

Career Tech Matters

by Dennis Franks • March 4, 2016

Last Saturday, among hundreds of his peers, Josh Younge was named Outstanding High School English Language Arts educator by the Ohio Council of Teachers of English Language Arts.



A teacher at Pickaway-Ross for his 13-year career, Josh decided to become an English teacher because he enjoyed reading and writing.

“Writing was one of my weaknesses (when younger). I wasn’t a bad writer but it was my weakest subject. But I had a phenomenal English teacher.”

Ruth McClain, who was that teacher during his junior and senior years, was the former executive director of the professional organization and nominated Josh for the award.

“She made class enjoyable and entertaining. We did a variety of things in class so that it wasn’t the same thing every day.

“I guess I would say that she made class challenging and that was something I hadn’t really experienced in English classes before. I had fun and didn’t mind being in class,” Josh said.

Today, he strives to use his time in the classroom to provide opportunities for students to be creative.

One such example is a change he made in his classroom. When he first started teaching, he would decorate his classroom walls. But he read an article that said some adornment can be distracting to students.

Now, he has students bring in a quote or picture that inspires them and it goes on the wall.

“I let students decorate the walls as it creates a sense of ownership,” Josh said. “It’s all student work and it’s all student-driven.”



Josh Younge was named the Outstanding High School English Language Arts educator by the Ohio Council of Teachers of English Language Arts.

Principal Shara Cochenour said in her award recommendation of Josh that he has continued to grow in many aspects of his career.

“I have found Joshua to be proactive rather than reactive in most every phase of his professional life. His ability to lead and mentor has been well developed.”

I concur with Shara. Josh continues to be a leader among our talented teaching staff. His work on PRTA and OTES and completing his administrative coursework are just a few facets that make him an outstanding educator and someone I truly enjoy working with. I am proud of the work Josh does for the students of Pickaway-Ross.

When accepting his award, he thanked Ruth and his mom, Debbie Younge, a veteran educator who won the award in 2001.

“If I can be half the teacher my mom was, that wouldn’t be bad,” he said in his speech.

I’d say he’s well on his way to accomplishing that. Congratulations, Josh.

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