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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

COLEMAN HONORS EDUCATORS OF THE YEAR

Top educators recognized for their contributions to teaching

Kent, Ohio (March 20, 2007) – The Coleman Foundation, located in Kent, Ohio, will present five Portage County teachers with Educator of the Year awards for their exceptional achievements in education. The event will be held Thursday, March 22 at the Aurora High School.

The awards are given in five categories to honor the educators for their excellent teaching skills and abilities to inspire their students. Each recipient demonstrated a dedication to students' total development and acts as a mentor to both their students and to other teachers.

The 2007 winners are: Teresa Graves of Southeast Local Schools (Pre-School to Middle School Award–sponsored by HFP/Ambuske Architects); Dr. Jon Secaur of Kent City Schools (High School Award sponsored by Portage Community Bank); Dr. Linda Rea of Hiram College (College/University Award sponsored by the Hiram Professional Building: Ken Pike & David Auble of Ohio Health Benefits, Kevin Painley & Elizabeth S. Tomasko, Attorney at Law and George J. Randall, CPA); Marc Stroom of Crestwood Local Schools (Non-Traditional Educator Award sponsored by the Record-Courier Newspaper); and Pat Mazzer of Kent State University (Lifetime Achievement Award sponsored by the Burbick Foundation). AVI Food Systems sponsored the event.

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\$1,000 is awarded to each recipient for their contributions to education and for all they do for young people. A short video will be shown about each educator and will feature interviews with students, fellow teachers and the person that nominated them for the award. The master of ceremonies for the awards will be Ann Womer Benjamin, the newly appointed executive director for the Northeast Ohio Council on Higher Education (NOCHE).

Now in its sixth year, the event was started to honor outstanding local educators that demonstrate compassion, understanding and respect for young people. Another goal of the event is to raise awareness of the mental health issues that affect youths and to raise money to help support mental health programs and services for children and adolescents.

All of the award winners are recognized for their willingness to go the extra mile to help their students. They engage in life-long learning and serve as role models for their students and in their communities. Without exception, the educators state that they can't imagine doing anything else in their careers. Teaching is the most rewarding profession they can ever imagine doing.

The Coleman Foundation is a philanthropic organization that is designed to support children, families and older adults facing mental health and rehabilitation challenges. The foundation supports Coleman Professional Services and other organizations that provide excellence in advocacy, leadership and education in mental health and rehabilitation services.

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