

Mrs. Emily Himonidis, St. Henry District High School

Nominated by Kaitlin Staverman

Why My Drama Teacher Rocks My Socks

Mrs. Himonidis (Mrs. H.) is the best drama director in the whole world. She makes sure that every person on stage knows why and what they are fighting for. She always reminds us that it is not the leads that make a show great; it's also the cast that backs them up. To accomplish this she sits down with each cast member and asks them about the character they have created. She wants to know our character's name, where we were born, how old we are, how we came to be in the place where we are, etc. It takes time and dedication, but it shows us how valuable each and every member of the cast is.

She does an amazing job of making everyone feel welcome. She always makes the cast larger than it needs to be in order to include everyone, especially the students who don't feel like they fit in any place else and often they don't. She takes a group of students, all of differing levels of talent, and transforms us into actors. When we come to our first practice we are all very separate, but by the end of the show we have become a family which is largely because of the safe-haven Mrs. H. creates at SHDHS. Additionally, students who may not feel that they have enough acting ability get a chance to participate by student directing.

Another reason Mrs. H. inspires me is through her dedication and sacrifice. Over the past four years she has adopted three kids from Guatemala, but she gives up hundreds of hours with them to be at play practice. She creates a professional playbill for the shows, has a special senior/preview night to recognize the seniors, with individual letters and serves a dinner for the parents, all things that take extra time and go above and beyond just putting on a show.

However, the most impressive thing that Mrs. H. does is to transform our cafetorium, into incredible settings year after year. During my four years, the cafetorium has become a barnyard, a tropical island community, New York in the 1920s, and the land of Egypt for this year's production of AIDA all with such limited funding. People always tell us that we put on the most professional high school performances, yet we perform in our school cafeteria.

Mrs. H. has truly made a difference in my life by teaching me to become a more outgoing person and helping me to break out of my shell. She taught me that it's okay to be yourself and to make sure you have fun in whatever you do. We all know that she will help us with any problem and can always put a smile on our faces. Overall, Mrs. H. is the best director because she truly cares about each and every one of her cast members, especially those who need it the most.