

News Release

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OEA Honors Community Members for Their Support of Public Education

On April 25, Oregon Education Association (OEA), the state's largest public school employee organization, honored the **Business Education Compact (BEC)** with the **OEA Education Citizen of the Year Award**.

The **OEA Education Citizen of the Year Award** recognizes individuals or organizations that have made a significant contribution to, or impact on, public education in Oregon. It is the Association's highest honor for a non-member.

The BEC is a non-profit that helps businesses and schools work together by providing effective, success-driven programs that meaningfully engage students, educators, and businesses. BEC's mission is to connect the classroom and workplace with hands-on, innovative learning experiences for students and teachers; to create and lead working partnerships with business and education; and to advocate for quality education in Oregon.

The OEA also honored **Norrine Smokey-Smith** with the **Ed Elliot Human Rights Award** for making a sustained contribution to human and civil rights in Oregon.

Over the last three decades, Smokey-Smith has been an activist in Indian affairs. She began as an elementary school teacher and culminated her career as the Title 7 Indian Education Project Coordinator at Portland Public Schools.

Smokey-Smith has served as a board member for the Oregon Indian Education Association and on the National Indian Coalition. She has organized the Native Youth Network and is a co-founder of the Native American Rehabilitation Association of the Northwest.

The OEA Awards Banquet concludes OEA's annual Representative Assembly, which drew more than 800 public school employees from throughout Oregon to set the Association's policy for the coming year. OEA represents 48,000 public school employees (preK-12 teachers, community college faculty, and education support professionals) throughout the state and is an affiliate of the 3.2 million-member National Education Association (NEA).

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