Outstanding Educator Mary Adams

Amy Moore

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Ms. Johnson feels that personal growth is an important goal in organized sports. “The biggest lesson I learned playing soccer happened during a game I was playing goalie,” she said. “The other team scored a crucial goal because my defense was not communicating. I was furious. My attitude dropped, and I wanted to quit. My dad pulled me to the sideline as the game was going on and told me that my attitude affected everyone else’s attitude around me. My mood would either enhance their performance or bring them down. I have taken that advice and have used it with my own team. I take it into my classroom too.”

Fall of 2005, in addition to the soccer-coaching job, Ms. Johnson was offered a part-time position at KHS teaching At-Risk students. Principal Fine said, “She looked forward to this opportunity to make a connection and a difference with the students that struggled academically.”

With Michigan’s high-quality teacher-education programs and surplus of teaching talent, the state has become a prime recruiting location for other states where teaching opportunities are plentiful. Spring of 2005, recruiters from Baltimore, Maryland, had offered Ms. Johnson a teaching position in their school district. “I considered the Maryland job,” she said, “but I liked Kelloggsville High School—the staff, the students, and the challenges they offered me.”

Ms. Johnson is now a full-time teacher at KHS. She is a freshman class advisor and a judge on the creative writing committee. She has completed her second season as Kelloggsville Middle School girls’ track coach.

Thirty-six students have signed up to try out for the Rockets, the KHS varsity soccer team. Ms. Johnson will be their coach for the 2006 fall season. Because she was willing to venture outside the box—outside her realm of comfort and familiarity and into a non-traditional job—she has become a role model for a young emerging soccer team that any player, male or female, would do well to emulate.

“Ms. Johnson has embraced all challenges and is making a difference in the lives of the students at Kelloggsville High School,” Fine said. “She greets her students and athletes with a friendly smile and serves as a positive role model on a daily basis. We look forward to the impact she will make in our school.”

“I hope always to be an inspiration to my students,” Ms. Johnson said. “I want to encourage them to become whatever they dream to be. I love teaching these kids; I love them teaching me.”

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