

Experiences outside classrooms ignite relevant lessons for life



Using her math skills and strategies, math teacher Ayola Vesey assists sophomore Michael Fording during class time.



As a First Lieutenant in the United States Army, Ayola Vesey gives a proud smile of her promotion in 2000, eventually becoming a Company Commander in Baghdad, Iraq.

Ayola has traveled from Alaska where she grew up to Hawaii, Colorado, North Carolina, Texas, Florida, Missouri, New York, Georgia, and California within the United States.

Other countries she has been to include Germany, Ireland, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Budapest, Canada, Kuwait, Qatar, and Iraq. Within the last five years, she has been to Japan, China, and Korea.

Soldiering a New Tour of Duty

What a soldier brings from the battle field to the classroom influences and inspires students in many ways.

Math teacher Ayola Vesey was an officer in the United States Army for eight years of which her last job was serving as a Company Commander in Baghdad, Iraq.

Ayola's most memorable experience serving in the military happened her last year in Baghdad where she was in charge of 140 soldiers.

"During the year in Iraq, I drove the most dangerous roads in the world. The enemy would plant bombs on the road I had to drive on with my soldiers. The base where I stayed at during the deployment was attacked with mortar bombs every morning and every night.

Several soldiers were killed during that deployment and many of them slept in the trailer next to me and my soldiers.

Despite all the dangers of this deployment, all 140 of my soldiers made it back safely. I credit all that to God for keeping us safe," said Ayola.

Born into a military family at Andrews Air Force Base, Maryland, Ayola worked as an industrial Engineer at Miller Brewery in Milwaukee, Wisconsin where she applied her B.S. in Industrial Engineering.

After that job, she started her teaching career in mathematics at Churchill High School in San Antonio, Texas. Later she went with family to Okinawa, Japan to teach math at Kadena Middle school on Kadena Air Force Base, Okinawa before moving to the Quad Cities to teach at North.

What Ayola likes the most about teaching at North is "the opportunity to help kids have fun learning math. "I didn't like math until I had a teacher that made the class fun for me. He also showed me that I was capable of learning anything and I just needed to find a way to maximize my learning style.

I also love creating positive experiences in my classroom and throughout the school. I enjoy sponsoring club like the Cultural Diversity Club to help students learn how to appreciate the differences and diversity on our campus and in our community," said Ayola.

Because of a struggling time with a college math class, she passes onto all students the lesson that she learned.

"If you find a teacher who makes learning easy for you, stay in touch with him or her. The key is to take the time to learn your learning style and try to link up with those teachers who teaching styles match your learning style," said Ayola.

Along with all of her travels, she has a husband, Jerry L. Vesey, Jr., three children who are Jerry D. Vesey III, Arianna Vesey, and Xavier Vesey.

Her outside of school organizations an activities center around being a member of Messiah Temple Apostolic Church and an active YMCA member at the Bettendorf gym.

~ Jaye Katz