

FEBRUARY 2026 TEACHERS of EXCELLENCE®

Recognizing Excellence in Teaching Through Dedication, Compassion & Knowledge

PROFILE

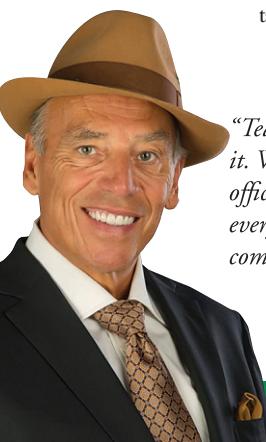


KASSANDRA LUDLOW,
Fourth Grade
Oak Hill
Elementary School,
Lowell

PROFILE



RICHELLE AUBIN,
Interventionist
Veterans Elementary
School,
Hobart



"Teachers provide a foundation for life as we know it. Without them there would be no doctors, police officers, authors, scientists, engineers ... virtually every vocation. We appreciate and acknowledge their commitment to making our world a better place."

Best Regards,
Kenneth J. Allen



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PROFILE

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WHY TEACHING IS MORE THAN A DAY JOB:

Tiffany King loves making learning fun. "I love to add songs, dances, chants and hands-on activities to help my students learn and understand new skills," King says. "Hearing them use the same language and encouraging words while they help each other or work independently makes me feel like the best teacher in the world. I wanted to be a teacher because I want to help others learn while feeling safe and welcome despite what they have going on outside of school. School was always a place that made me feel connected to others when life was hard and I was dealing with things outside of my control. My teachers always made me feel seen and important, and it is my dream and mission to do that for our most innocent and vulnerable." King earned her bachelor's degree in general and special education from Indiana University Northwest along with a certificate to help students who speak more than one language..

FAVORITE PART OF TEACHING:

King recalls when one of her students made a cute but insightful comment during an Earth Day lesson about keeping garbage out of bodies of water. "One student said, 'If we keep throwing plastic in the ocean, then the turtles will need plastic surgery.' I love this memory because we were talking about a pretty serious topic, and he was trying to use what he knew to make connections about what we were learning. Also, it was cute and funny. Teaching is all about making connections."

TIFFANY KING,
Kindergarten
South Haven
Elementary School,
Valparaiso



KRISTY STEPHENS,
Eighth Grade
Language Arts
Hebron Middle
School, Hebron

WHY TEACHING IS MORE THAN A DAY JOB:

"I truly enjoy working with middle school students because there is never a dull moment," Kristy Stephens says. "Their enthusiasm and silliness make our school a place full of laughter. It is exciting to work with students at an age where they are constantly changing and growing. I value the opportunity to help them as they develop into who they will become in the future." Stephens earned her bachelor's degree from Indiana University Bloomington and has been teaching at Hebron Middle School for 26 years. She enjoys helping in

her school community through activities and events outside the classroom.

FAVORITE PART OF TEACHING:

Stephens says that one of her favorite yearly classroom activities is the "Shark Tank" project. "Our eighth graders participate in a 'Shark Tank' project that culminates with their pitch to various community members who volunteer their time to serve as evaluators. It's great to see a community that genuinely cares for its students and to see our students rise to the occasion with such professionalism and creativity."