

FREMD HIGH SCHOOL TEACHER STEVE ELZA IS FINALIST FOR 2015 ILLINOIS TEACHER OF THE YEAR



Elza, who has worked at Fremd High School for seven years, is one of 12 finalists for 2015 Illinois Teacher of the Year.

When Steve Elza, applied technology teacher at Fremd High School, first heard about being a 2015 Illinois Teacher of the Year finalist, he was speechless.

“I have a passion for what I do with the kids and seeing them succeed, and when someone else sees that passion and says ‘you’re doing a great job and we appreciate what you do,’ it really validates what we all do here. It’s pretty amazing.”

Elza, who has worked at Fremd High School for seven years, is one of 12 finalists for 2015 Illinois Teacher of the Year. The State Board annually sponsors the “Those Who Excel” awards to honor individuals who have made significant contributions to the state’s public and non-public schools, and each year selects a Teacher of the Year from a list of outstanding candidates.

An honor like this is one that Elza said is surreal. He said it is a great honor to be recognized for his passion of teaching students because he is doing what he loves to do. He added that sometimes it’s easy for teachers to be unaware of the impact education might have on students, and moments like this validate the job teachers do.

“Anyone who knows me knows that I truly enjoy my job. I love working with students and being able to share my passion for the automotive field with my students is why I do this,” he said. “Fremd is an amazing place to work – from administration and student services, to other teachers – I truly believe we have a family atmosphere

here.”

In addition to Elza, District 211 will be well-represented among recipients in the 2014-2015 Illinois State Board of Education’s “Those Who Excel” education awards program.

High School District 211 Those Who Excel award candidates include (listed alphabetically):

- Secretary to the Superintendent Sally Cimmarusti (educational service personnel category)
- Schaumburg High School Head Librarian Susan Elk (student support personnel category)
- William Fremd High School Applied Technology Teacher Steve Elza (classroom teacher category; 2015 Illinois Teacher of the Year finalist)
- District 211 Academy-North Teacher Dane Henning (early career educator category)
- James B. Conant High School Assistant Principal Robert Small (school administrator category)
- Hoffman Estates High School SOAR Core Committee (team category)

“Those Who Excel” award recipients will be honored by the Illinois State Board of Education, and the 2015 Illinois Teacher of the Year will be named, at the “Those Who Excel” awards banquet on Saturday, October 25, in Bloomington, Ill.