



JOSH MANDEL

STATE TREASURER OF OHIO

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By Scott Halasz
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XENIA — Donna Shaw insists she is just doing her job.

But Ohio State Treasurer Josh Mandel feels otherwise. That's why the Cox Elementary School teacher — who coordinates the district's gifted program — received the Financial Literacy Award from his representatives in her classroom on Thursday. The award is given to educators who excel in instructing their students about the world of finances.

Shaw, a 1993 graduate of Xenia High School, is the first non-high school teacher to receive the award. Superintendent Denny Morrison along with most of the members of the Board of Education were present at the award presentation, along with some family members and her adoring fourth-graders. Shaw doesn't see what all the ado is about.

"I feel like I'm doing what I'm supposed to do," she said. "(But) it's nice to be recognized."

It wasn't difficult for Mandel's representatives to recognize a teacher who deserved kudos.

"We don't have a lot of standout elementary teachers at this time," said Lindsay Kuhn Blair, economic development and financial education officer for Mandel. "No one else in the state is doing what she's doing."

What Shaw is doing is teacher third, fourth and fifth grade gifted students in the X Tar program about money … and then some.

It's not the old Lemonade Stand computer game. This is serious business.

Shaw actually recreated the Great Depression in her classroom. And in another unit, her students come up with a product, design it, manufacture it, market it and sell it. And her students pay bills on a regular basis.

"You talk about going above and beyond," Kuhn Blair said.

It's all about teaching the students what it's like in the real world.

"We really focus on the entrepreneurship," Shaw said. "We do real-life, hands-on experiences."

These are lessons that don't stop when the students get to sixth grade and beyond.

"Teaching the students about financial literacy is providing them with a skill that they will be able to use the rest of their lives,"



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Morrison said. "Donna does a terrific job with her students. She is well deserving of this prestigious award."

Even if she doesn't think so.

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