



Bette Milleson James – Hoxie, KS

Bette James says her personal goals and beliefs about teaching are easily defined and very broad. She says, “I am here to prepare human beings for participation in the great experience that is life on this planet – an experience that involves joy and pain, hope and fear, gain and loss. Every person must somehow learn to know himself or herself, to find a place in the family of mankind, and to participate in the great, ongoing conversation that occurs in the literature and history of that family.” She feels these beliefs made her a better teacher as she found ways to lead students to these truths through her classroom experiences that focused on the basic skills of communication.

Her education background began in Hastings College, Hastings, Nebraska, from 1956-1958, then to Fort Hays State University, Hays, KS where she earned her BA in 1965, her MS in 1971, and her Reading Spec, in 1977. She also has earned many more hours of education from several higher learning institution as well as a large variety of professional growth activities, memberships and professional growth through staff development and training.

Her teaching experience began in 1958 at Hill City in second grade. From there, she substituted in Hoxie, all grades, for 7 years. Then the next step was instructing music, which began in 1968. Next was Title I Developmental Reading from 1972-1981. In 1981 she added English and Technology to her Reading courses until 1999. She also taught Outreach Night Classes at Colby Community College from 1986-1991. She continued at Community College for 2 more years as well as ACT Prep Tutoring from 2012-2021.

As a professional she has received numerous awards, and honors, as well as serving in various community positions. She has received grant awards and served for many years in her church as well as the community. In the larger community of the state, she had opportunities to give presentations on school profiles and writing and curriculum development, as well as QPA at the Kansas Association of School Boards Region Nine Conference. And in the even larger “community” of our world, her family was privileged to host Hoxie’s first international exchange student.

She finds it difficult to define highlights of her career. “Many occurred in only moments, when a student’s eyes lit up with understanding. Others were extended rewarding experiences. The career is ongoing even now, as I seemingly don’t know how to end it.”

Masayoshi Yamazaki was a student of Mrs. James at Hoxie High School. Currently he runs a Defense and Aerospace focused company in Japan. “As an exchange student, I lacked skills and capabilities for English in preparation for SAT tests. She kindly allowed me to attend her classes. As a result of her devoted coaching, I was able to enhance my English skills. Without Mrs. James’s intensive English Education, I would not be here doing what I do now. Therefore, I

strongly believe that she should be recognized by a fine institution like the Kansas Teachers' Hall of Fame." We sincerely agree and welcome her to the class of 2022.