

UCS honors top educators

Teacher of the Year receives two-year vehicle lease

By **Emilee Gorshe**

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EMILEE GORSHE — THE SOURCE

Zita Burton of Havel Elementary School finds out she's the Teacher of the Year and learns that she will be receiving a free two-year lease of the vehicle of her choice from The Suburban Collection.

administrators.

Each was presented with an engraved teardrop-shaped glass award, but only one was awarded a free two-year lease from The Suburban Collection and given the title "Teacher of the Year."

"The 2017 Teacher of the Year has a tireless energy and is committed to students and their success," UCS Supt. Christine Johns

said. "UCS is a community with very deep roots. We are proud of those roots. This teacher reflects and symbolizes these roots in multiple ways."

After Johns announced that Burton, who has worked as a teacher for 40 years, was the UCS Teacher of the Year, Burton was completely overwhelmed by the announcement.

Burton, who expressed

her appreciation as she talked about what a spectacular feeling it is to be a teacher that day and every day, selected a 2017 black Mustang as her vehicle for the free two-year lease.

The Suburban Collection's "Teacher of the Year Program" celebrates exceptional teachers who contribute so much to the development of students through-

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Utica Community Schools honored its three Teachers of the Year finalists with a presentation on March 22, and one of them walked away with exciting news - and, soon enough, new keys. For her recognition as Teacher of the Year, the Suburban Collection awarded Zita Burton of Havel Elementary School with a free vehicle lease for two years. Burton, Nicole West of Jeannette Junior High School and Scott Spry of the Utica Center for Science and Industry were recognized for their hard work and dedication during the award ceremony at the Community Education Center at Walsh, 38901 Dodge Park Road. A video presentation featuring compliments from current and past students and fellow teachers at their schools was played during the ceremony, further honoring and appreciating them, according to district



PHOTOS BY EMILEE GORSHE — THE SOURCE

Nicole West of Jeannette Junior High School (left) and Scott Spry of the Utica Center for Science and Industry were among the three teachers nominated for the Utica Community Schools Teacher of the Year award.

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out metropolitan Detroit communities.

"We've done (this) for the past seven years," said James Elder II, general sales manager at Suburban Ford of Sterling Heights. "Utica Community Schools - there's no better organization to support and that they support us. It's a tradition now."

This year, nine metropolitan Detroit-area teachers will be awarded vehicle leases.



James Elder II (left), general sales manager at Suburban Ford of Sterling Heights, stands with Zita Burton of Havel Elementary School and UCS Supt. Christine Johns after announcing Burton as the Teacher of the Year and presenting her with a free two-year vehicle lease from The Suburban Collection.

For a photo gallery from this event, visit sourcenewspapers.com.