



# *Teacher of the Year*

## **Marci Groesbeck**

From the moment I stepped into their classroom, I knew this class wouldn't be an easy A. This class challenged me every day, and one thing I appreciated most about this teacher was the methods for imparting knowledge were always different. They called on the whole class, not quite content with letting the same 5 kids answer every question. They roamed the classroom, peaking under drawn hoods, pulling back headphones, and reaching into the back corners where the D students thought they would be safe from having to contribute. They thought wrong.

I believe it was this educator that gave me one of my first unchangeable B's, and I was distraught. But they assured me that my GPA would remain intact, and life would go on. It was my persistence and theirs that showed me it is not the teachers that give us the easy path, but the ones who show us the challenge, that grow us the most. My work ethic tripled, and it was because of their methods that I returned a stronger student the next year, hoping that this year, maybe they would have a more lax style, but again, I had failed to see that this educator had one style, and it was the style of quality. I found that this so-called "elective course" was one that I constantly had to work to get an A in. I wish so badly that we had more teachers like this one. One that made you think, made you work for it. I have to say, the class changed my worldview completely.

Our teacher had chosen to not shy away from a difficult subject matter and discussed something that had affected a loved one, not because it was easy, but because it added to our understanding of the complicated subject. I had never seen such vulnerability with an educator before, and I experienced newfound respect for this teacher. I had been shown that the right teachers take their job seriously and look for new and different ways to light a fire within their students. She has worked here for many years and often tells us stories about staff members come and gone. This teacher has been here through the ups and downs of West Valley High School, and ups and downs of her own. I have watched as she has lost much, gained much, and continues to pour passion into her work, her students, and everything she does. I am proud to say she was a teacher of mine, and I am humbled and honored to be able to present the Teacher of The Year Award to Mrs. Groesbeck.

Mrs. Groesbeck, I want to thank you. Your legacy within this school and community has impacted so many. Many teachers teach, but not many educate. Your course in Psychology has shown me how to have empathy. First and foremost, you infused your lessons with the moral that people with complicated mental health are people first. You taught our class humanity, and you inspire me and many others to challenge ourselves, not accepting less than what we can give. I sincerely hope that you recognize, as I do, your passion, drive, strength, and inspiration.

