

2006 HONOREE

Bill Richey

Xenia High School, Xenia, OH
High School Science Education • 11th Grade Chemistry



Years Teaching: 20

Average Class Size: 25

Classes Taught Per Day: 5

School's % of ESL Students: 1%

School Type: Public, Med. City

Type of Class: Self-contained

“A positive and colorful environment is essential if quality teaching and learning is to take place. With that in mind, two themes permeate my classroom: attitude and discovery. In ten years, my chemistry students will probably forget how to calculate the molarity of a solution, but I hope they will never forget that I’ve taught them how important a good attitude is to success. A good attitude starts with me, the teacher. When the tardy bell rings and the classroom door is closed, there is only one attitude that matters. There is only one person who can make magic in the classroom.

Teachers are the heart and soul of education. If I have a negative attitude, it carries over to my students. Many of my students come from broken and single-parent homes and I may be the only stable adult they come into contact with on a day-to-day basis. My students cannot change their past, nor can they change the circumstances and the environment in which they live, but I can help to influence their futures. I often remind my students that they can either ‘fly with the eagles or muck around with the chickens.’”

“My teaching style should be filled with things to make my students question, think, and problem solve. I have a poster next to my chalkboard that I often look at. On it is a quote by William Yates that says, ‘Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire.’ Whether that fire extinguishes or bursts



into a huge flame is up to me. Anyone can fill a pail of a student by making that student memorize facts, but it takes a special educator to light the fire of his or her students and convert that stored up potential into future possibilities.”

“There are few teachers who have a more positive effect on students than Mr. Richey. At my high school, both the man and the subject he teaches are spectacles of excitement and passionate learning. Mr. Richey’s fascinating ability to captivate students comes from his ability to entertain them. The man has a quirky, yet markedly genuine sense of humor. Some teachers who possess a sense of humor as electric as Mr. Richey’s spend too much time amusing their students, but not Mr. Richey. His keen sense of humor is well integrated into the rigorous teaching of chemistry.”

— former student

OTHER HIGHLIGHTS:

RadioShack National Teacher (2001) • Milken National Educator (1999) • Ohio Teacher of the Year (1998) • Howard Post Excellence in Education Award, Xenia High School Valedictorians (15 times)