



# JCHS Senior Charli Sawyer Goes “Above And Beyond” For Her Students

by Dalton Brown, News Reporter  
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JERSEYVILLE - Charli Sawyer is a senior at Jersey Community High School, but she’s also an aspiring teacher who’s already going above and beyond for her students.

Charli takes the TEACH class at JCHS, which offers dual credit with Lewis & Clark Community College and provides real-world teaching experience for seniors considering an educational career. She also takes Advanced Design, where students learn - among many other things - how to sew by machine and by hand. Combining the skills she’s learned in both classes, she recently made her students a special surprise - 19 handcrafted monsters made of felt, which are their new “reading buddies.”

For 90 minutes each school day, Charli teaches Kindergarten students in Mrs. Goetten's classroom at West Elementary School. She encourages her students to read faithfully to their new “reading buddies” to help make their monsters smarter while learning valuable skills.

“I want to help all kids succeed,” Charli said. “I have a passion for wanting to help students who can't spell or read very well. I struggle with it and want to help as many as I can. Reading and writing is so important in everyday life that it's horrible to not be the best at it. It's something you use in everything so many times a day.”

Erica Heitzig, who teaches both Advanced Design and TEACH at JCHS, said Charli went “above and beyond to make an impression on her Kindergarten students.” She added how rewarding it is seeing Charli use what she’s learned in both classes.

“It's intrinsically motivating for me to see her combine the skills and experiences that she's learned in my classes,” Heitzig said. “It adds value to both of my classes, inspires others, and allows her to create unique experiences and bonds with others.”

Hetzig, who is also Charli's "proud aunt," said her compassion and friendliness extends far outside just one classroom.

"For Senior Superlatives, she was voted 'Most Likely to Make Someone's Day,' and that practically sums her up," Hetzig said of Charli. "Her compassion for everyone in her life, family, friends, or just an acquaintance, is a force. She is friendly, personable, and goes out of her way to greet students by name in the halls of JCHS."

In the TEACH program at JCHS, Hetzig said students gain hands-on field experience by being placed in a classroom with an experienced teacher. Her class currently consists of 14 students from JCHS, North Greene High School, and Calhoun High School. She said her TEACH students are "a fantastic group, and they have been a refreshing reminder of why I wanted to be a teacher."