

Teacher of the Year Committee – high school

It is with great pleasure that I nominate Mrs. Judith McCann for consideration for the 2020 Smart/Maher VFW National Citizenship Education Teacher Award. Judith has been a member of the Social Studies department at Westerly High School since 2001.

Mrs. McCann's AP European History class was able to receive an 80% passing rate on their Advance Placement exam. Her skills, knowledge and willingness to help her students in preparation for this difficult test contributed to this exemplary performance by her class.

Judith obtained her Bachelor of Arts in History, with a minor in Education from the University of Maine, Orono and her Masters from Connecticut College.

“I first decided to teach history because I truly loved learning about the past that helped create our world. I was fascinated by the stories of Ancient Greece and Rome, how they established great empires but also how these great empires fell from power. Several of my history professors were able to paint pictures in my mind of the past, as though I was there and it inspired me to learn more. I wanted to create that type of environment for my future students, to envision these events but also to understand why the past is so significant for our world today and for the future.”

Following her history professors, she as well paints pictures for her students with her daily instruction. On a recent school trip to our nation's capital McCann witnessed a large group of WWII veterans at the changing of the guard at Arlington. Through the use of personal photos, she then integrated them with lesson plans with her classes to emphasize the significant contributions of our veterans to our great nation. This has allowed her students to better understand our history in not only seeing the past but hearing first hand experiences from WWII veterans. Students need to see the past, hear the past and write about the past to truly understand all historical events.

It is without hesitation that I nominate Judith McCann for the 2020 Smart/Maher VFW National Citizenship Education Teacher Award.