The Department Recognizes Glenna Roderick for Excellence in Secondary Education

Submitted by Eric W. Johnson on October 12, 2015 - 9:54pm

The UW Department of History knows how to appreciate quality teaching—and with the help of our donors, we are happy to give it the recognition it deserves. At last spring’s History awards ceremony, the department was pleased to confer the Pressly Prize for Excellence in Secondary Education to Glenna Roderick of Todd Beamer High School in Federal Way. Named for University of Washington emeritus professor of History Thomas Pressly and his wife, Cameron, the prize is awarded annually to the outstanding teacher of history at the high school level in the state of Washington.

The love of history runs deep in Washington, and this year’s group of candidates was very strong. But Glenna Roderick stood out from the crowd, helped along by the fact that no fewer than eight of her former students nominated her for the award. Ms. Roderick teaches AP US History and ASB Leadership at Todd Beamer High. In the past she has taught a variety of other topics as well, including Government, standard US History and Language Arts. According to her principal, Joni Hall, Ms. Roderick is “a fantastic teacher” who consistently shows herself to be deeply invested in every student’s learning. As a result, she has a large and devoted student following. Perhaps equally importantly, she has been instrumental in dramatically increasing the number of students taking AP US History and passing the AP US History exam at Todd Beamer, where the course recently went from being an opt-in course to an opt-out one for qualified students.

Praise for Ms. Roderick is no less enthusiastic among her former students, many of whom credit her with instilling in them a love of history and providing them with the skills to thrive in college. According to one of her former students, Olivia Rao, “She taught us to be civically engaged and aware of the world around us. Coming from a school where it was not the norm to achieve scholastically, she made it all attainable as long as we worked hard... She is the reason I am succeeding in college today.” Another student, Ula Jun, echoed these thoughts, noting that that Ms. Roderick remains her favorite teacher to this day, and adding that “Her ability to drive her students to excellence while also providing the utmost support and positivity has been unparalleled.”

The department salutes Ms. Roderick for her dedication to her students and to the larger school community, and for her brilliance as a teacher of history. We are grateful for the many well-prepared and inspired students that she sends on to the
Department of History  
University of Washington  
318 Smith Box 353560  
Seattle, WA 98195-3560

Phone: (206) 543-5790  
Fax: (206) 543-9451  
histmain@uw.edu