



## Q&A with Jeffrey Henderson: The student becomes the teacher

published by mhaprov on Tue, 05/29/2012 - 09:12



Jeffrey Henderson was born in Glendora to parents Craig and Sue Henderson. When he was 2 1/2, his sister Shari was born. In 1990, the family moved to Victorville where his dad was looking to change positions at Southern California Edison.

During childhood, Henderson attended Eagle Ranch Elementary School in Victorville until fifth grade and had a number of wonderful teachers while he was there. He was first introduced to Apple Valley his kindergarten teacher, Roseanne Smith, who attended Church of the Valley at that time. She invited the family to attend service on Mother's Day 1990.

In sixth grade, Henderson was invited to be one of the first students at the Academy for Academic Excellence in Apple Valley. Because the family spent a lot of time in Apple Valley between school and being active at Church of the Valley, they decided to move there. After he graduated from high school, Henderson attended Victor Valley College and then transferred to

California State University San Bernardino where he majored in business marketing. While he was in college, he worked two summers at Forest Home Christian Summer Camp in the San Bernardino Mountains. It was there that he decided to become a teacher. He completed his teaching credential at the University of Redlands and is currently working on his master's degree in educational leadership at Brandman University in Victorville. Henderson has come full circle as he's currently an economics and government teacher at the AAE.

Q: What do you do in your free time?

A: I enjoy spending time with my girlfriend, Melissa, and taking trips with her all around Southern California, especially the beach. Also, I really like watching the show "House" and "New Girl" on Fox. I also love riding my motorcycle around the High Desert and playing basketball and golf. Lastly, I love to play my guitar.

Q: What's your favorite guilty pleasure?

A: I still love drinking Capri Suns, but I wish they would make adult sizes so they are not gone in two sips.

Q: Where do you find deep satisfaction?

A: I have found in my life that I get the most satisfaction when I see my students succeed. Some of the happiest moments in my life as a teacher so far have been when students call or write thanking me for various things during their time as my student.

Q: If you could change one thing about Apple Valley today, what would it be?

A: I would love to see the North Apple Valley Retail Complex used more by the community. The complex seems to have a lot of potential, but is most definitely not used to its full potential. I would also love for the Lowe's on the north side to reopen someday; hopefully sooner than later.

Q: Tell us about a happy memory in your first car.

A: My first car was a 1987 Toyota Celica. I guess I got confused as a teenager sometimes between my red two-door coupe and a Jeep. My friends and I would off-road in the Toyota nonstop and never once had to get towed out of a ditch or fix a flat tire. I would love to go and find that car again and buy it back someday.

Q: Who was your hero as a kid? Do you have a hero today? (or someone you especially admire?)

A: The closest thing I ever had to a "traditional" childhood hero would be Donatello from the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. My real heroes in life would be both my parents and grandfather. I can honestly say that I would not be where I am today without the support that they have given me.

Q: What's your favorite sports team and why?

A: I am a huge Los Angeles Lakers fan. Some of my earliest sports memories include watching games on TV between Magic Johnson and Michael Jordan. I enjoy watching basketball in general, both college and the NBA.

Q: What are five things you are grateful for?

A: My Lord and Savior Jesus Christ; my family; my wonderful girlfriend, Melissa; my church and school families including my students; my cat, A.J., and golden retriever, Dusty.

Q: What makes you tick?

A: Whenever I get a compliment from a student or a group of students I get a sudden burst of energy, so I would say that is what makes me tick more than anything.

Q: Tell us about one thing you want to accomplish in life.

A: I love being a teacher, but like many teachers I am very unhappy about the state of education in California. I love the way the CEO at AAE, Rick Piercy, has defined our current status of education. "I am convinced that we can change the 19th century assembly line school model into a system that will prepare students for the demands of the 21st century and empower parents to be consumers of educational opportunities with schools of choice." (Apple Valley Review, Q & A with Rick Piercy: A hands-on learner, Sept. 20, 2011.) Like Rick Piercy, my goal is to help shift our system of education someday into a system that will prepare students for the demands of the 21st Century. Rick Piercy also shared with me the three new Rs of 21st Century education which I try to remind myself of each day: rigor, relevance and relationships.

Q: What are your three favorite places to eat in the High Desert?

A: Chateau Chang, Viva Maria's and Buffalo Wild Wings.

Q: Tell us about a special vacation.

A: I went on a cruise to the Western Caribbean when I was about 18. My dad and I enjoy geocaching when we have time and we wanted to find a geocache in the Cayman Islands. After about two hours of searching through some of the jungle covered area of the island we finally found the cache and had quite an adventure trying to get back to the boat in time.

Q: How can readers get a hold of you?

A: My contact information can be found on the Lewis Center's website at [www.LewisCenter.org](http://www.LewisCenter.org).

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