



## PRESS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## Monrovia High Names Annie Van Dyke as Teacher of the Year

**MONROVIA** – Student political cartoons depicting the Trump administration, LGBT rights and the war in the Middle East, cover the classroom wall of 24-year Monrovia High School history teacher Annie Van Dyke.

Van Dyke is known for inciting lively debates in her class and tackling provocative topics. Her ability to motivate her students to think beyond their personal perspectives to give thoughtful answers to real-world topics garnered her Monrovia Unified's 2018 Teacher of the Year Award.

"Students have a lot to say and if they're given the opportunity to express themselves, they can be exceedingly eloquent," Van Dyke said. "Having the opportunity to make discussions about historic and current events issues eventually becomes my students' favorite aspect of class because it allows them to think and be creative."

Van Dyke was honored at a Nov. 8 Board of Education meeting and commended for advocating for new professional development training and infusing civil discourse in her lessons to ensure students are ready for college-level discussions.

"Annie's dynamic classroom motivates students to think creatively and question the status quo," Principal Kirk McGinnis said. "I often bring campus tours or campus visitors through her class to see the high level of rigor in which her students engage in daily."

In addition to spurring vibrant discussions in class, Van Dyke helps students with college essays, coaches the academic decathlon team, and is the driving force behind the school's new Humanities Academy. She also attends teaching workshops to improve her instruction methods and shares these practices with her Monrovia High colleagues.

"Annie is a positive force in the lives of her students," Monrovia Unified Board President Bryan Wong said. "She makes sure all of her classes are engaging and provides a solid education in both knowledge and skills that will help them for the rest of their lives."

**MORE**

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### OUR MISSION

Inspire students to engage in meaningful learning in a safe and nurturing environment that embraces diversity.

Challenge students to be ethical, productive members and leaders of the community.

### OUR VISION

Our students will be ethical, compassionate individuals who:  
 ■ graduate from high school prepared for college and career,  
 ■ contribute and adapt to an ever-changing world by being resourceful and responsible citizens, and  
 ■ embrace diversity.

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Van Dyke has taught geography, world history, AP U.S. History and AP Art History and served as a bilingual coordinator during her 24 years in the District.

"Annie's classroom discussions allow our students to talk about real-world issues," Monrovia Unified Superintendent Dr. Katherine Thorossian said. "They learn to listen to opposing viewpoints, argue while using facts and remain civil at all times during and after discourses. Thanks to Annie, our students will be able to develop solutions to today's issues while shaping the ideas of tomorrow."

### PHOTOS:

**112217\_MONROVIA\_TOTY1:** Monrovia High School history teacher Annie Van Dyke helps a student on an in-class assignment. Van Dyke was named Monrovia Unified's 2018 Teacher of the Year for motivating students to think beyond their personal perspectives to give thoughtful answers to real-world topics.

**112217\_MONROVIA\_TOTY2:** Monrovia High School history teacher Annie Van Dyke leads her class and the day's lesson.

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