

## DISTINGUISHED SECONDARY SCHOOL SCIENCE TEACHER AWARD: 2010

Luke Diamond was presented with the Tennessee Academy of Science Distinguished Secondary School Science Teacher Award for 2010. Each year the Academy presents this award, which began in 1997, to a science educator in the state who has made significant contributions to science teaching and learning.

Diamond teaches three sections of conceptual physics (ninth grade) and one section of Advanced Placement physics (mechanics) at Pope John Paul II (JPII) High School in Hendersonville, Tennessee. Diamond received the award, including a plaque and \$500, from the TAS because his contribution to science teaching and learning has been significant. He has "served as a role model for science teachers throughout the state as he actively promotes and engages his students in student-originated, inquiry-based science education." Diamond has been instrumental not only in building a strong science curriculum at JPII but also in enhancing the school's Science Olympiad team. In the area of curriculum development, his research and collaboration with his colleagues resulted in the launching of a revision of the JPII science curriculum.

Diamond's students have presented the results of original research projects in the Tennessee Junior Academy of Science (TJAS) competition. This student research is conducted as part of a course with students choosing their projects in teams of two. Ten of his students have had their research published in

the *TJAS Handbook and Proceedings* during the past three years. In addition, the Science Olympiad team at JPII has advanced to the state finals each year from 2005 to 2009. He has coached and mentored students who have become individual champions in Wright Stuff, Astronomy, and Fermi Questions at the State Science Olympiad Tournament.

Diamond was named recipient of the 2009 JPII Harvest Award for Excellence in Teaching and was a 2009 state finalist in the Presidential Award for Excellence in Science & Mathematics Teaching. He has participated in and presented at numerous science conferences/workshops. His professional memberships include the American Association of Physics Teachers and the Tennessee Science Teachers Association.

Dr. Jack Rhoton, past president of the Tennessee Academy of Science and Executive Director of East Tennessee State University's Center of Excellence in Mathematics and Science Education, presented the award, saying that "Luke weaves the wonder of knowing into his daily classroom teaching. He has the unique ability to nurture the natural curiosity of his students, instilling in them the thirst for knowledge and the power to learn."

Diamond received his B.S.E. in Naval Architecture and Marine Engineering in 1997 from the College of Engineering, The University of Michigan, and earned a Secondary Education Certification in Physics with a minor in Mathematics in 1999 from Oakland University, Rochester, Michigan.