

JANICE GOSSMAN

GEOY ALJ

19-20

The most rewarding aspect of teaching is knowing that you have made a difference in the life of a young person. In my 29 years in education it would be difficult to find an individual more passionate about her profession and students than Janice. At ALJ, Janice Gossman educates and inspires over 120 students per year over all backgrounds and abilities. Based on formal and informal observations of many of our shared students throughout the years, it is quite clear to me that Janice Gossman's humble approach to her profession allows students to find their creative voice and express themselves in a non-verbal way.

I always find that one of the most prominent compliments a teacher faces is when at any time your name comes up in ancillary student conversations; Mrs. Gossman is that teacher. Caring, uniting, encouraging, praising, accepting, empathetic, intelligent, talented, cool, 'she just gets us' are just a few words that are overheard in the hallway between students speaking about Mrs. Gossman. Mrs. Zamboni, Mrs. Sanchez and Mrs. Cusick, colleagues, stated "that Mrs. Gossman is always looking to unite the student body and fights for the underrepresented and marginalized students. As you can see, Mrs. Gossman is well admired by all. Selflessly, Mrs. Gossman puts in countless hours afterschool working on projects, placing items in the kiln, displaying student work around the building as well as co-advising the Active Minds Club. She runs the GSA and the Coffeehouse in efforts to create a space that is safe for students to be themselves. In her efforts with all the clubs she is involved in, she is developing a community that is empathetic and compassionate of others. Her passion for art is inclusive and inspires all who have the pleasure of knowing her. This is one of the many reasons why Mrs. Gossman makes an excellent candidate for Arthur L. Johnson's Governor's Educator of the Year Award.

As with any exceptional teacher, Mrs. Gossman's teaching style is one in which she is constantly encouraging students to take a risk and chance with art. She attempts to allow students to discover new information for themselves and finds a way to express themselves through various mediums she teaches. Above her normal workload, Janice has taken on the

responsibility of an independent student class for students who desire to learn more about art.

As you can see, her commitment to students runs far beyond the 'school day'. She truly cares for her students as individuals; students always know when and where to find her and are confident she will be helpful in addressing their needs. It is quite evident that Mrs. Gossman speaks 'with her students', not 'at her students'. She always tries to ask 'leading' questions rather than simply giving them information. She does not expect nor desire that students unilaterally accept what she says as fact, but rather that they evaluate things critically and draw the appropriate conclusions.

Janices's strengths as an instructor is her passion and creativity. She is often bringing in ancillary 'garbage' and transforming it into an out of this world art lesson for her students. She has given so selflessly for so long, I feel that this recognition is a simple 'thank you' for a job well done. She is well respected and admired by the students at ALJ, their parents, and most certainly our colleagues. It is with immense honor to present our Governor's Educator of the Year, Mrs. Janice Gossman. Her ability to interact with her students, parents and staff, developing positive relationships conducive to education and improving the overall educational experience for our students has made her a wonderful role model for others to follow.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Feeley

Principal

Arthur L. Johnson High School