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# News Release

## Premier Academy High School Youth Receives State Award

**Joliet IL, March 3, 2007:**

Samantha Ziblis, a student at Premier Academy High School, was among eight students from across Illinois to receive Outstanding Student Awards from the Illinois Coalition for Educating At-Risk Youth (ICEARY). She was honored at a luncheon during the ICEARY Annual Conference in Springfield, March 1-2, 2007.

Samantha was the top student selected from Region 3 representing alternative education programs in Lake, McHenry, Kane, Kendall, Grundy, DuPage, and Will counties. She was nominated by her English teacher, Annette Kurek.

“Samantha deserves this award because she exhibited exemplary behavior, extraordinary patience, maturity, and effort while she was at Premier,” Kurek said. The 15-year-old sophomore completed her academic program with excellent grades and demonstrated communications skills and leadership as she stage-managed Premier Academy’s first-ever Poetry Slam in December 2006. She has since resumed her education at Plainfield North High School.



*Premier Academy teacher Annette Kurek, left, with ICEARY Outstanding Student Award recipient Samantha Ziblis.*

ICEARY is an association of educators, truancy workers, counselors, administrators, officers, and others who work with at-risk youth. The organization is dedicated to nurturing the academic and personal growth of at-risk youth in Illinois.

According to Principal Charisse Beach, the Premier Academy staff and student body take pride in Samantha’s success. “It’s important for our students to receive recognition for their outstanding achievements. It inspires classmates, affirms the good work of our teachers and counselors, and often spurs the student on to greater achievements,” she said.

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Premier Academy, located at 51 W. Jackson St., is a state-funded regional safe school program for youth in middle through high school as an alternative program for youth when continuing in their home school is not an option. The program is operated by the Education Service Network and administered by the Grundy-Kendall and Will County Regional Offices of Education.

For more information on Premier Academy, please visit the Education Service Network web site at: [www.educationservicenetwork.org](http://www.educationservicenetwork.org). For specific information on Premier Academy High School, please contact Principal Charisse Beach at [cbeach@grundy.k12.il.us](mailto:cbeach@grundy.k12.il.us).