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[Moore, Voiles each win regional Teacher of the Year honors](#)

Earlier this year, three Hamblen County teachers were announced as the District-Wide Teachers of the Year and were paid a surprise visit from the central office "Prize Patrol" formed of administration and staff and board members carrying cake and balloons.

Tuesday afternoon, the same group of celebrants gathered again and set off to congratulate two of those three teachers who were named Tennessee CORE Teachers of the Year for the First Tennessee District, Derek Voiles and Brandon Moore.

"It's a great day here in Hamblen County," director of schools Dr. Dale Lynch said. "We have two outstanding teachers that are representing the teaching profession, not only here in Hamblen County, but also across the entire state. There will not be two finer teachers of the year in Tennessee than these two that have been chosen.

"We're very honored and proud of the work they do every single day, and I just want to say congratulations to them and to the administration of the school. I think the culture the administration has cultivated at both of these schools is second to none," he said. "Mr. Voiles and Mr. Moore are two of the most outstanding teachers we have. I'm excited for them, and I'm proud of them, too."

Voiles is a seventh grade language arts teacher at Lincoln Heights Middle School. He is in his sixth year as an educator and said the mentoring partnerships he has created along the way are what have allowed him to receive this honor.

"I'm just so thankful for the support of the administration and of the people from this district who have continually poured into me and have allowed me to develop professionally in the district and in this school," he said. "I've grown, not only as a teacher, but also as a leader."

During his time in education, Voiles has served as a Tennessee Department of Education Core Coach, an SRSE national presenter and a 2014-2015 SCORE Fellow.

He currently serves as an ELL Liaison, a Writing Across the Curriculum trainer and a new teacher mentor in addition to being a Scholar Bowl coach, a Beta Club sponsor and a member of the School Improvement Plan committee and the school's Leadership Team.

All of that combined with his work in the classroom is why principal Joseph Ely said Voiles was the perfect candidate.

"It's exciting having someone from our school represent us," Ely said. "We have a great district full of great teachers, and to have him represent us is a great honor."

Voiles said he was simply out of words.

"It's exciting and unbelievable," he said. "I'm very appreciative and shocked at the same time. It's a very humbling experience. How do you even say that? Really, you're just taken off guard and completely shocked."

Moore is a High School music teacher at Morristown-Hamblen High School East where, for the past five years, he has served as the fine arts chair, as a Leadership Team member and as a county-wide professional development leader. He is in his ninth year as an educator.

"I am absolutely shocked but very honored," he said. "I'm just really appreciative of Hamblen County for giving me the opportunity to even do this. And I would just like to thank my family for their support. They're always unconditionally supporting me and have always tried to help me achieve whatever goals I've had in life."

Under his leadership, 41 East High students have received All-East Tennessee Choir honors, 21 have received All-State Tennessee Choir honors and each of them have or will graduate from the school with distinction.

In addition, he has led the choir to two state superior ratings the past two years at the Tennessee American Choral Directors Association State Festival Assessment and has received one regional superior and one regional excellent rating over the past three years at the J.B. Lyle Festival Assessment.

Moore said he attributes all of those accomplishments and the honor of being named Teacher of the Year to his students because that's what it is all about.

"I think the students are the most important thing; everything is centered around them," he said. "You know, any awards or accolades I get are just a credit back to them for their hard work. Without them, I don't have anybody to teach. We have some very willing students in this county, and they have worked really hard. I just appreciate them cooperating with me. I think that's the most important thing."

Moore was informed of his recognition in a cafeteria filled with high school students, all of which cheered him on and sent him off with thunderous applause.

Moore and Voiles were selected by a committee formed of school administration and previously named Teachers of the Year. They were selected to represent the First TN district which includes surrounding counties such as Greene County and Greeneville City Schools, Hawkins County and Rogersville City Schools, Sullivan County and Kingsport City Schools and other systems in and around the Tri-Cities.

The next step for Moore and Voiles will be to complete the application process in hope of being named Tennessee's Teacher of the Year. If they were selected, the announcement would be made in the fall.

"For now, I'm just putting that out of my mind," Moore said. "I will continue doing what I do best, teaching my students. And, if that (being named Teacher of the Year) happens, you might even get a tear out of me."