

After reading parts of my nomination letter in the latest Region 7 newsletter, I felt as if I was described as a very busy teacher. In reality, however, I am blessed to say that in being an Art Educator, I am simply doing what I love each and every day and it is truly tremendous to be recognized in such an honorable way.

I would not be here today without the help, support, and love of some wonderful individuals. Not only was I nominated by Ms. Kathryn Clark, but I am also continually inspired by her. From elementary school art teacher (“Queen Paintbrush”) to mentor teacher to colleague, our journey together has been incredible. She continues to challenge, motivate, and inspire not only myself, but everyone around her.

I am lucky to be able to teach in such a wonderful environment for such a wonderful school district. Arlington Central School District supports the arts in a time when other programs are cutting back funding, jobs, and support for the arts. Union Vale Middle School- where I teach art to sixth graders- is a place where students and teachers come together in a positive, motivating environment. The middle school environment is genuinely unique- a place where students and teachers alike are incredibly passionate. I could not ask for better colleagues or more fabulous students.

I would also like to thank my fellow Art Educators of Region 7. Over the past few years, you have helped me grow and have inspired me to strive for excellence and have motivated me in all that I do. It was wonderful to see so many familiar faces at the awards ceremony supporting one another and celebrating who we are and the differences we’ve made in the lives of young people. We have accomplished so much.

Finally, I must thank my family for supporting me throughout this incredible journey. From donating grout to cutting wood for hundreds of students to scouring for materials, they love and encourage all that I do. To be named “Most Promising Art Educator” is not only an honor, but a challenge to become better and better, using Art Education as a catalyst for change and inspiration in the lives of young people. Thank you.

Sheri Altieri