



TEACHER OF THE MONTH

Lawrence Land

BY LIZ ROTH AUS BERTRAND

When fifth-grade teacher Lawrence Land was 16, he fell in love with Germany during a summer exchange program to the rural village of Pfaffenhofen. Now a German immersion teacher at E. E. Waddell Language Academy, he describes each school year as a journey with his students.

Herr Land, as his students call him, believes this journey must captivate the attention of his fifth-graders every moment of the day. He continually stretches his students' thinking and keeps the classroom dynamic.

"We are on a language adventure together regardless of whether we are tired or grumpy," he says. "Learning is fun. If it is not, at any moment, then I am not doing my job, fundamentally. I take that to heart."

Visit his class and you might observe students working independently at stations, hear Beethoven playing in the background or see a picture of a German city projected on the board to provide inspiration. He wants to make things real and engaging.

It's not always easy, as he has so much to teach. As

a language immersion instructor, he teaches math, science and social studies in German plus English and, of course, German!

But Herr Land has been succeeding, according to former student Sophia. In her nominating letter for Teacher of the Month, she wrote: "He is awesome, and I am not just saying that. He makes me want to get up in the morning and go to school. He motivates us."

Herr Land draws inspiration from the many teachers who made learning fun and rewarding for him as a student.

"I was very fortunate to have a lot of inspiring teachers in my high school program," he says. "I am honored to be carrying that torch forward."

As for the secret to his success, he sums it up this way: "I do believe it's a calling. I'm passionate about what I'm doing, and I do care about every single student. The moment you learn to care about every single student – not just the ones who do their homework – you become an effective teacher."

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