

Leading Learning Award December 2024



Tiffany Smith

Tiffany Smith goes above and beyond her role as an ESL teacher to meet her students' needs both inside and outside the class. She is always researching and implementing new ideas in her classroom. She goes to conferences and scours the internet looking for sites, activities, and curricula to enrich her students and classroom. She shares her knowledge with her colleagues and is always willing to take time out to answer questions about using the many things she has discovered. She is very professional and passionate about learning.

She also does many things outside the classroom to help her students. She tutors emergent readers, takes students to appointments, helps them fill out forms, attends sporting events to support young immigrants, invites them to different events to expose them to American culture, and attends birthday parties, just to name a few.

Recently, one of her Afghan students shared his struggle with getting his family here in the United States. Tiffany met with him multiple times and wrote a letter on his behalf to Hillary Scholten, US Congresswoman. Because of Tiffany's advocacy, Congresswoman Scholten will intervene on his behalf. Tiffany is compassionate and very humble. She never seeks recognition for the tireless work she does. I feel blessed that she is my colleague.



Andrea Fortin

I joined Andrea as an ISS in 2020. She taught me everything I needed to know and more about being the best Instructional Support Specialist possible. She was (and still is) my role model. She encouraged me to return to school for my master's in special education. She boosted my confidence and supported me through that journey and once I started in my own classroom, she constantly would check on me and help in any way I needed.

When I switched classrooms and obtained her as my own ISS in my room, that was the best thing to happen to me in my teaching career. She is the main reason why I can be successful in my classroom. She has been with me through the ups and downs of this profession, and I could never thank her enough for helping me get to where I am today.

Andrea goes above and beyond every second of every day while at work. She is the first to offer a helping hand to students or staff. She is someone you can trust with anything. She is a friend to everyone and anyone. She constantly checks in with others and means every word she says to them. She has a student-first mindset and will push through the tough days, but she still smiles at the end. She is amazing with students and always finds new ways to deepen her relationships with new and current students.