

ISTA New Teacher of the Year Awardees 2009

Region 1-Two Awardees

Loriann M. Gulik-Hoyle will begin her second year as a high school biology teacher in the Fall of 2009. Loriann taught at J. Sterling Morton East in Cicero last year and she will be teaching at J. Sterling Morton West in Berwyn this year. She is a 1998 graduate of the University of Illinois Champaign-Urbana and received her Doctor of Chiropractor Degree from National University of Health Sciences in 2001. Loriann made the *wise* decision recently to become a high school biology teacher through a certification program at Benedictine University. Prior to teaching Biology, Loriann had a successful chiropractic practice in Orangeville. In her short time as a teacher, Loriann has made lasting impressions and sincere connections with her students. She instituted a positive behavioral reward system in her classroom called “*caught doing something good*,” which has created a student-centered learning environment. Loriann regularly uses hands-on activities in her lessons to boost student achievement and engagement. Loriann’s students are very diverse and she has adapted her lessons to suit all learning styles in her classroom. According to her University Supervisor, Loriann has “*shown a genuine sensitivity to the social, economic and cultural diversities of her students.*” Loriann’s commitment to her students, flexibility in her teaching style and drive for excellence are among the reasons she is one of ISTA’s New Teachers of the Year. Congratulations, Loriann!

Sarah O’Leary is in her third year as an educator and currently teaches at the Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy (IMSA) in Aurora. She teaches a variety of courses including Scientific Inquiries in Biology, Molecular Cell Biology and Methods in Scientific Inquiry. Sarah received her Bachelors Degree in 2005 from Augustana College and obtained a Masters Degree in 2007 from Northern Illinois University. In her short time at IMSA, her colleagues stated, “*Sarah has become a valuable asset to the science team.*” Sarah frequently utilizes formative assessments in her lessons, and stresses the importance of self reflection and responsibility to her students. Her classroom is best described as “*student-centered*” as students learn the material primarily through doing activities, analyzing data, discussion, and working with one another. Sarah is a huge advocate of inquiry in the science classroom, and supports students in the Student Inquiry and Research Program (SIR) at IMSA. Sarah is also a volunteer teacher in the EXCEL program at IMSA, which assists students with their transition to IMSA academics. Not only is Sarah great with her students, she also has helped many staff members utilize technology. Sarah is no stranger to ISTA, and previously presented information on active learning at the annual conference. Sarah’s use of inquiry in the classroom, leadership skills and willingness to help both students and faculty at IMSA are among the reasons Sarah is one of ISTA’s New Teachers of the Year. Congratulations, Sarah!

Region 2

Michael Fredericks will begin his second year as a science teacher in the Fall of 2009. He is a high school biology teacher at Princeton High School in Princeton. Michael received his Bachelors Degree in May of 2008 from Eureka College. Michael was nominated for this award by his Department Head and Principal, having made quite an impression on them in his first year of teaching. Michael is tech savvy, a passionate biologist and a dedicated professional. According to his principal, Michael *“moved in and started preparing to teach biology in June 2008,”* two months prior to the start of school. Michael’s classroom is run like a “well-oiled machine,” from procedures to questioning techniques, he is always the man in charge. As a result, his students are always engaged, interested and active participants in the classroom. After lessons, Michael continually reflects to search for strategies to make his lessons better. Michael also is involved with students outside of the classroom in his role as assistant coach of the varsity boys basketball team. According to his Department Head, *“Michael is an exceptional teacher,”* and *“an ideal role model.”* Perhaps his principal summed it up best by stating, *“I feel like I hit the jackpot by hiring Michael.”* Congratulations, Michael, on being named an ISTA New Teacher of the Year!

Region 4-Two Awardees

Julie Fane is entering her third year as a science educator. She is a fifth grade teacher at Muffley Elementary in Decatur. Julie received her Bachelors Degree in 2006 from Millikin University and her Masters Degree from Eastern Illinois University in 2008. Although Julie has only been a teacher for a short time, she displays strong leadership qualities and innovation in her classroom. She also possesses a strong work ethic and caring attitude for her students. Julie is enthusiastic, eager to improve her craft, hardworking and open to new ideas. Some innovations initiated in her classroom include small group instruction, differentiated lessons and Smart Board activities. Her classroom is a “*model*” for others in the District and is regularly visited by teachers looking to follow in her footsteps. Julie is also participating in a group called Earth Explorers, an elementary carbon sequestration project with the Illinois State Geological Survey and Archer-Daniels-Midland. Outside of the classroom, Julie is a Girl Scout troop leader, YMCA basketball coach, self esteem coach, quarterly speaker at Millikin University and mentor to new teachers in her District. According to her nominator, “*I cannot think of a better example of an up-and-coming science star than Julie.*” Congratulations, Julie, on being named an ISTA New Teacher New Teacher of the Year!

Ashley Henrichs is entering her third year as a science educator. Currently, she is a sixth grade science teacher at Glenn Raymond School in Watseka. Ashley received her Bachelors Degree from Olivet Nazarene University in 2006. When Ashley began her career at Glenn Raymond School, she was hired to fill the role of a retired teacher whom everyone adored and respected. However, Ashley rose to the challenge and quickly won over her colleagues, students and parents, establishing herself as a science stakeholder in her school. Ashley founded the Annual Pumpkin Fest, involving lessons on solid, liquid and gas interactions. The culminating activity to the Fest has become somewhat of a legend in Watseka, an exploding pumpkin. Ashley is also a key component in her school’s popular Science Club and state championship winning Science Olympiad team. She has also taken ownership in the sixth grade science curriculum, which has enhanced student achievement throughout the upper grades. Additionally, Ashley is involved with ISTA, having served as a conference registration volunteer and a member of the New Teacher Conference Panel. According to her nominator, Ashley “has made a name for herself as an excellent teacher of science.” Ashley’s innovation, creativity, and leadership skills are among the reasons she is one of ISTA’s New Teachers of the Year. Congratulations, Ashley!