



NICOLET HIGH SCHOOL

RETIREE TRIBUTE

2020

"As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words, but to live by them."

JOHN F. KENNEDY



LYN DEISS

PHYSICAL EDUCATION &
HEALTH TEACHER

7 YEARS AT NICOLET

First Memories of Nicolet:

After my interview, Laura Mildebrandt walked with me towards the front doors. All I kept thinking was, she doesn't want me to get lost or she wants me to get the heck out of this building as fast as possible. Every single person that I met was so very kind and welcoming. I honestly felt like I could go to anyone with a question. I immediately felt like this was my "new" home away from home. The fabulous food we were fed during the new teacher orientation. I must have easily gained 5 pounds from just the afternoon cookies. This place is AMAZINGLY special!

Most Memorable Moments:

The Red Carpet Welcome - starting the first year, when you don't know any students. Then as the years roll by, you know all the students but the freshmen.

The Foundation Fundraiser with the Blue Signature Drink - There was an ingredient in that beverage which caused guests to bid on items they weren't even interested in.

Supervising at my first Nicolet football game and being told that students don't pay to enter any home athletic event. This doesn't happen in any other school district in the state.

Attending the plays, musicals, concerts, athletic events and other activities to support the overall Nicolet community. Our students are so talented in so many venues.

Traveling with FEAR to Kansas in 2019. I always thought that cheerleading competitions were loud. Robotic competitions hands down are LOUD!

Dr. Kabara's Paper Plate Awards

Trying to figure out why my tape dispenser, stapler or scissors would disappear from my desk and then magically reappear 2 or 3 days, and realizing that Mr. Koppa was just "borrowing" the items.

Acquiring new nicknames from my department mates - Lynda Lou & Grandma



LYN DEISS

Plans for Retirement:

Providing random acts of kindness for family and friends.

Fill-in babysitter or daycare provider for nieces and nephews.

Volunteering for the St. Ben's Meal Program through our church - and other church activities.

Training a black Lab puppy - starting at the end of June. I'm thinking of training her to be a therapy dog if all goes well.

Lots of sewing, quilting, gardening, furniture painting & home projects.

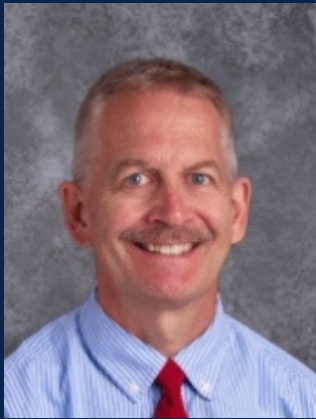
More bike rides, more yoga classes and just more outdoor activity.

Hopefully an Alaskan cruise and tour in the very near future, and lots of other trips in the US.

Parting Words:

It isn't often that a group of co-workers can brighten a person's life and heart. I have been blessed to spend the final years of my career at Nicolet. Thank you for making these 7 years so special for me. It's always be a great day to be a Knight!





BRIAN DUE

MATH/COMPUTER
PROGRAMMING TEACHER

20 YEARS AT NICOLET

First Memories of Nicolet:

Tradition of excellence; high expectations of teachers and students

Most Memorable Moments:

The amazing things that students can do; every year they do something new and surprising!

Basketball Championships (Boys 2019, Girls 2011)

FEAR 4786 - Robotics Competitions

Science Fair Projects

Volleyball playoffs (Boys State runner up 2008, 2009)

Musicals (favorite, "Joseph" 2013)

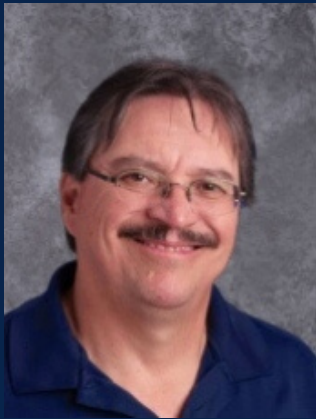
Plans for Retirement:

Travel, visiting State and National Parks, physical fitness

Parting Words:

"It's a great day, Nicolet".....every day IS a great day!"





IGNACIO ESTRADA

TEACHER OF MATHEMATICS

23 YEARS AT NICOLET

First Memories of Nicolet:

I came to Nicolet from out state without any knowledge or preconceived notions of it. It was a good thing. With a growth mindset and awesome colleagues, I was soon indoctrinated into the Nicolet way. A true professional pleasure.

Most Memorable Moments:

I have always enjoyed the college freshman and sophomores returning to visit in December or June after their terms are over. I will miss not being able to see them this year and notice how much they have grown.

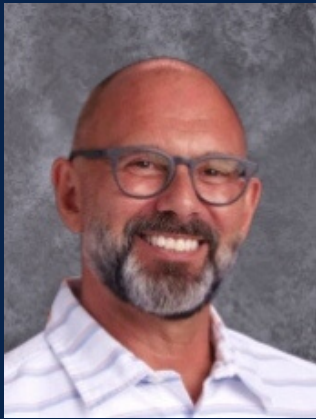
Plans for Retirement:

Most likely, I will continue in education in some reduced capacity in the hispanic community. An educational journal I read indicated that, on average, minority students have less than 1% minority teacher in their entire life. I intend to attempt to change this fact to a slightly greater degree.

Parting Words:

I have had 23 long pleasurable and sometimes hard years at Nicolet. I will always look back fondly at all the great students, parents and colleagues I have worked with over this time. Memories are plentiful in my mind and will always be with me. I would not trade a single moment. O.K. Maybe a few!





MARIO FIORENTINO

FRESHMAN INTERVENTIONIST

31 YEARS AT NICOLET

First Memories of Nicolet:

When I first came to Nicolet for my interview in the summer of 1989, the school was in the last stages of a big renovation. Administrative offices were relocated throughout the building during the construction. My interview was to take place in lower D wing, Room D11. I got so lost trying to find it, and there was nobody in the building to guide me. I really started to get nervous that I was going to miss the interview. Fortunately, as I rounded a corner, my soon-to-be new good friend Sheila Felder rounded the same corner at the same time from the opposite direction while she too was searching for the interview room. Somehow, we found our way. I think that was the first prerequisite to being hired at Nicolet: finding your way through that airport of a building!

Most Memorable Moments:

In January of 2001, I applied for the position of Coordinator of Nicolet High School's Alternative Program. And to the dismay of my friends and colleagues, I got the job! I don't think I was ever so happy, excited, and scared - all at the same time. It was a position that I really, really wanted because I truly believed that I could make a difference with at-risk students. Thank you to Jeff Artero, Jane Joyce, and Tammy Trulock for seeing potential in me.



MARIO FIORENTINO

Plans for Retirement:

Stacy (my wife) and I have long dreamed of travel without the restraints of working around our school schedules. We have an extensive list of destinations to explore. When not traveling, we will be spending our time wintering in South Beach, Miami Beach where we own a condo and summering at our cabin high on a bluff overlooking the Mississippi River. We also will be spending time picking up litter on our newly adopted highway, County Road N in Vernon County, WI. Please stop by if you are ever in the area(s).

Parting Words:

Being employed at Nicolet for the last 31 years has been one of the highlights of my life. It has been an amazing experience. A key to success that I learned in the Alternative Program was to always be flexible. "One size fits all" absolutely does not work in education. There is a way to reach difficult students. Sometimes you just have to think outside the box and be creative. Also, smile and laugh. You'll have the kids eating out of your hand. Peace and love to all!!! Mario aka Tino





JIM MEIER

MAINTENANCE

32 YEARS AT NICOLET

First Memories of Nicolet:

Wow

Most Memorable Moments:

The flood

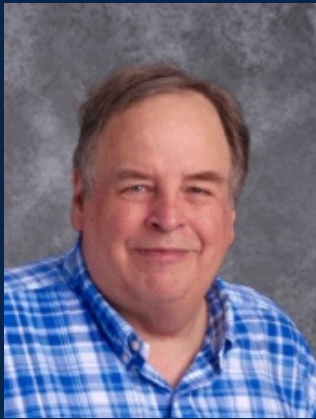
Plans for Retirement:

I have moved to Sun City West, AZ, my wife and I bought a new home in a retirement community with four recreation centers and seven golf courses. With all the opportunities in this area I surely will be able to keep busy for quite some time.

Parting Words:

32 years, wow can't believe I was there that long. How that time seem to have gone so fast. I truly enjoyed working at Nicolet High School. The challenge of my job was well rewarding to me, because it pushed me beyond my limits, and comfort zone to see what I could truly accomplish. I was also able to meet so many individuals over those years and those individuals and memories will stay with me forever. My only regret I have was not being able to say a proper goodbye to the staff because of Covid-19 virus. It would have been nice to talk to each and bring up some of the great stories in the past that we shared together. In closing, thank you all for the respect that you have shown me, and friendships that were made, in all these years.





JEFF PHILLIPS

ADMINISTRATIVE AIDE, SUB,
FOOTBALL COACH

14 YEARS AT NICOLET

First Memories of Nicolet:

It was a great place to work! Loved the support and professionalism of the staff. Nicolet always did things the right way. Above all, I enjoyed being around the students. They kept me young. As the person who ran detention as one of my duties, students were cooperative and exhibited few problems. I spent a lot of time with two coworkers Wayne Schultz and JD Davis. They always had my back and helped out the senior coworker I will miss Nicolet.

Most Memorable Moments:

The best memory I had which was reinforced each day was the fact that I loved coming to work every day. Student and staff accomplishment whether it was in the classroom, stage, or athletic field was a constant reminder to me that I was working in the right place. Knowing the fact that we were working in an important educational institution the staff in the office were cordial and light hearted. I loved them all. I will always remember the day my son JJ Phillips who I was substituting for his teacher wanted to ask a question but had the hardest time figuring out what to call me. I hope when things settle down that I will again have the opportunity to return to Nicolet as a substitute.

Plans for Retirement:

For me retirement is a state of mind. I will always be active.

Parting Words:

Don't ever take Nicolet for granted. It is special!





ELIOT SCHEUER

MATHEMATICS TEACHER

27 YEARS AT NICOLET

First Memories of Nicolet:

What I most recall about beginning my career at Nicolet was how happy I was to have taken the risk to leave the corporate world to work with kids. From my initial days at Nicolet, I found teaching to be a joy. I recall being very impressed with the Nicolet community of teachers and leaders, and a bit surprised by how fast-paced, intense, and yet, quite fun it was!

Most Memorable Moments:

Jumping up and down like a kid with Chris Brown in the laundry room at UW Oshkosh when we realized our Nicolet team was going to win the State Chess Championship for the first time.

Endless discussions about students, curriculum, our families, and so much more, with my math colleagues during daily lunches in our conference room.

Working with students on their independent science research projects, the satisfaction and joy in competing at the International Science fair, and most notably, attending the Nobel Laureate Panel each year.

Walking into the building one morning with my son Jason, who was not feeling much like being there. He said, "Dad, my Biology teacher (Mr. Schroeder) said that the two most important things for the survival of any species are food and reproduction. Can't I just focus on those two things and skip high school?"



ELIOT SCHEUER

Plans for Retirement:

My plans for retirement are to teach business, economics, and statistics courses at local universities and colleges. I plan to travel with my wife anytime we wish now that I am free of the school calendar. I will hike and backpack in the national and state parks, and hit as many high-mountains I can. I plan to read more and to find new interests and hobbies that challenge me. Finally, I'd like to give back by getting involved with new organizations in the greater Milwaukee community.

Parting Words:

Simply put, I love teaching. The classroom feels like a second home to me, and perhaps more so, having had the opportunity to teach both my kids. The energy I get from my students has been wonderful. Every day, they inspired me to be a better teacher and a more understanding and compassionate person.

My colleagues and the administration have been incredibly supportive, professional, and always forward-thinking. I leave Nicolet with the fondest memories and highest respect. It was an honor and a privilege to work here for 27 years. Nicolet will always be part of who I am.

