

Veterans of Foreign Wars
Department of Vermont
Teacher of the Year 2019-2020 Grades K-5

Alison Sylvester is a 5th grade teacher at Union Street School in Springfield VT. She is sponsored by Springfield VFW Post 771 and it's auxiliary.

Alison Sylvester has been teaching in the Springfield District 14 years of her 19 years of teaching. She has taught grades 1 through 5 in every subject. Currently she is teaching 5th grade students all subjects.

One-year Alison coordinated a pen pal project with local veterans. Throughout the year they would write back and forth. It gave the students a connection to veterans within the community. Some students even wanted to continue that relationship after the school year.

She had guest speakers come to her class and talk about the Honor Flight and their mission. That year her students wrote cards to be delivered during the next New England Honor Flight.



Throughout the years Alison has not only taught the Pledge of Allegiance but taught the meaning of each statement. It is important to know what we are pledging, not to just say the words.

Every year she would have her students talk about Veterans' Day and Memorial Day. She emphasizes the difference between the days and why they are so vastly different.

Alison is a strong member of the community and teaches her students the meaning of being an important member of a community. She works with her 5th graders to be the leaders of the school and to be there for the younger students. Giving back to our community, whether it is the school, town, state or the nation is everyone's responsibility.

Recently the principal stepped down at her school. During this time the students questioned who was in charge. Alison took this opportunity to work with her students to understand the hierarchy of the public-school system. She further explained that the school board oversees the superintendent and the running of the schools. They learned that the school board members were voted in by the people of Springfield. With this knowledge, they now understand the importance of voting and that each vote counts.

We need more teachers as dedicated to their students and the community as Alison Sylvester does!

For these reasons, I feel that Alison should be selected for the Smart/Maher VFW National Citizenship

Cindy Brown