



TSTA NEWS

TEXAS STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

316 W. 12th St., Austin, TX 78701 • 877-ASK-TSTA • www.tsta.org • Fax 512-486-7049

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Contact: Clay Robison

512.476.5355, ext. 1233; clayr@tsta.org

Cell: 512.535.8994

TSTA member chosen as National Teacher of the Year

Shanna Peeples, an English teacher at Palo Duro High School in Amarillo, has been named the 2015 National Teacher of the Year by the Council of Chief State School Officers. Peeples, a member of the Texas State Teachers Association and its Amarillo Education Association affiliate, will serve for one year as a full-time national and international spokesperson for public education.

“Shanna serves as a great example of how teachers transform the lives of their students every day,” said TSTA President Noel Candelaria. “Shanna’s ability to motivate and instill a love of learning among her students—regardless of her students’ backgrounds or the language they speak— is the reason Shanna and thousands of other teachers like her have earned the respect of Americans who appreciate the great work teachers do every day in every community in our great nation.”

Peeples, a veteran of 12 years in the classroom, worked as a disc jockey, medical assistant, pet sitter and journalist before becoming a teacher, a profession that she says eventually chose her. She taught seventh grade English Language Arts for about six years before moving to high school. Peeples teaches AP English and serves as the English department chair as well as an instructional coach for other teachers.

“My students, survivors of deep and debilitating trauma, have shaped the kind of teacher I am,” said Peeples. “They have taught me to never make a promise I can’t keep because so many already have learned to see the world through suspicious eyes. To be the best teacher to them, I have to remember this and honor their background. I remember so I can gain their trust because I want them to read and write their way out of where they are.”