

JASON ANDERSON

Intently pacing in front of the class is a man dressed in full Revolutionary War uniform, describing the scene on the battlefield. His “soldiers” listen attentively as “General Washington” pleads for his troops to continue fighting for their freedom.

Since 2001, Jason Anderson has taught with passion at Hoban, embracing its Holy Cross values, living his Catholic faith and inspiring students to be better, more informed citizens of the future.

“I will teach until I no longer can,” Anderson said. “The freedom of being here is awesome. It’s teaching not only what you want but also how you want. It’s making kids think, which includes religion.”

Yet Anderson entered the teaching profession only after he managed an art gallery, ran a bed and breakfast with his wife and was a chef. After encouragement from friends and family who saw the passion he had for history, Anderson returned to school to get his teaching degree.

Anderson created the Revolutionary War Living History Day program, an interactive, hands-on, 18th century Revolutionary War encampment held for the last 10 years on Hoban’s campus. It has also been presented at various locations throughout Ohio and at Mount Vernon, Va. His students research and portray soldiers of the Revolution for area fourth and fifth graders. More than 10,000 students have participated in this unique learning experience.

Anderson has led field excavations with the archaeology class to Washington’s Mount Vernon estate, where students work with professional archaeological staff members. Hoban is the only high school in the United States to be invited to help with this project.

As chair of the social studies department, Anderson leads colleagues to develop new courses and opportunities for students’ pursuits in careers in the social studies field. In 2001, there were five courses; today there are 15, with more being developed. As an adjunct professor for St. Louis University, he provides opportunities for students to receive college credit.

“If I can impress upon one kid the importance of who they are, where they come from and how they can keep that alive, I’ve done my job,” Anderson said. “The Declaration of Independence is not some antiquated guide. We are here to focus on equality, liberty and justice. The Pledge of Allegiance isn’t just some kindergarten phrase. It means something. It’s who we are.”

As a Holy Cross educator, Anderson’s passion and zeal for history are matched by his passion and zeal for his faith. He is an example of how to live your faith—Catholic or not.