touch" for connecting with her students. "We were impressed with her from the beginning," he said.

Brinkman chooses to teach at a rural school for many reasons, including the class sizes, support from parents and the ability to closely monitor the students learning styles.. "I like standing in the hall between classes and knowing almost every single student that walks down that hall," she said. "I love getting to know my students and their unique personalities.

"Raising children is a team effort," she said. "I want parents to realize that we are all of the same side and that we must work together for the benefit of the children"

Brinkman and her husband, Eric, have three children, Jake, 6; Madilyn, 3; and Lyla, 2.

The Rural Teacher of the Year Award winner is selected based on the quality and depth of answers to questions in the following categories: professional biography, educational, history, professional development, community involvement, philosophy of teaching, education issues and trends, and the teaching profession.

The Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas comprise 17 electric distribution cooperatives; Arkansas Electric Cooperatives Inc. (AECI), a Little Rock-based cooperative that provides various services to the distribution cooperatives; and Arkansas Electric Cooperative Corp. (AECC), a generation and transmission cooperative. The distribution cooperatives provide electricity to more than 500,000 members, or customers, in Arkansas and surrounding states.

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