

# Theresa (Terry) Annette Goltermann



The Region 2 Virginia Teacher of the Year is Theresa (Terry) Annette Goltermann, a veteran teacher of 27 years, 14 of which have been in York County School Division. At Tabb Middle School, she

has taught science and is currently teaching programming and game design, engineering design and problem-solving, and digital literacy. Previously, Ms. Goltermann taught seven years at the American International School in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, and six years in Florida.

Ms. Goltermann earned a Bachelor of Science in science education from the University of Central Florida. In 2012, she received a Master of Arts in Education and Human Development, majoring in educational leadership and human development, from The George Washington University in the District of Columbia.

As a young child, Ms. Goltermann's love for science began. She recalls that her second-grade teacher taught her how to make playdough, and she went home to make it herself. She stated that her "love of science grew when her eighth-grade science teacher explained the physics of sound, and her class played their homemade instruments forming a classroom band that brought complaints from the teachers next door." Her passion for science grew even more when her high school chemistry teacher performed the burning salts demonstration, explaining why the salts burned different colors. Now, in her own classroom, she provides experiences so "her students make their own memories formulating their own paths."

In 2014, a spin-off course in learning code through game design was created as a result of Ms. Goltermann's sponsorship of after-school science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) clubs to dig deeper into projects, such as programming robots,

building remotely operated vehicles (ROVs), and creating digital products. Now over 200 students are reached annually by Ms. Goltermann through her classes and clubs.

Serving as a leader in her school, Ms. Goltermann sponsors four afterschool STEM Programs, two of which are competitive team events. She also has been a peer mentor, supervising teacher for preservice teachers, science department chair, Project-Based and Transformative Learning Cohort member, and Science Fair coordinator.

Ms. Goltermann was recognized as the Air Force Association's 2014 Virginia Teacher of the Year. The purpose of the program is to recognize classroom science and mathematics teachers who prepare students to use and contribute to new technologies. Other recognitions include the following: American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics scholarship recipient in 2013 and 2015, Armed Forces Communications and Electronics Association (AFCEA) Tidewater Chapter Teacher Tools Award Winner in 2013 and 2014, and the Siemen's Teachers as Researchers Fellow (Oakridge National Laboratory) in 2014.

"I hope my legacy as a teacher," states Ms. Goltermann, "is that I hatched the next generation of STEM innovators. I have always had a passion for science and engineering, but in the last five years I have incorporated specific methods which increase students' capacity to learn science and technology in preparation for the workforce. Central to my methods are the three beliefs: make learning fun, foster purposeful relationships, and empower students to be life-long learners."

The principal of Tabb Middle School, Ms. Heather Young, wrote the following: "Ms. Goltermann has dedicated much of her career to inspiring young learners while creating a buzz for STEM-related courses and opportunities in the York County School Division (YCSD). In addition to

her strong content knowledge, she is the consummate professional with a sunny disposition. Her rapport with students and dedication to student discovery make her an extraordinary asset to our division and a true gift to our students... Ms. Goltermann is wildly ambitious and has a work ethic beyond compare. As a physical science teacher, she saw students who thrived when given hands-on tasks, but were limited to explore further because of time constraints with the fast paced curriculum. This was not a barrier for Ms. Goltermann. Instead she developed and sponsored an after-school club to provide students with the creative outlet they craved. This club was the catalyst for a course that Ms. Goltermann created for YCSD: Engineering Design and Problem Solving. Shortly after, Ms. Goltermann began tinkering with coding a Raspberry Pi and shared it with her students. They were instantly hooked so she designed the curriculum for the Introduction to Computer Programming and Game Design course. As a result of Ms. Goltermann's passion and tenacity, these courses are now offered at three YCSD middle schools with parents actively lobbying to bring them to the remaining middle school. Not only did she design the courses, she enjoys a collaborative partnership with the other course teachers and is always willing to lend a hand to support their efforts. In addition, Ms. Goltermann works tirelessly outside of school hours to sponsor a plethora of successful groups to include Sea Perch, Robotics, Girls Who Code and First Lego League, which has qualified for state competition the last two consecutive years. When funding threatens an idea, Ms. Goltermann starts writing. In the last five years alone, Ms. Goltermann has been awarded over \$17,000 in grants... What a perfect example for all Virginia educators!"