

## **2022-2023 St. John Baptiste Excellence in Education Award Winners:**

**Mr. Gerry Scudella** joined SMSA in February of 2023 as the 5-8 grade Band Instructor. The Holy Spirit guided us together - it is the only way to explain it. Gerry came forward, at a much needed time and his experience and gifts shone brightly through the last months of school. His talents were illuminated throughout the spring concert while beautiful music radiated through the middle school students' instruments.

Leading the band of Middle School students is not an easy task. Clearly, Gerry respects his students, the music, and the instruments that are played. He demonstrates this to his students by holding them accountable individually and as a band. You can hear Gerry say, "the band only works if we all work together." Responsibility and leadership is easy to observe in Gerry's daily life. He is always where he needs to be, serving his role with great pride, accountability and gratitude - holding students to the SMSA standards and not settling for less than their best efforts.

Faith and community tie our last two core values together. Gerry can be seen at Holy Family weekend Masses, in service to others, playing his own instruments and sharing his gifts, to enhance the Mass experience for all.

Gerry - you are an inspiration to so many around you. You embody the Ledger Way core values and animate them through your everyday thoughts, words and actions in serving our students, parents and colleagues. Your heart is special because you love the students you educate, and love them enough to hold them accountable to our Ledger Way. You remind us it is not the amount of time you have, but what you do with the time you have that counts.

Mr. Gerry Scudella, thank you for being a Buffalo leader, charging into the storm last February, positively influencing others around you and sharing your gifts with SMSA and our larger faith community.

**Mr. Greg Zimmer** joined the high school teaching staff of SMSA in 2021 after 28 years of teaching experience, serving previously at Hartford Union High School, and Fond du Lac High School. Mr. Zimmer holds a BA in Economics from Northland College, and BS in Broadfield Science from UW-Milwaukee. He also has earned a Master of Science Degree in Managerial Science from Cardinal Stritch University, and Wisconsin DPI Masters Licenses in Chemistry, Science, and Biology/Life Sciences. Greg and his wife Mary are the proud parents of three SMSA alumni, Gabe ('16); Leah ('18) and Joseph ('21).

Among his previous professional distinctions, Mr. Zimmer earned the prestigious and rigorous National Board Certification as a teacher in 2003 and renewed certification in 2013. Mr. Zimmer has also been recognized as a Herb Kohl Teacher Fellow for demonstrated teaching excellence.

'Our' Mr. Zimmer is an innovator. Last year, he was instrumental in securing a \$5,000 G.I.F.T.S. Grant from the Archdiocese of Milwaukee to launch the SMSA Trout in the Classroom project in a partnership with the Trout Unlimited environmental education program. The successes we have enjoyed with that fantastic program were featured in a video shown at the Archbishop's Catholic Schools dinner in Milwaukee last Spring! Mr. Zimmer's unwavering commitment to this project was inspired by his deep desire to help his students grow and make meaningful connections with God's magnificent creation.

On the Ledge, we talk about being "soulful educators"; Mr. Zimmer exemplifies this quality, grasping that the students we serve are creations of God with both visible and invisible truths to recognize. Soulful educators understand that there is more to the human condition than meets the eye, more to the children in our classrooms than our five senses can affirm. Greg Zimmer is indeed a soulful educator who embraces the promise and mystery of both the observable and unseen truth found in students. He is a person of expansion and inclusion, joyfully offering a courageous "yes" to serve the needs of others – most especially the lost souls sometimes found within our school.

A natural born teacher, Mr. Zimmer establishes an engaging and welcoming classroom environment where everybody learns. Why? Because their teacher believes in them, prays for them - and with them - cares for them, and thoughtfully prepares lessons that nurture and sometimes amaze them! Junior Ian Gallindo - who was asked to help with the Trout in the Classroom project told me: "Mr. Zimmer is cool. He likes us, notices us and asks us to step-up to help with the project. He values me and all his students."

On behalf of all my high school colleagues and the Ledger we serve, we congratulate Mr. Greg Zimmer for his well deserved recognition as educator of the year!

**Mrs. Summer Anderson** "Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms" (1 Peter 4:10). This statement helped early Christians know how to live so that their lives, both individually and collectively, would glorify God.

Summer Anderson exemplifies this message and illustrates her love for others through her work. This is Summer's third year serving St. Mary's Springs Academy as the Coordinator of Campus Ministry. Prior to that, Summer worked in our Elementary School office and has been a supportive parent. Summer and her husband, Mike, are the proud parents of Ben, Aiden, Lily and Maddie. No matter what role Summer plays, she is dedicated to supporting our students and staff.

Summer currently oversees the Campus Ministry Core Team, who, along with our School Chaplain, (this year with Father Michael), create experiences for our students to learn about and serve through their faith. From class retreats to prayer services, from Mass to service opportunities, Summer is passionate about supporting the spiritual formation of others. In fact, our Campus Ministry club in the high school has doubled in size since Summer has taken the

lead! Summer selflessly devotes her time to others and endlessly encourages others to share their God given gifts as she shares her own with us.

Thank you, Summer, for your stewardship and leading with your faith. Most of all, thank you for sharing your gifts with the SMSA and Holy Family Communities.