

Lisa Simms is Awarded Geauga SWCD 2020 Conservation Teacher of the Year

The Geauga Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) is proud to announce that Lisa Simms, a second grade teacher at Jordak Elementary, has been selected as the 2020 Conservation Teacher of the Year! Individuals are chosen for their exemplary efforts, accomplishments, and commitment to conservation education.

For over thirty years, Lisa has been teaching for the Cardinal School District. She began as an Intervention Specialist at Parkman Elementary in 1990, then started teaching second grade in 2000. In 2006, the District's three elementary schools consolidated to AJ Jordak Elementary School in Middlefield, where Lisa continued teaching second grade.

Throughout her teaching career, Lisa has incorporated as much science as she can through presenters and field trips. Lisa goes above and beyond to engage her students in many learning opportunities available throughout the county and community to positively impact her students' interests and proficiency in the sciences.



Geauga SWCD's Education Specialist, Gail Prunty (left), recognized Lisa Simms of Jordak Elementary (right) as the 2020 Conservation Teacher of the Year for her exemplary efforts, accomplishments, and commitment to conservation.

Some examples of programs then and now include:

- Lisa consistently schedules Geauga SWCD conservation education programs each year for all of the Jordak Elementary second grade classes to enhance their learning opportunities. Past programs have included Web of Life, The Incredible Journey, Freddie the Fish and Riparian Rescue to name a few.
- Lisa organized "Habitats Around Our Schoolyard" walks and many field trips to the J.H. Barrow Field Station at Hiram College with Professor/Field Station Director Matt Sorrick.
- For many years her students participate in Holden Arboretum's Growing Students in Science program which included two field trips at the Arboretum and one classroom visit by Holden staff each year for several consecutive years.
- She provides annual opportunities for her students to participate in Geauga Park District's environmental education programming including Geauga Wildlife, Insect Extravaganza, Portable Planetarium, Weather Wizardry, plus many science-themed field trips to Swine Creek and the West Woods.
- She organized many programs through the Geauga Trumbull Solid Waste District on topics such as waste, recycling, trees, and habitats.
- Lisa invites science consultant Claire Zurbuch to assist with classroom learning opportunities including the use of the Ohio Division of Wildlife's Wildlife Treasures Trunk to investigate some of Ohio's native critters.
- Throughout the years, she has provided opportunities for her students to become scientists both in and outside the classroom using the scientific method and science journaling to document investigations.

Congratulations to Lisa for being chosen as the Conservation Teacher of the Year. Her efforts fostering environmental stewardship in elementary students is helping to shape their future and the future of Geauga County!



**Geauga Soil and Water
Conservation District**