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## **SAINT THOMAS ACADEMY'S LITTLE NAMED 2011 FRENCH TEACHER OF THE YEAR FOR MINNESOTA**

**MENDOTA HEIGHTS, Minn., April 13, 2011** – Saint Thomas Academy announced today that French teacher Caroline Little has been named the 2011 Minnesota French Teacher of the Year by the Board of the Minnesota Chapter of the American Association of Teachers of French (MN AATF). The award will be presented at a ceremony on May 6, 2011, at the Minnesota Humanities Center in St. Paul by Lydia Belatèche, Ph.D., president of MN AATF.

Mark Westlake, the Academy's physics instructor, nominated Little for the award. In his nomination, Westlake said:

"When Caroline Little opens her door every morning there is an air of excitement. She is prepared and her students come early knowing they are going to have a good experience. Her room is alive. Her relationship with her students is positive and healthy; you can see that even though she pushes them hard, they like her. As the only French Teacher at Saint Thomas Academy, she commands seven preps with relative ease. She relates well with both her seventh graders (They think she is from France!) and her seniors (Who she has instructed for six years.) Caroline holds her students to a very high standard and it is obvious that they do their best for her.

"Her creativity makes class interesting and varied. Activities range from tasting and rating cheese with her youngest students to virtual trip planning with her sophomores. Her oldest students enjoy conversation about current events. Mde Little's French Honors VI class studies a section they call 'a decade of French cinema' with segments of French movies from the 1900s to present. It is obvious that students 'dive' into the language the minute they enter the room and are not ready to get out of 'pool' when the period ends. Mde Little's French day doesn't end after tutoring; she also has an active 'French Club' that celebrates the culture of France. (The French Club is so popular that it includes members who don't even take French!)"

Little joined Saint Thomas Academy in 2002. In 2009, she was the recipient of the annual Michael Rongitsch Faculty Award, presented by the Academy's Fathers' Club. The award honors a faculty or staff member who best exemplifies the spirit of the Academy and honors the memory of beloved faculty member Mike Rongitsch.

Eighth grader R. Thomas said of Little: "Madame Little has been a very special teacher, not only for me, but also for my brother Dylan and sister Arianne. I always look forward to French class because Mde. Little makes learning French fun and always takes a special interest in every one of her students. It is easy to see that she enjoys teaching and truly cares that we enjoy learning French. She is always available to spend extra time helping her students to understand, and gets her students excited and involved in learning. I am so lucky to have such a wonderful teacher and because of her, I will continue to love and study the French language."

“Madame is a very engaging teacher who works to incorporate all aspects of the language, from culture to writing,” said M. Whalen '11. “She also makes sure to cover all angles of current issues. Her teaching ability makes the language much more fun to learn and excites the students in many ways. I love her class and I always look forward to the new material she brings to us each day.”

“As a language teacher I’m excited to make the world a little smaller,” Little said, “and give students a chance to see that a 16-year-old boy in Paris is really not all that different from a high school sophomore at Saint Thomas Academy. I love teaching French!”

### **About Saint Thomas Academy**

Founded in 1885, Saint Thomas Academy is an all-male, college preparatory, Catholic, military/leadership school committed to preparing young men to succeed in college and in life. Nationally accredited by the Independent Schools Association of the Central States (ISACS), the academy challenges young men to excel academically, spiritually, morally and physically in and out of the classroom. For more information, please visit [www.cadets.com](http://www.cadets.com).

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