

Shannon Perna

Palomino Intermediate School

2016 Rodel Exemplary Teacher Finalist

A tip for new teachers

“ I believe that the most important thing to remember is that we never stop learning. We all make mistakes, but the key is to learn from those mistakes. If a lesson doesn't go well, reflect on it and improve with each coming lesson because each day is a new start in your classroom. Another piece of advice is to ask for help if you need it; teachers are more successful if we help one another instead of trying to go it alone. I also am a big believer in planning. In my opinion, a teacher can't plan enough. If you are not planning properly, students will pick up on that and lessons will not improve over time. In order to set yourself up for success, plan accordingly.

Bragging rights

“ Our school has an amazing staff that is focused on doing whatever we can to help our students receive the best education we can possibly give them. As a staff, we are always learning new teaching strategies and striving to learn from one another. The staff members I have the privilege to work with are the best teachers I know and I learn from them constantly. My classroom is a unique family that centers on going to college. Everything we do in class pertains to reaching the ultimate goal of attaining a college degree. The classroom is full of school spirit and each student will proudly state where he or she is going to college when asked. My students know that their dreams are reachable and their future is bright. We work hard in order to move toward our goals, one lesson at a time.

Learning from a mentor

“ I have learned so much and continue to learn from many educator mentors. I was fortunate to be a Rodel Promising Student Teacher paired with Damon Timm, a Rodel Exemplary Teacher. I learned to be passionate about my students and to be consistent with them in order to create a safe learning environment. I know that students can do anything they set their minds to and that my attitude determines whether they believe that about themselves or not. I saw Mr. Timm's passion for his students and his profession, and it has given me permission to be excited about each class, every year I am in the classroom. I have also learned to communicate with parents regularly so that my families know I care about their children and want the best for them. I use many strategies from Mr. Timm and I am forever grateful for that experience.



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Paradise Valley Unified District
Sixth grade

Experience: Eight years in education, all as a sixth-grade teacher

Degrees: B.A. in Elementary Education from Arizona State University; M.A. in Bilingual/Multicultural Education; ESL Full Endorsement; SEI Full Endorsement

The Rodel Exemplary Teacher Initiative honors extraordinary teachers and asks that they each mentor high-potential student teachers.

What sets the program apart from typical student teaching programs is that mentor teachers are selected based on their outstanding student achievement in high-need schools, their ability to mentor new teachers, and the recommendation of their principals and Rodel's observation team. This ensures that student teachers are learning from the best. In addition, Rodel provides further training and support to both mentors and student teachers to assure Promising Student Teacher Graduates start their careers as outstanding educators.

Since 2004, 167 Rodel Exemplary Teachers have been named and more than 650 Rodel Promising Student Teachers have been mentored.

The 2016 Rodel Exemplary Teachers will be announced on November 29 at www.rodelaz.org.