**Kirsten Tahara, First Grade Teacher at Ethel I. Baker Elementary School in Sacramento,**

**Named 2024/2025 Esquire IMAX Teacher of the Year**

**Tustin, Calif. (May 14, 2025)** – [SchoolsFirst Federal](https://www.schoolsfirstfcu.org/gateway/schoolsfirstfcu/home) Credit Union, the largest credit union in California and the largest serving school employees and their families, in partnership with ABC10 Sacramento, Esquire IMAX Theatre, Papa Murphy’s Pizza and the Sacramento State College of Education, today announced that Kirsten Tahara of Ethel I. Baker Elementary School in the Sacramento City Unified School District has been named the 2024/2025 Esquire IMAX Teacher of the Year. The prestigious award was presented during a ceremony at the Esquire IMAX Theatre in downtown Sacramento on May 13.

Kirsten Tahara was selected from a pool of 12 monthly award recipients. She has been teaching within the Sacramento City Unified School District for 29 years. Before her teaching career, Tahara attended Sacramento State, where she received her bachelor's degree and a multiple subject teaching credential.

"Teachers are role models and mentors who educate and shape the lives of children who will one day be our future leaders, so it’s important to teach with integrity, purpose, patience and kindness," Tahara said. "It still amazes me to watch students go from not knowing the alphabet, how to hold a pencil or speak English to being able to read, write and speak English – all within a school year! Each child is different and learns differently, so from the tiniest of steps to the greatest leaps, every bit of progress made is a success."

As part of her recognition as the Esquire IMAX Teacher of the Year, Tahara received a $5,000 prize from SchoolsFirst Federal Credit Union.

“Ms. Tahara personifies all of the attributes that are associated with educators who create a tangible difference in the lives of students and prepare them to succeed,” said Julie DePrada-Schott, specialist, school and community relations at SchoolsFirst FCU. “SchoolsFirst FCU is proud to support this important initiative to recognize the outstanding contributions of educators in the Sacramento region.”

In place for 20+ years, the Teacher of the Month program highlights local teachers making a difference in the lives of their students and families. To nominate a local teacher in the greater Sacramento/Stockton/Modesto area for a future Teacher of the Month, please visit [ABC10 Teacher of the Month.](https://www.abc10.com/teacher-of-the-month)

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About SchoolsFirst Federal Credit Union

SchoolsFirst Federal Credit Union is the largest credit union serving school employees, and for the sixth year in a row, Forbes has named SchoolsFirst FCU the top credit union in California. Serving school employees and their families, the organization is dedicated to delivering World-Class Personal Service and improving the financial lives of its Members. In J.D. Power’s 2025 inaugural U.S. Credit Union Satisfaction Study, its Members ranked them #1 for overall satisfaction. Today they serve nearly 1.5 million Members with a full range of financial products and services. SchoolsFirst FCU was founded in 1934, when 126 school employees pooled $1,200 and established a Member-owned cooperative to help improve each other's lives. The Credit Union has more than $33 billion in assets and remains the largest credit union in California and the third largest credit union in the United States. For more information about SchoolsFirst FCU, visit schoolsfirstfcu.org.

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