



The Bolton Scholarship Fund

Investing in the future...

Renée Hartzog Smith Memorial Scholarship

Established July 2022

The Renée Hartzog Smith Memorial Scholarship is established to honor the memory and the commitment, dedication, and impact of a gifted Bolton Center School teacher. Renée taught grades 2, 5, 6, and 7th grade Language Arts during her 21-year tenure at BCS. She was a dynamic force in the classroom! Coincidentally, her frequently bestowed phrase, “May the Force be with you,” sent her students off to conquer their own independent goals. While setting high expectations for their best effort, she celebrated students’ individuality and developed their self-confidence with genuine love and vibrant humor.

As a teacher, Renée was an animated storyteller and oral reader. At times, her bounding voice carried into the hallway with the vivid orations of various story characters. Even the most reluctant reader would be drawn into characters and plots that she brought to life in the spirited environment she created. But within that joyful atmosphere, she never lost sight of high learning expectations. Dangling participles and careless spellings had no place in her presence! Every student was held accountable for a strong work ethic in pursuit of expected skills. When she announced, “The queen is in,” students knew they were about to embark on a challenging journey of learning, filled with encouragement and support.

Both students and colleagues quickly recognized Renée’s sincere care and genuine interest in others. She nourished the quiet student, guided the resistant one, and brought smiles, laughter, and a safe haven to all. No student escaped her notice or her plan for their success. She was credited by many as “my favorite teacher.” Students who went on to become teachers cited her as their inspiration. With that same care shown to students, she supervised student teachers, mentored new teachers, collaborated with colleagues, engaged with families, and made lifelong friends among those she encountered within these varied groups. A former student teacher, mentee, and colleague stated, “To know Renée is to love her. She looked out for me in all ways possible and gave me the best advice. She showed me what a confident teacher looked like.” Renée exemplified the qualities that every teacher aspires to. She made a difference.

The Renée Hartzog Smith scholarship reflects Renée’s love of the language arts by supporting a worthy recipient in the pursuit of a career or continued education in any language arts related field. Such pursuits might include teaching, journalism, research, correspondence, writing, public speaking, online media, copywriting, advertising, etc. As Renée conveyed to her students: The command of language arts skills strengthens the influence of words and offers the opportunity to inspire others. Hopefully, the recipients of this scholarship will inspire others in the same meaningful way that Renée inspired those who knew and loved her.