

Celebration of Excellence

Employee of the Month

CHS – Michael Elder

College I attended: After graduating from High School I moved to SFA where I earned a bachelors degree in combined sciences and attended classes in the Pre-Medicine track on route to become a Dentist. After getting accepted to Dental school in San Antonio, I came to the realization that I was not following my heart in becoming a dentist and decided to go back to school at SFA to earn a Masters degree in science. I earned a masters degree in biology with an emphasis in microbiology/cell and molecular biology.



Years in Education: I spent two years while getting my Masters Degree teaching biology labs at SFA and I have now been teaching in Center for three years.

Who is your greatest supporter/ inspiration: My wife Amanda has my back 100 percent. She has always been there for me and was undoubtedly my biggest inspiration in becoming a teacher. She has always dreamed of becoming a teacher and the way that she touches those 1st grade babies lives on a daily basis really encouraged me to become a compassionate and inspirational teacher. From the time I told her I was thinking about applying for a teaching position at the High School level until now, she has done nothing but encourage and motivate me to be the best teacher I could possible be.

Why did you choose to become an educator? From the moment I entered college I as very involved in my classes as well as on campus study groups. While I didn't realize my passion for teaching immediately, I did notice that I spent a significant amount of time explaining concepts to my peers in study groups. I enjoyed doing this and felt like they were also so appreciative and grateful. I never considered a career in education because I felt as though I was too shy to stand up in front a group of people and speak everyday of my life. I overcame this fear when I had no other option financially but to teach biology labs at SFA while earning my masters degree. The experience I gained at SFA gave me the confidence to follow this career path that I love so much.

What makes a good teacher? A good teacher realizes that the curriculum being taught is not the most important thing that can be taught to a student. I feel like I am meant to be a teacher. Not because my divine purpose in life was to teach students about physics or anatomy and physiology, but something much greater. I know that I am here to show students love and how to behave as a man or as a husband or as a functioning citizen in our society. To teach them what it means to show up to work everyday with a positive attitude and prepared to give 100 percent of yourself regardless of your circumstances. I think a good teacher is one that teaches both through words but more importantly through actions.

One area in which I need improvement. Sometimes, I get so caught up trying to teach students what I know is the required curriculum that I forget that I am not only here for that reason and I need to step back and realize that these students also need someone to just show them that they are noticed and that they are cared for.

What do you love about CISD: I love that I wake up every morning excited to come to work. I know that when I show up the students will be respectful and all of the staff have each other's back. I know that the administration values me as an instructor and I value them as administrators. I feel as though they know that I am going to do what it takes to get my job done to the best of my abilities in the classroom.

From Around Campus:

"Mr. Elder is everywhere. If he is not teaching or coaching soccer, he is assisting someone, somewhere doing something. I know I mostly see what goes on in the 200 wing, but, if Mr. Elder hasn't won yet this year, I would hope that he is recognized this month or soon."

"He is teaching, keeping the kids happy, and a soccer coach, and the faith leader on school mornings, and the greatest UIL coach for science, and a fantastic A & P instructor at Panola - and still has time to continually smile and ask, "How are you? Need anything?"

"He is truly passionate about his students and what he teaches. He is unafraid to try new things and take chances. He always seems to have a room full of students before and after school."

"He seems to be working late every day with his UIL kids or tutoring for class. He is always upbeat with one of the best attitudes around."