

Jennifer Ann Sarnes is her formal given name, but to those who had the pleasure to know her, she was simply Sarnes. When a person can be known by one name, it speaks to being a presence. Her quick sarcastic wit and knowledge of trivia made her the proverbial life of the party. She was just a person that everyone wanted to be around, to laugh with, to ask advice from, and to just be near. This X factor is what made her true calling as a teacher.... the reason why so many of her students continue to carry her in their hearts.

Ms. Sarnes, to her students, inspired a love of reading through competition - with her. A voracious reader, she challenged students to beat her page goals by modeling the behavior and skills she was endeavoring to teach them. She simply did not *teach* reading; rather she *inspired* reading. Many reluctant readers fell under her spell and blossomed. Through the Holocaust Reading Unit, students read about and heard about a dark time in history and came away with a new perspective about life and what is truly important.

Her presence was felt not only in the classroom, but in the innumerable extracurricular activities that she was an official part of and the ones that she volunteered to help out at a critical moment. She was simply everywhere, a part of everything ,which made her such an invaluable and intrinsic part of the experience at Southern.

The ideals of this scholarship are lofty ones. It is difficult to quantify someone who inspired students, who encouraged them to be better versions of themselves, who volunteered because it was the right thing to do to make students' lives richer, and who embodied the craft of teaching so effortlessly. The former Wilson Southern Middle School student and recipient of this scholarship should be truly proud to carry on the tradition of Ms. Sarnes.

