



GOOSE CREEK

CONSOLIDATED INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

Himsel named Secondary Teacher of the Year



Debbie Himsel

Goose Creek Memorial

Goose Creek Memorial High School health science technology teacher says she was not a student who always wanted to be a teacher, but not many teachers can say they celebrated their 50th birthday taking the state certification test.

"Life often brings surprises, and I truly believe that the desire to be a teacher, to nurture others to pursue life and learning with a passion, was in my heart all along," Mrs. Himsel said. "I didn't

realize it at the time, but some wonderful teachers impacted me along the way. Growing up in Goose Creek schools, I have fond memories of many teachers."

Although she had the highest admiration for her mother, Mrs. Himsel originally did not want to follow in her footsteps as a nurse simply because she worked too hard. However, she soon realized that serving others was purposeful and rewarding, so she began her career in nursing.

"Working in the Cardiac Catheterization Lab, I thoroughly enjoyed being on the cutting edge of technology in the Medical Center. Learning was invigorating as every day brought new challenges," she said.

When Mrs. Himsel became a mother, she had the opportunity to stay home with her children. Through the years she became closely involved in school life from volunteering in the classroom to being active in PTO.

Years later, Mrs. Himsel found herself in the job market again and decided to substitute teach until she got a permanent job. That decision led to a long-term substitute position followed by an offer to teach full time in private school.

"I was smitten. It's ironic that the two professions I've enjoyed, nursing and teaching, are two of the most demanding, what I originally hoped to avoid," she said. "The opportunity I now have (at Goose Creek Memorial) to combine the two careers I love by teaching health science is a blessing indeed."

Mrs. Himsel's students have been honored at the Gulf Coast Regional Blood Center Celebration of Life Luncheon the past two years.

She gets excited and creative about most events related to health care such as making a giant pink "human ribbon" to promote Breast Cancer Awareness which raised \$1,200 for the American Cancer Society; Health Occupation Students of America (HOSA) teaming with girls sports to form a giant heart for national "Go Red for Women" Day, making the front page of the Baytown Sun; and receiving a grant to begin a Certified Nurse Aide Program and having all my students pass the state test.

"It's my job to make sure my students are ready for the next step in their education toward their career goals. They are awesome young people with incredible potential, but sometimes you have to show them and help them believe in themselves," she said. "The purpose of life is a life of purpose, and helping my students find their purpose is an awesome reward in itself."

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