

January 2025 Spotlight

Nicole Monroe

Teacher at Grandview Middle School

Meet Ms. Nicole Monroe, 7th grade science teacher at our Grandview Middle School. Respected by her students, peers and leadership, Nicole is the one you go to for answers. A 2-year High School State Powerlifting Champion, her hobbies include weightlifting, camping, travel, and music.

She graduated from WSU in 2011 with a degree in Zoology, and her thought initially was to pursue her dream of becoming a Marine Biologist in California. However, after she gained opportunities to travel, she experienced a shift in perspective and decided to explore a new career path. This led to her work as a deckhand on a mega yacht that traveled to many countries in the Mediterranean and the Caribbean.

In 2019, she made the decision to return home to Aberdeen, WA, to be closer to family and seek a career with more 'predictable hours.' Later relocating to Grandview to be near her sister, Cyndi Charvet, a school psychologist here at GSD, this is where Nicole landed, and calls home. Nicole says, "At the time, my sister had just given birth to Keira, my niece, who is now five years old. Cyndi encouraged me to explore substitute teaching, given the growing demand for educators." She continues, "When the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted traditional education, I saw an opportunity to formalize my interest in teaching and enrolled in WGU to pursue a Master's in Teaching. Now, five years later, I am proud to be a 7th Grade Science Teacher, channeling my diverse experiences and passion into the classroom."

When asked what her favorite thing about teaching is Nicole replies, "What I love about teaching is making science relevant for my students. I enjoy finding ways to connect what we're learning to their interests and hobbies, making concepts not only easier to understand but also applicable and memorable." Continuing she says, "I love seeing the transition of science being 'boring' to 'oh, science actually does matter,' because they realize how it relates to something they care about. I also love giving students experiences they've never had before, whether through experiments, simulations, or hands-on activities. Watching their curiosity and understanding grow as well as the complexity in their questions is incredibly rewarding."

Ms. Monroe has been with the Grandview School District for 5 years and says she would tell her first year teacher self that "it is impossible to do everything perfectly and that is okay."

Nicole says her proudest moments are to see the growth of her students. "I have worked with many students who are initially very shy and hesitant to participate in presentations or public speaking activities. I provide opportunities for students to present their work, both in groups and individually. While some students may initially choose not to present due to feelings of embarrassment or fear, I have witnessed remarkable growth in their confidence." Continuing she says, "By the end of the year, many of these same students have overcome their apprehensions and delivered outstanding presentations, showcasing their hard work and personal development. Witnessing this transformation fills me with pride for my students and their resilience."

When asked what advice would Nicole give a new teacher, she says, "For in-coming teachers, some advice I would give is to ask questions and ask for help. Stay positive, focus on the impact you're making rather than dwelling on challenges. Take care of yourself, avoid burnout by prioritizing self-care, hobbies, and time with friends and family." Nicole continues, "Be flexible, lessons won't always go as planned. Adapt to the moment and your students' needs. Lastly, do not rely on technology. Always have a backup plan with good ole paper and pencil."

Thank you Ms. Nicole Monroe for not only encouraging our student's interest in science, but encouraging them to see and enjoy the world around us. Our students, families, and our community are so fortunate to have you!

