



COLLIER EDUCATOR GRANT "STAND UP FOR JUSTICE"

Sponsored by the Community Relations Committee, Jewish Federation of Collier County

A \$750 annual grant will be made to the educator, whose lesson(s) and/or activity(s) is selected as best meeting the criteria below. The purpose of this grant is to honor those Collier County middle school and high school educators who have striven to counter the prevailing tendency within today's popular culture for students to deride or denigrate others based upon difference. The lesson(s) or activity(s) should have as a major objective the purpose of instilling the positive character trait of "respect for others" in students. All nominees must have created lessons of their own design or successfully made adaptations from other programs and should be able to show evidence of a positive nature as a result of implementation. Successful nominees will be contacted and asked to submit a copy of the lesson(s) or activity(s) from the current school year a description of its implementation, and evidence of effectiveness. Nominees may include Collier County middle school and high school teachers, guidance counselors, school librarians, administrators, and media specialists. Self-nominations are accepted.

Nominee's Name Jana Csenger
Nominee's email csengeja@collierschools.com
Number of years' teaching 18
Grade or subject taught School Psychologist
School Collier County Public School, assignment may change annually, '12-'13 Tommie Barfield, Alternative Schools & Golden Gate High School
School Address 5775 Osceola Trail, Naples, FL 34109
Phone (daytime) 239 377-7616
Phone (evening) 239-821-7210

On a separate page(s) with the name of the nominee on each page, please briefly:
Describe the precipitating events that motivated you to initiate these lessons or activities.
Describe the lesson(s) or activity(s), and, if adapted from another source, please reference.
Explain how the lesson(s) or activity(s) teach students the importance of respecting others no matter what religious, racial, cultural, or other differences exist.
Explain how it helped them counter bigotry and bullying and prepare them to stand up for justice?

IF YOUR APPLICATION IS SELECTED AS A FINALIST, YOU WILL BE ASKED TO PROVIDE EVIDENCE/PROOF OF EFFECTIVENESS, SUCH AS, BUT NOT LIMITED TO: A QUESTIONNAIRE OR INTERVIEWS, DOCUMENTED ANECDOTAL CONVERSATIONS AND/OR OBSERVATIONS, ETC.

Please complete the following section if you are nominating someone other than yourself.

Your name _____
Your email _____
Your address _____
Your phone, day and evening _____
Relationship to nominee _____

Submit the completed form no later than March 15, 2013, to:
Beth Povlow
Educator Grant Coordinator
c/o CRC, Jewish Federation of Collier County
2500 Vanderbilt Beach Road, Ste. 2201
Naples, FL 34109

Jana Csenger

March 8, 2013

I am a School Psychologist in Collier County Public Schools. This year my assignment includes Tommie Barfield Elementary, Alternative Schools and Golden Gate High School. My assignment includes children that range from the infants in the teen parenting program to the young adults up to age 22 in the modified curriculum classrooms. My students come from public housing in Immokalee to mansions on Marco Island. I love working with this variety of students as it requires me to keep my knowledge base broad and my skills up to date.

As a first year psychologist in Illinois in 1995 I was assigned to a large middle school. One of the first students I worked with as a counseling case was an 8th grade girl. She was struggling with relationship problems with a friend and she came to see me weekly. At the time I hypothesized that she had a crush on the friend and that was at the root of the problem but she had not "come out" to me so I never brought it up. Several years later, when she was in high school, she returned to the middle school for a visit and shared with me that she was gay. She thanked me for my support and encouragement and let me know how much it had meant to her during that time. Years later that same student contacted online and told me that she believed my support had saved her life. On more than one occasion she had thought back on our sessions and the support that she felt and those feelings gave her the strength to continue on and know that it would be better someday.

Three years ago I was assigned to my first high school in Collier County. I had previously worked in elementary, middle and alternative schools but 2010-11 was my first high school. In October of 2011 I attended a professional development workshop titled: Meeting the needs of some or all? Expanding professional competence to address the needs of LGBTQ youth in schools. I learned about what schools are doing to promote tolerance of LGBTQ kids and decided I wanted to bring a Gay Straight Alliance to my school. My assignment was changed in the 11-12 school year and I had already received referrals for students who were struggling with issues related to their sexuality and/or gender identity. I approached my building administration from the perspective that this type of club would tie into anti-bullying efforts throughout the county. With the support of administration I brought up the idea to my students. While they were excited about the idea, none of them were ready to take on a leadership role yet to get the club started. Instead we started learning more about what other GSAs in Collier County were doing and tried to support them. In May of 2012 I helped to chaperone the Equality Prom that was held at the Unitarian Universalist Church in Naples. Several of my students attended along with students from around the county.

Addressing the formation of a GSA from an anti-bullying perspective fits in with other actions I was taking around the district. In 2010-2011 I participated in the development and presentation of an anti-bullying program throughout Collier County. Together with a district Behavior Specialist and the then Coordinator of Safe and Drug Free Schools we developed a powerpoint about the district's efforts to address bullying, the impact of bullying and warning signs. We created our presentation for parents and then traveled around the district speaking at schools in

the evenings. Since then I have further adapted that presentation and made solo presentations at school counselor inservice meetings, additional PTO meetings and most recently at a meeting of the area Pediatricians at NCH.

Back at Golden Gate High School, this year several student leaders stepped up who were motivated to begin a GSA on our campus. We had our first meeting on December 7, 2012. We currently have 12-15 regular participants who bring their lunch to a weekly meeting on Fridays to discuss ways to make our campus safe for all students. We participated in National No Name Calling Week and are currently preparing for the National Day of Silence on April 19. I am very proud of the group of students at GGHS and their bravery at belonging to a club that sometimes makes them vulnerable to prejudice on and off campus. There are more than 12 teachers on campus who have requested Safe Space stickers and posters to hang in their rooms to signify that they are supportive of all students and will make their classrooms safe from bullying and harassment. Our kids are currently trying to raise money to help contribute to the organization of this year's Equality Prom and also to donate to causes that agree with our mission to make the world a safer place for LGBTQ youth.

In the future we would like to produce some of our own Public Service Announcements (PSA) to show on our internal televised announcements to encourage students to accept each other regardless of differences. We would also like to continue building relationships with the other GSAs in Collier County so that we might coordinate some larger district-wide efforts like movie or speaker series. I am proud of what I have accomplished and what the students at GGHS are working to accomplish to make our school safe.