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Teachers feted at luncheon

By ANNETE DARLING
Reporter

The East Texas Regional Collaboratives for Excellence in Science Teaching honored area teachers Thursday.

The luncheon was held at the Roy H. Laird Country Club with Senator Bill Ratliff as the keynote speaker. Sen. Ratliff said he was flattered and honored to be the keynote speaker.

"I came from a generation where DNA was probably a typographical error " he said. He related stories of when he was in school, and how much his teachers affected his future. He described situations with teachers which led him to becoming an engineer.

"If it hadn't been for them, I might have been a lawyer for gosh sakes," Sen. Ratliff joked.

He congratulated teachers for their efforts, dedication, and work, adding that their techniques in teaching will serve students in their life.

"Your influence will never end," he said.

Region VII Collaborative Director Nita Beth Camp spoke of teachings in the past where all that was needed was a book and students.

In order for science to have meaning for children, it must be done with a hands-on, experimental method, she said.

Mrs. Camp said the organization was started about five years ago by Kamil A. Jbeily, director of the Texas Regional Collaborative.

"The Collaborative indeed has produced some very strong, very fine science

Dr. Jbeily, a graduate of the University of Texas in Austin, said that Sen. Ratliff's mere presence was a clear indication of leadership provided in the organization. It's that state leadership that we are extremely proud of," he said.

Dr. Jbeily is originally from Lebanon, and said he came to America because it is a land of opportunity.

He added that the collaborative uses opportunity to grow and develop through the teachers with training, mentoring, and professional development.

"You, the teachers, are the key and we are committed to serving you," he said.

Southwestern Bell sponsored the "Honoring the Teachers" event.

Anita Meyer, external affairs area manager of Southwestern Bell in Tyler, said the company would provide \$200,000 over the next three years to support development for over 6,000 science teachers.

"Teachers are truly the heart of the education system," she said.

Other speakers included Grace Shore with the State Board of Education and Janet Russell of the Texas Education Agency.


teachers," she said. "Teachers don't get honored enough."

Eddie Little, executive director for Region VII ESC greeted guests and area teachers. He said science teaching is extremely important, and teachers should be congratulated on the time they dedicate to their work.

"You are important and integral to the children in East Texas," he said.

Mayor Bin Wilson welcomed everyone to the event.

"My intelligence has increased by 200 percent just by sitting in this room with you today," he said.

 See [Slides for the Honoring the Teachers Event](#)

[<Back>](#) [<Dr. Jbeily's Homepage>](#)
[<Collaborative's Homepage>](#)

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