

## **VFW Smart/Maher VFW National Citizenship Education Teacher Entry**

I am nominating Lois Jean Schneider who teaches 8<sup>th</sup> grade United States History at Grace Christian Academy. She taught my children during their 8<sup>th</sup> grade year and left a lasting impression on our entire family.

Mrs. Schneider is passionate about history, deeply patriotic, loves students, and honors veterans. She uses her classroom to connect students with veterans in a way that makes history tangible, honors veterans, and instills patriotism into her students. She has an obvious love and respect for veterans who served to protect our freedoms as well as for the future generation who will one day lead and protect our country. I watched in awe as she bridged the gap between those who served and those who will one day serve our country. She assigned an in-depth interview for each student to complete with a veteran of their choice, and she had students create a trifold board displaying highlights of the interview, photos of the veteran, and mementos of the veteran's story such as maps and medals. These displays were set up for the entire school to see as a component of a Veteran's Day celebration. Each veteran was invited to attend an assembly in their honor, escorted into the auditorium to patriotic music, and thanked by students in various ways including speeches and songs. Veterans were acknowledged with thunderous applause as each military branch received honor and gratitude during the Armed Forces Medley.

I listened as my children interviewed their grandfather who served in Vietnam. He rarely speaks about his time flying helicopters as a part of the United States Army in Vietnam; this interview allowed him to share his experiences with his grandchildren. His story is now documented and preserved, courtesy of Mrs. Schneider's annual 8<sup>th</sup> grade assignment. My children are proud of their grandfather, honored him through a personalized display, and escorted him into the assembly. Through tears, he said it was the best Veteran's Day program he ever attended. I am grateful for Mrs. Schneider's passion for history, patriotism for our country, love for her students, and gratitude for our veterans that facilitates this connection between students and veterans as she bridges between veterans and future generations.

### **Entry Submitted by:**

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