



TEACHER of the Month

**MEGAN DEROCHA –BIOLOGY TEACHER AT
THE JOHN CARROLL SCHOOL**

How long have you been teaching?

This is my 12th year teaching high school biology. I taught for 6 years in New Jersey prior to moving to Maryland. It was a real blessing to be hired at The John Carroll School. I currently teach biology, honors biology, and advanced placement biology.

Where are you from?

I was raised on a small farm in New Jersey prior to moving to Bel Air.

When did you know you wanted to teach?

I always enjoyed helping others, and I had a fascination with the outdoors and animals. In sixth grade, we covered biology. From that point on, I knew that becoming a biology teacher would be the perfect profession for me.

What do you do in your classroom that makes you a unique teacher?

My former students have shared that they appreciated my excitement about the content we cover. I try to incorporate as many hands-on activities as possible yet strive to make my class challenging. I hope that my students leave my class with a greater appreciation for biology and respect for the world around them.

What are some of the challenges that you face?

I have been blessed with wonderful students, but sometimes it is challenging to get them excited about certain topics. The idea of photosynthesis makes a lot of people tune out. The biggest challenge I face is getting my students interested and excited to learn about everything biology.

What are some of the biggest rewards of teaching?

One of the biggest rewards of teaching is hearing that a student likes my class and appreciates biology. I love when students ask in-depth questions about the material we are learning which indicates they are really taking it all in. Furthermore, I have had former students tell me that I was influential in their college decisions to major in biology. Can there be a better reward?

What are your favorite sports teams?

Well, I played collegiate field hockey and lacrosse but never really followed any teams. Now, living in Maryland, I would have to say the Ravens!

Do you have any hobbies?

In December I completed my second master's degree (MS Biotechnology from JHU) which consumed most of my free time. I now look forward to spending more time with my husband and my 2 year old son. I also enjoy training and showing my dog, a black Labrador Retriever named Ellie.

What are your favorite hangouts in Bel Air/Harford County?

So here is where my biology teacher mentality shines through. I love going to the 'Duck Pond' next to John Carroll with my family, the Bel Air Farmers' Market, or walking the Ma and Pa trail. We also frequent the Plumpton Park Zoo and various farms during the summer/fall.

To nominate a teacher of the month, contact Laura at Laura.Rowland@n2pub.com