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**Contact: Jennifer Robinson
303.376.8830**

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December “9Teachers Who Care” Award Announced

Congratulations to Lafayette’s Ryan Elementary School’s Janet Stellema

Lafayette, CO – 9NEWS and CollgeInvest are pleased to honor Janet Stellema, the math and science coordinator at Ryan Elementary Math and Science Focus School in Lafayette, with the December “9Teachers Who Care” award.

Stellema makes math and science come alive to the students at Ryan Elementary. She takes a hands-on approach whether she is sponsoring an after-school science club, bringing in guest speakers, or sharing her own adventures and applying them to classroom learning.

Deborah Quinn, a Ryan Elementary parent and president of the PTA, nominated Stellema for the 9Teachers Who Care award for her hard work and enthusiasm. “It has been a long time since I have heard or seen a teacher that has Janet’s dedication to the students, parents, staff and school. No matter what is asked of her, she gives 200%,” Quinn wrote.

Quinn praises Stellema’s efforts beyond the classroom. Stellema can be found at Ryan Elementary after hours helping out with various clubs, meetings or students. During the PTA nights at Ryan Elementary, Stellema engages the students by conducting science experiments while the parents are meeting.

Stellema’s contributions can be felt in the community, as well. She pioneered a program at Ryan connecting University of Colorado School of Engineering graduate students and Ryan students. The graduate students help the elementary school students apply their math and science skills to engineering projects. Stellema also has created a program for guest speakers from local hospitals to come and share their knowledge with the students.

In the summer of 2005, Ryan Elementary became a math and science focus school and Stellema was instrumental in making the program a success. “The focus program has been a success from the beginning, and Janet Stellema is the major reason for this success,” said Ryan Elementary principal Jim Armitage. “Under the direction of teacher Janet Stellema, math and science do ‘ROCK’ at Ryan Math and Science Focus School.”

The “9Teachers Who Care” award was created by 9NEWS and CollegeInvest in 2001 to recognize and profile educators who are making a difference. The program was designed to highlight the positive stories and outcomes that are happening in Colorado classrooms every day.

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Anyone can nominate a teacher for the 9Teachers Who Care award. Nomination forms can be downloaded from the Education Page or the Community Page on www.9news.com or requested by calling 303-871-1899.

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