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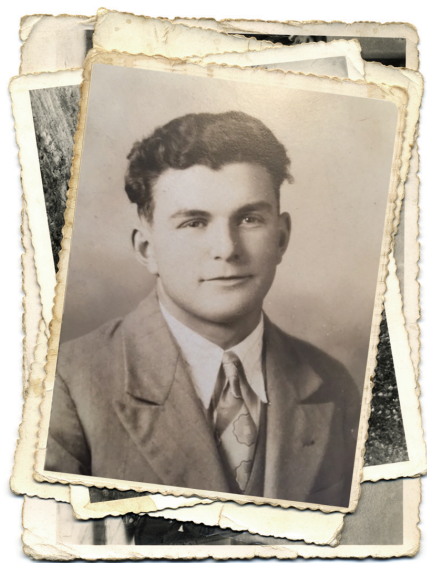
Washington Education Association
Volume 54, Number 4 – Fall 2016

2017 Teacher of the Year

Quincy's Camille Jones returns to her roots to help her community bloom. 4

A Glass Half Full

I have never seen one day cause such an effect as Election Day. No, this is not an anti-President-elect Trump piece. Nor is it an “if only we-they-someone had just” point-a-finger piece. It is a personal reflection on the past and future. I’m not writing it to change anyone’s point of view but instead to give just one person’s perspective.



Arthur Moreau Jr., or known affectionately as Papa, Kim Mead’s paternal French grandfather. His parents escaped France. He was born in the United States.

I am the great-grandchild of immigrants. Multiple languages were spoken when I was small, but never with the intent to teach. Always with the intent to keep a secret and rarely if ever displayed publicly. It would make you different. The fabric of my great-grandparents’ lives was rich with culture but also tattered with fear. Never say where you are from. You could become a target. They quickly saw that this land of plenty and dreams of a better life came at a

price. Deny who you are or face the consequences.

I am the grandchild of a man who gave up going to school when his father died; of a woman who wasn’t allowed to be left handed and was stolen by gypsies. I am the grandchild of a man who witnessed his parents’ wedding once it was safe to return to their country; and the grandchild whose grandmother played piano in the silent movies and in bars that she snuck me in as a two-year-old.

I am the child of union parents. They understood that when you stand together you are stronger than when you stand alone.

I am the wife of a person who finds joy in the possibilities each student sees as they pass through his classroom door.

I am the mom of two very wonderful adult children who make me proud every day. Each, separately, faced death and overcame to be advocates in their own way.

I am the grandmother of two beautiful girls who are amazed by stars streaking by overhead in the night sky and who still want to hold their grandma’s hand.

I was numb. The first emotion (or non-emotion). Not at who was elected, but at what it could mean. The intensity of fear was seen across the nation. As much as many would like to blame that fear on a particular candidate, regardless of who you supported, I don’t think any one person is the real cause of fear. I think the bigger piece was looking at each other and wondering if the person across from you dislikes you because of your skin color, accent or sexuality, or ... or ... or. I saw that same fear growing up.

I am the president of a powerful union. Now is the time we must face each other to renew our commitment to one another and the students we teach. Schools have always been a place of safety. Now, more than ever, we need to provide that safety for our colleagues, students and communities.

I’ve seen thousands standing up to support each other. I know many saw this as an anti-election outcome. But if you stopped for a moment and looked out at the crowds you saw people wanting to make sure that others knew they would be there for them. Too often, we see only one absolute answer. There isn’t only one answer any more than there is just one question. How we move forward as a nation is being watched so very closely ... by the most important group of all ... the children.

You can look at the glass as half empty, or you can see it as half full. I choose half full. We have an opportunity to build on the commitment we have to each other. Finding the solutions together will make lasting answers for our students.

The day after the election, when public fear was the strongest, I received the following text from my son: “I hope you know you raised me right. You raised me to fight for those who can’t fight for themselves. Thank you for teaching me to be compassionate.”

It wasn’t about who won: it was about who we chose to be. I choose hope and opportunity and standing up for everyone’s future. Granted, I’ll still have a fist in the air as I hold the half-full glass in the other hand.



Kim Mead

WEA legislative agenda focuses on funding class size and compensation

WEA has one goal for the legislative session that starts in January: Fully fund public schools

In 2012, the Washington Supreme Court ordered the state to amply fund basic education in its McCleary decision. Five years later, the state is in contempt of court for failing to provide the amply funded public schools the constitution guarantees our children.

Here's the complete 2017 WEA legislative agenda as adopted by the WEA Board.

Fully funding quality basic education for all children is Washington's paramount duty.

With the state's Sept. 1, 2018 school funding deadline looming, here is WEA's single legislative goal for the 2017 Washington Legislature: **Fully fund K-12 basic education as required by state law, the Supreme Court's McCleary decision and the Washington Constitution.**

Fund smaller K-12 class sizes, additional support staff, and professional and competitive base salaries and benefits for all educators, including higher education employees. This includes protecting the right to invest in our local schools through local levies and opposing any restrictions on collectively bargaining educator compensation at the district level.

We believe local families and educators know what their students need to be successful and that they have a fundamental right to make decisions about their children and public schools.

It's likely other education issues will pop up in coming months. Billionaire education reformers want Gov. Jay Inslee and the Legislature to pass more misguided policies like tying test scores to evaluations, expanding charter schools and limiting local collective bargaining for school employees. They want to lowball McCleary, privatize our schools and shortchange our kids. It's up to us as WEA members to make sure the Legislature focuses on what really matters: full funding.

Gov. Inslee, who just won re-election with our support, will be releasing his state budget plan later this month, and WEA members expect his budget to include substantial new funding for smaller class sizes and competitive pay. More than 1,400 WEA members emailed him in November, urging him not to shortchange our students.

Visit www.WashingtonEA.org/OurVoice/ for more information about the upcoming legislative session.

Pro-public education candidates win on Election Day

Washington voters made at least one thing clear when they voted in November.

They want our elected leaders to focus on their paramount duty of fully funding public education.

Candidates endorsed by WEA-PAC for their pro-public education, pro-union positions did well.

Voters re-elected Gov. Jay Inslee, whose December state budget plan is expected to make a major investment in K-12 public schools.

They re-elected Washington Supreme Court Justices Charlie Wiggins, Barbara Madsen and Mary Yu, all of whom have a strong record of supporting public education funding. (Billionaire education reformers spent more than \$1 million trying to defeat Wiggins and Madsen.)

Cyrus Habib was elected lieutenant governor, and Chris Reykdal was elected superintendent of public instruction. (See Q&A with Reykdal on page 7.) In meetings with WEA members, Habib vowed to use his position to uphold the state constitution's paramount duty clause. Reykdal's time as a state legislator, school board member and teacher, combined with his support for local collective bargaining rights, will be helpful during the upcoming school funding budget battles.

Voters roundly defeated Sen. Steve Litzow, chairman of the state Senate education committee. Litzow was the sponsor of charter school legislation and bills that mandated the use of student test scores in teacher evaluations, and he refused to meet with local teachers. More than 100 WEA members and friends doorbelled for Lisa Wellman, who defeated Litzow.

In Vancouver, voters overwhelmingly elected teacher Monica Stonier in a tough race against a fellow Democrat who was supported by Stand



Monica Stonier

for Children and groups with ties to the Freedom Foundation. Stonier previously served in the Legislature as the vice-chair of the House

Education Committee, and she is a building rep in the Evergreen Education Association. WEA members called and doorbelled thousands of voters on Stonier's behalf, and she will be a strong voice for educators in the upcoming legislative session.

Dozens of other candidates endorsed by WEA members also won, including Pramila Jayapal in Seattle's 7th Congressional District and Republican Secretary of State Kim Wyman, Republican Dave Reichert in the 8th Congressional District and Republican Duane Davidson as state treasurer.

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2017 Teacher of the Year

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I love this job.
I get to innovate
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student in my
school special...

Camille Jones

”



“If we want to have great teachers in our schools and we want our students to have a great education, we have to find a way to create a different culture that’s going to support teachers.” – Camille Jones, 2017 Washington Teacher of the Year

Quincy’s Camille Jones is Washington’s favorite apple

Growing up in agricultural Quincy, a few miles past the Gorge amphitheater on the plateau above the Columbia River, Camille Jones knew the town’s motto boasts of “Opportunities Unlimited!”

Nonetheless, she knew she wanted more, to pursue a career in the world outside of Quincy. So after graduating with college degrees in Spanish and European Studies, Jones traveled to Spanish-speaking Central and South America, the Caribbean and Europe.

“This phrase started working its way into my mind: ‘Bloom where you’re planted,’” Jones recalls. “I realized that there’s so much need here. ... My service value could be more effective if I applied it into my own community.”



An important part of her job, says Jones, is to make sure every student has an opportunity to show the gifts that they have, especially when students are heavily assessed in math and reading.

Jones returned to college, got her teaching credentials, and landed a job in an elementary classroom. Today she teaches K-3 schoolwide STEAM enrichment and highly capable students at Pioneer Elementary in Quincy, and she is Washington’s 2017 Teacher of the Year.

Agriculture remains a huge part of her life. She lives amid the orchards where her husband raises apples; nearby her dad still grows onions. Her past travels help her bring global connections to her students — many of whom have yet to see the ocean — so that they, too, can envision the world outside of Quincy.

“As teacher of the year, I really want to get out and talk to people about the changes we need to make in our education system to make it really relevant to the world of today,” Jones says. Education needs to look like the real world. With unlimited information available on the Internet, schools need to ensure students have the skills to analyze that data, and how to use it to work effectively with others. And, perhaps most important, education needs to be personal.

"I see kids everyday who come to my class, and they might not be excelling in reading or math, but they might be *amazing* artists or engineers," Jones says. "The future is going to be for those people who are innovators and the creators in our society. We need to help them fulfill that potential that they have."

The foundation of good teaching is good relationships, Jones notes. That's why she loves Quincy's schoolwide STEAM philosophy (science, technology, engineering, art and math), because students' passions and talents can be overlooked with the overwhelming emphasis on standardized test scores.

"A lot of what I've tried to do is change the culture around how we identify students' giftedness, because we're missing out on a lot of those students," Jones says. "Now, today, I have kids all the time tell me, 'I want to be a computer engineer!' 'I want to be a civil engineer!' and those are first-graders! That's really exciting that they have that vision already."

Quincy's schoolwide enrichment has three tiers: At its base, every single student gets to experience opportunities outside their general education curriculum. The second tier helps advance the skills of students who are showing potential. The third tier offers independent, highly targeted opportunities for top students — those at the school identified as highly capable.

Colleague Sara Hausken, a kindergarten teacher at Pioneer and elementary parent, applauds Jones' approach.

"She has totally redesigned what enrichment looks like in our building," Hausken says. "And we're able to find students that have skills that we wouldn't otherwise notice."

Although Jones didn't realize teaching would become her passion, it now feels like everything in her life was intended to lead her to this point.



Camille Jones helps her students blossom by teaching them to think both locally and globally. At Pioneer Elementary, she works with students in the school's STEAM Lab, where she offers challenging activities in science, technology, engineering, art and math. Raised on a farm, agriculture remains an integral part of her life.



"I love this job. I get to innovate and be creative as a teacher. And I get to seek out what makes every single student in my school special," Jones says. "The problem is my job is so unique. ... When I taught third grade, I didn't feel this way. (And) when I talk to other teachers across Washington, I hear a lot of anxiety and stress. ... Some of the best teachers I know *actively* try to convince others *not* to go into teaching. If that's the case, we know we have a big problem."

Too often, schools must focus on bringing underperforming students up to standard — ignoring the also legitimate needs of highly capable students. Testing has narrowed what teachers can teach. Standards have narrowed how teachers can teach. Inadequate funding has narrowed the pool of students willing to pursue teaching as a career.

"If we're going to have a great school system in America, it has to start with great teachers, and we have great teachers — but we need to empower them to do a great job teaching," Jones says. "Adequate funding makes a huge difference in the outcome for students, from funding teachers well enough that they can pay off their loans, to providing the supplies and the technologies that we need to keep our education system relevant to today. Those things *are* expensive — and they're worth it!"

In a community where more than 80 percent of her students are English language learners and most live in poverty, Jones recalls Quincy's motto, "Opportunities Unlimited," and hopes to she can help her students dream big.

"It kind of goes back to my 'Bloom where you're planted' motto," Jones says. "This is the place that I know, the community that I know. People trust me here. And I think I can make the biggest impact here."



TOGETHER, we are creating a movement

Every educator is in the profession with the best of intentions.

Yet, students — and staff — are treated differently just because of how they look or because of their background.

Not understanding or respecting the differences may or may not be intentional but ensuring equity for all students and WEA members is something more than 200 WEA colleagues committed to do recently.

This year's WEA Human and Civil Rights Leadership Conference attracted the largest turnout in recent years. Participants gathered Nov. 18-19 to network, work on professional development and collect strategies for improving cultural diversity for members and students. Headlining this year's WEA Human and Civil Rights Leadership Conference was NEA Secretary-Treasurer Princess Moss. The conference theme, "Leadership and Culturally Responsive Strategies," was held at the Four Points Sheraton Hotel in Des Moines to accommodate the growing popularity and size of the event.



Pam Sepulveda-Wilson



A record turnout, including a team of paraprofessional leaders from Seattle EA, attended WEA's HCR Leadership Conference to work on culturally responsive strategies and commit to ensuring equity for all students and WEA members.

Pam Sepulveda-Wilson, who teaches elementary ELL at Frank Wagner Elementary in Monroe, hopes such events inspire members to help make schools a better place for future generations.

"I, by all means, am never going to ever feel like I know every cultural strategy for every child and it is always going to be a learning process," says Sepulveda-Wilson, who is on the WEA HCR Committee, which organized the conference. "Yes, we have standards and curriculum to teach, but every child comes in with unique needs and unique culture that we need to get to know. Every child needs to know that they belong and that we are going to teach them where they are at to get them to as far as they can go as they learn to be lifelong learners."

Part of the conference was designed to meet participants at their own level of membership experience: less than five years, less than 10 and 10-plus years. Many participants are repeat attendees. They say they return because the conference is a chance learn new skills, strategies and tools on how to close the opportunity gaps. Plus, the conference is a way for members of color to see and connect

with colleagues with similar sentiments, especially when they work in buildings where there are few other educators of color.

"My most valuable takeaway from this conference is the power of change, that together we are creating a movement," says Shawna Moore, who teaches health at Chinook Middle School in SeaTac. "And with this movement we are and will impact the lives of all of our scholars, with intentional and purposeful focus on our B and B (Black and Brown) scholars."

Seattle paraeducator Angela Mosley-Freeman uses what she learns from the conference in her life and shares tips with colleagues at Rainier View Elementary.

"Teamwork makes a dream work," Mosley-Freeman says. "... realizing human rights is the best essential first step to help build our society."

Mosley-Freeman says she's committed to helping colleagues understand the importance of coming together to unite as one.

"The most valuable takeaway that I gained is to be able to maintain an open mind and to think outside the box. Respect others' feelings, backgrounds and opinions about race. I learned that to be able to collaborate about race and equity issues with other nationalities actually brings us closer together."

For committee member Wilson, timing for this work is critical.

"My hopes are that we can continue to serve our members of color who may not have that support system, as well as continue to educate all educators about cultural diversity," Wilson says. "This is not the time to continue to wait and see. This is the time to do the work. ... The time is now to make sure another child does not fail in school simply because they are not understood."

Chat with new schools chief

Chris Reykdal is Washington's next state superintendent of public instruction. Reykdal, a state House member from Tumwater and former teacher, was endorsed by a broad coalition of unions, including WEA-PAC. As Reykdal prepares for the transition to his new role, he took time to chat with *We2.0* and to reach out to WEA members. Below is an excerpt of our chat. Read the entire conversation online at www.washingtonea.org.

Q: Now that you have won the election, what are your plans to reach out to constituents who voted for your opponent?

A: The first major effort is to build a cabinet that reflects the priorities of the campaign. Fortunately, in this race for OSPI my opponent and I shared several priorities — amply funding our public schools, addressing our excessive testing system, closing opportunity gaps, supporting our educators, and so many other critical elements that lead to student success. As we build a more diverse cabinet, we will simultaneously be faced with the most critical legislative session for education in our state's history. It will be imperative that we build feedback processes that engage stakeholders and constituents across the state. We don't mean just tours (which we will do), but also more real-time opportunities to give immediate feedback on policy and budget considerations of the Legislature.

Q: What are your top priorities for your first year as state schools superintendent?

A: My top priorities in my first year as Superintendent of Public Schools are, first, to work with the Legislature and the Governor's Office to get our schools fully and amply funded. My next priority

is to bring a more rational approach to our excessive testing system. Third, we must get our public education system re-committed to career and technical education, which will provide our students more pathways to graduation and raise our graduation rates. Fourth, I will fight every step of the way to ensure our local school districts maintain the ability and authority to make decisions for their districts — this is even more critical given the new Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education appears to have a massive privatization agenda. Finally, OSPI as an organization is loaded with talent, but there is a need to focus that talent and energy on strategic initiatives and better ways to evaluate our success. There will be an emphasis on evaluation of the effectiveness of the organization and the major units that operate at OSPI.

Q: How will you try to help our legislative houses understand how unfunded mandates impact students, educators and their families?

A: There are two parts to an unfunded mandate — the mandate part, should something be required? and the funding part; even if it should be mandated, is it accompanied by the right level of resources? Our team will engage education leaders to better understand what things need more resources and what needs to simply go away. EVERY mandate has a constituency behind it that got the mandate put in place. This work is difficult, but may have new importance as we move closer to fully and amply funding the system.

Q: Where do you think we are headed in terms of standardized testing requirements?

A: The testing regime in our state, much like other states, has deep roots in the last two presidential administrations. Now



State Superintendent of Public Instruction-elect Chris Reykdal

we see the new Trump team trying to reconcile his campaign theme of more state control with a USDOE Secretary who has a long history of privatizing education through political influence and very wealthy influential power brokers in Michigan and in other states around the country. Will they insist on standardized testing? Can they square that with campaign Trump who swore to eliminate the Common Core and return standards and practices back to the states? The apparent election of Donald Trump complicates the political landscape around standards, testing, and states' rights.

If we can successfully maintain state control, my efforts will include a reduction in standardized testing, and especially the need to eliminate passing a standardized test as a graduation requirement. Meaningful assessments that impact student achievement and progress should be written and graded by a child's teacher. This gives more control back to individual school districts and educators. Under almost any scenario however, we will still need to administer some standardized tests, but it's time to put those results in proper context and application — evaluation of state and district progress — not as a punitive tool aimed at students and teachers. There is bipartisan momentum for this effort — it's time to make this the state's core assessment policy.

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UNION BUG FPO

Stand up for students' civil rights on Jan. 16, MLK Jr. Day, in Olympia

**The Washington Constitution makes it clear:
An amply funded basic education is every
student's civil right.**

On Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Jan. 16, thousands of educators, parents, students and community members are gathering on the capitol steps in Olympia to **Rally for Student Civil Rights & Amply Funded Public Schools**.

Spending the holiday in Olympia advocating for the civil rights of all students is a great way to show our commitment to public schools and our children. It's just four days before Inauguration Day, and the rally will draw like-minded supporters who want to take a stand in support of something positive.

Groups like Washington's Paramount Duty, the NAACP and others will be joining us.

The rally runs from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. Then from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., rally goers will break into small groups and hand-deliver the Student Bill of Rights to legislators from all 49 legislative districts.

The Student Bill of Rights highlights the five funding issues the Legislature must address to comply with the Supreme Court's McCleary decision: Funding for a well-rounded education in general, funding for smaller class sizes and support staff in all grades, funding for competitive pay and benefits, funding for safe and up-to-date schools and protecting local flexibility to meet students' needs with levy funding.

JAN. 16
Rally
for Student Civil Rights
& Amply Funded
Public Schools

"I'm saving January 16th to go to Olympia because I think it's important to add our voices as school secretaries. We have a different lens and we wear a lot of different hats. It's important for everybody who works with children not to get overwhelmed on a daily basis. I love kids and I don't want to get burned out because of my daily load."



Cheryl Williams

*Cheryl Williams
Attendance secretary/BECCA
Kilo Middle School, Federal Way*

"If not now, when? I'll be in Olympia on January 16th to make my voice heard. Public education in Washington should be at the forefront of this legislative session. We must keep pushing forward for our students and educators."



Dan Jordan

*Dan Jordan
Fifth-grade teacher
Olympic View Elementary, Seattle*