

2018-2019 Teacher Of The Year Award Recipient Stacey Gibson



Stacey Gibson pictured with

Memorial School Principal Andrew Gonzalez and Assistant Principal Brandy Gadoury

The 2018-19 Teacher of the Year is Stacey Gibson, Preschool Teacher at the Memorial School.

The East Hampton Teacher of the Year in conjunction with the State of Connecticut Teacher of the Year Program has as its purpose to recognize and honor teacher excellence. Today we celebrate excellence in teaching by recognizing one of our many teachers who have inspired a love for learning in their students and who have distinguished themselves in the profession.

Stacey has literally “created” the full-day Smart Start program at the Memorial School. She has provided rich experiences for students including meeting professionals in our community, celebrating holidays and events, performing for parents, and making sure the students are an active part of the school community at Memorial. But even more important is the tremendous academic and social progress that she has been able to foster in her students. The data supports tremendous academic growth in a population that traditionally entered Kindergarten without any schooling at all. The social growth in the students has

prepared students for a full day Kindergarten experience, giving them an invaluable introduction to school life.

Stacey clearly understands the needs and capabilities of the Pre School student. The full day preschool program was new to our school district and a new experience for her. She took the time to prepare herself, our community, and our students for a first-rate program. Her personal commitment to this program is so evident when you see the materials that she prepares for the students on a regular basis. Every theme, every holiday, every event is highlighted by materials, props, sets, and pieces created by Stacey!

Stacey's Pre-School program should be a model that the state uses as an exemplar. It's more than a preparation for Kindergarten. Looking just at the program on its own, it lays the ground floor for an absolutely positive school experience for these students for the rest of their school careers!

In her application for Teacher of the Year, Stacey mentioned that a colleague told her that "my class is a progression and an experience." Stacey indicated that this conversation left her thinking about the atmosphere she wanted to create for preschool children. She includes that she stepped outside of her comfort zone to teach Pre-K and recreate herself as an educator. She writes, "When you change, you grow. I jumped in head first in May, read the grant, reviewed the application, started asking questions, and built a classroom."

Stacey has done much more than build a classroom, she has impacted the lives of our youngest learners in the most positive way. Our newest learners start their journey through their school year with a great start thanks to Stacey.

As a school district we are proud that Stacey will represent the East Hampton Teachers this school year, 2018-19. She will be recognized at the Bushnell Theater at the annual State of Connecticut Teacher of the Year Celebration on Wednesday, December 5th representing all teachers, schools, and the community of East Hampton.