

Arch Coal Foundation Honors 12 West Virginia Classroom Teachers With Prestigious Teacher Achievement Awards

CHARLESTON, W. Va., March 5, 2012 /PRNewswire/ -- The Arch Coal Foundation honored 12 outstanding West Virginia classroom teachers today with Arch Coal Teacher Achievement Awards. It is the state's longest running, privately sponsored teacher recognition program.

Announcement of the teachers receiving a 2012 Arch Coal Teacher Achievement Award was made by Steven F. Leer, Arch Coal chairman and chief executive officer. He was accompanied by West Virginia Governor Earl Ray Tomblin and West Virginia Education Association (WVEA) President Dale Lee.

The 2012 Arch Coal Teacher Achievement Award recipients are:

Dr. Teresa Baxter	North Marion High School	Farmington
Tabby Beall	Gilmer County High School	Glenville
Linda L. Berg	Scott Teays Elementary School	Scott Depot
Mary K. Blaker	Parkersburg High School	Parkersburg
Teresa D. Brown	Craigsville Elementary School	Craigsville
Lee Anne Burton	Monongah Elementary School	Monongah
Sonda Folk Cheesebrough	North Elementary School	Morgantown
Bill Gibson	Morgantown High School	Morgantown
Sheila B. Leach	Huntington High School	Huntington
Mary McClure	Cabell Midland High School	Ona
Connie McClung	Nicholas County Career Technical	
Scarbrough	Center	Craigsville
Debra A. Sowards	Scott Teays Elementary	Scott Depot

"We predict that Arch Coal will need to hire almost 2,000 new employees in the next five years as global energy markets surge once again," said Leer. "About half of those new employees will be in West Virginia. We're counting on these award-winning teachers and their colleagues to make sure that the students who come through their classes are well-educated and well-prepared. Arch Coal and the rest of the business community owe a huge debt of gratitude to great teachers – and we will be relying on them to an even greater degree in the future.

"With excellent classroom teachers, our children learn to compete and excel in today's increasingly complex world," said Leer. "The teachers we honor as Achievement Award recipients are examples of the best of the best educators in the state's classrooms, and they deserve our thanks and admiration."

"The power of education is demonstrated through the lasting positive impact our teachers have on our young people," said Gov. Tomblin. "The knowledge and wisdom our teachers impart daily serve as a guiding light that enables our young people to realize their diverse talents and interests. I am pleased that Arch Coal continues to support education in West Virginia, and it is with great pleasure that I congratulate this year's award recipients. Your dedication has truly made all the difference and our young people are better prepared because of it."

"WVEA is pleased to once again partner with Arch Coal for the Teacher Achievement Awards," said Lee. "It is refreshing to find a corporation such as Arch Coal that understands the value of teaching and the dedication of West Virginia's teachers to the academic success of their students. It is even rarer to find one that is willing to create and finance a program to honor those teachers. WVEA wants to thank Arch Coal and all the outstanding teachers throughout the state of West Virginia for their commitment to public education."

The 12 teachers collectively have more than 250 years of classroom experience, one doctorate, 10 masters, and numerous additional years of post-graduate studies. Arch Coal Foundation officials said almost 600 nominations were made. The public nominates teachers, and a blue-ribbon panel of the teachers' peers – previous recipients of the award – review applications and make the award selections each year.

In addition to recognition, Teacher Achievement awardees receive a \$3,500 unrestricted cash award, a distinctive trophy and a classroom plaque. The West Virginia Foundation for the Improvement of Education, a foundation of WVEA, makes a \$1,000 award to each recipient's school, for use with at-risk students.

The teacher recognition awards are underwritten by the Arch Coal Foundation and supported in program-promotion by the West Virginia Department of Education, the WVEA and the West Virginia Library Commission. The Arch Coal Foundation also supports teacher recognition or grant programs in Wyoming, Utah and Colorado, as well as a number of other education-related causes.

U.S.-based Arch Coal, Inc. (NYSE:ACI) is a top five global coal producer and marketer, and the most diversified American coal company, with mining complexes across every major U.S. coal supply basin. In 2011, Arch continued to lead the U.S. coal industry in safety performance and environmental compliance among large, diversified producers. In West Virginia, Arch Coal subsidiaries operate mining complexes at Beckley; Buckhannon (Imperial); Cowen (Eastern); Grafton (Tygart); Holden (Coal-Mac); Morgantown (Patriot); Philippi (Sentinel); and Sharples (Mountain Laurel).

SOURCE Arch Coal, Inc.

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