

A FAME tribute to Renée Goin

By Jennifer Minor of Henry Clay High School

“So I learned a really geeky pick-up line today. Want to hear?” she questioned the class.

Acknowledging our curiosity, she proceeded. “If you were $\sin^2(x)$ and I was $\cos^2(x)$, we could get together and be 1!” she exclaimed. It was an obvious reference to our recently learned trigonometry equation: $\sin^2(x) + \cos^2(x) = 1$. As corny as the joke might have seemed, we all laughed along, and I doubt any one of us in pre-calculus class that day would ever be capable of forgetting that equation now.

Educators are considered some of the most valued professionals in society today. These are the individuals who teach our peers, family, friends and everyone else the fundamentals to learn in order to become anything later in life. Each of these nominated teachers has made some impact on another student. Maybe they effectively taught English, and the student aspires to become a journalist. Or maybe it's the physics teacher who taught them interactively all they need to know in preparation for an engineering degree in college next year. However, the greatest teacher of my education is not based on academics alone.

Ms. Goin is more than the ordinary math teacher. Her spunk and spirit brighten up every day like a beam of sunshine in her windowless room. Despite the fact that I already enjoyed math, her teaching style kept me interested in learning and pursuing development and growth in knowledge. Whether it was a cheesy pick-up line, graphic cue or song, there was always some new way to remember her lessons. Beyond her skill in mathematics and instruction of core

content, she taught me lessons on “being a person.” She is a cheerleader in determination and coach in persistence. At the climax where I’d do anything to give up, she would be standing next to me saying, “You know this, think a little harder, dig a little deeper. I know you now this.” When the time to schedule classes for my senior year came around, it never crossed my mind to not take her Calculus 2 class. In an environment so welcoming, knowledge so abundant, I couldn’t help but join in. She is the person I know I can always turn to, who will understand my sarcasm, continue to push me further and encourage me to follow my dreams.

As a kindergartener, many children look forward to that excitement of going to school. Gradually as you grow older, that enthusiasm dwindles, and by the time you’ve reached your senior year, you’re ready to be done with school and graduate. Ms. Goin’s class is the exception because just as a kindergartener anticipates that first school experience, I still look forward to going to Calculus 2 each day. I can’t say I know any other teachers who help design T-shirts, but I also don’t know many other students other than Ms. Goin’s who would proudly wear an “I Love Calculus BC” shirt. There is a reason for these students’ enjoyment and promotion of that class. As Ever Garrison once said, “A teacher is a compass that activates the magnets of curiosity, knowledge and wisdom in the pupils.” Ms. Goin has been my compass. An inspiration. A friend. An incredible individual. She is an extraordinary teacher.