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Twin Rivers Substitute Receives Statewide Honor

SACRAMENTO - Warren Popp is the recipient of the 2013 Arthur S. Marmaduke Award as California's High School Counselor of the Year.

The 80-year-old Popp (pronounced Pope) is a substitute at Keema High School. He received the prestigious award with a $1,500 check during an Aug. 8 ceremony at the California Student Aid Commission.

"It was an amazing experience," says an emotional Popp. "I'm overwhelmed. I just can't believe it. It's a wonderful way to cap my career, although I don't feel like it's the end of my career."

Popp, who has a bachelor's in math and a master's in counseling, was hired in 1957 to teach math at the former Del Paso Junior High School, now the Grant West campus. He was there eight years before accepting a counseling position at Grant Union High School in 1965. He also worked as a counselor at Foothill High School, from 1972 to 1993, when he officially retired after 36 years with the district.

But Popp says his retirement didn't last long, just three months. He got a call to work as a substitute at various sites and has been working ever since. Popp has been at Keema 18 years.

"I tell my friends that Keema is the best job that a person in my situation can have because I'm still able to help students and I enjoy that so much," say Popp. "Over the years I've built good relationships with kids. I feel that's one of my gifts."

Popp works two days a week at Keema and shows no signs of slowing down.

"I used to think that 80 years old was old, but not anymore. I get up early every morning and look at another wonderful day. I go to work at Keema where I'm surrounded by a wonderful staff. I love it," he says.

The Arthur S. Marmaduke Award was established in 1985 in honor of Marmaduke, who was the executive director of the California Student Aid Commission for 25 years. Candidates must be nominated by school principals.

*Twin Rivers Unified School District serves approximately 27,000 preschool
through adult education students in northern Sacramento County.*
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