

Good News Report

Michelle Byers, Normal Community High School

The faculty and students of Normal Community High School join me in expressing appreciation to Michelle Byers, a teacher in the Student Support Program, for the her efforts and hard work committed to developing the NCHS first floor greenhouse. Mrs. Byers had a vision of using the greenhouse as a lab for students enrolled in her physical science class.

Mrs. Byers' passion for this project is obvious. She worked on weekends and over the summer to prepare and stock the greenhouse for her students. Last spring, she applied for and was awarded a WHOI Kids Count grant for \$1000. She used the money to purchase tools, soils, and equipment for the greenhouse. Further illustrating her commitment to making the greenhouse a success for her students, Mrs. Byers completed a workshop offered through the Agricultural Institute. She also completed several seminars offered through the University of Illinois Extension program and has become involved with the local Master Gardeners Association. Her participation in these two programs has assisted her in developing a network of friends and support for her work. Ed Decker and Charlotte Talkington, both members of Masters Gardeners, serve as mentors and consultants to Mrs. Byers. Throughout this school year, Mrs. Byers has received numerous donations of plants and equipment from members of Master Gardners and local businesses. In addition, members of the association have offered to conduct seminars and classes related to plant care to her students.

Mrs. Byers' enthusiasm and attitude is contagious as her colleagues in SSP have also donated plants and have used the greenhouse for their classes. Mrs. Byers states that "People have been very generous with their supplies and time," and that she is very grateful. She plans to have an Open House this spring which will feature a special assignment that students will complete for Mothers' Day.

It is a great pleasure to present Michelle Byers for recognition for this impressive accomplishment. Her work will have long range benefits for NCHS students and our community. Thank you Mrs. Byers!