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Simpson County educator named state's top history teacher

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Justin Mitchell

A Simpson County social studies teacher will represent Kentucky as he competes for the honor of the top history teacher in the country.

Justin Mitchell, who teaches at Franklin-Simpson Middle School, has been named the 2021 Kentucky History Teacher of the Year by the Kentucky Historical Society.

“(History) is the subject where, as a teacher, I can be creative in how I reach students,” Mitchell told Kentucky Teacher, a publication of the state’s education department. “I get to be a storyteller, actor, tour guide, archaeologist, comedian and artist – all in the course of a week.”

Mitchell has taught eighth grade social studies at Franklin-Simpson Middle School since 2010 and serves as a gifted and talented program coordinator, club adviser and a school-based decision making council member.



The Kentucky History Teacher of the Year award recognizes imaginative K-12 teachers who've demonstrated a dedication to teaching American history grounded in primary sources. It's presented by the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History.

His goal as an educator "is to raise up incredible citizens who actively participate in their community, state and nation," he said.

A graduate of Western Kentucky University, Mitchell is currently a doctoral candidate at WKU in educational leadership. As Kentucky History Teacher of the Year, he'll receive a \$1,000 grant, an archive of classroom resources and recognition at the KHS Annual History Awards. He's one of 54 finalists for the National History Teacher of the Year award competing for a \$10,000 prize. The winner will be announced in September.

— Follow education reporter Aaron Mudd on Twitter @NewsByAaron or visit bgdailynews.com.

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Education reporter. Covers education and related issues, focusing primarily on the Bowling Green and Warren County public school districts and Western Kentucky University.