



Ford named Sparks Toyota Teacher of the Month for October

BY KRISTYN WINCH
 THE BUSINESS JOURNAL

For Horry County native Katie Ford, teaching in the county has always been a dream.

"I've always wanted to give back to the community where I got my education," the second grade teacher said.

Ford is in her sixth year of teaching and the 2019-2020 school year marks her third year at Seaside Elementary School.

"I love working here," she said. "I really try every day to make it our best. I want my students to be the best learners, and to do that, I strive to be the best teacher."

One of Ford's classroom agreements is to "always be green and growing."

"I'll always be learning as a teacher," she said.

Ford is a graduate of the University of South Carolina, earning a degree in sociology with a minor in education.

She received her certification in early childhood education from Coastal Carolina University.

Prior to teaching at Seaside, Ford taught first grade at Myrtle Beach Primary School.

"I've always had a passion for children," she said. "I love that I'm able to work with students to meet their needs."

Ford is a member of Seaside Elementary's social committee, working to plan outside events for students, teachers and staff members. Last year, she served as advisor for the school's Girls on the Run club.

Ford teaches multiple sub-

**SPARKS
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**Teacher of
 the Month**

Katie Ford
 Seaside Elementary School



jects to her class, but she especially enjoys teaching reading and writing.

Horry County Schools introduced new curriculum this year titled "Being a Writer" that Ford said is "fabulous."

"If you're a good reader, you can be a good writer," she said. "This shows the link between the two. In first grade, you learn to read. In second grade, you expand on that with reading to learn. I love watching kids grow with reading in these early years."

Ford's students just completed an author study on Laura Numeroff, known for the book "If You Give a Mouse a Cookie."

Seaside students also participated in a project where they decorated pumpkins to correspond with book characters and paraded the pumpkins around the school.

"It was another way of making literacy fun," the teacher said.

Ford is dedicated to making reading fun for all of her students, allotting for 15 minutes of independent reading in the classroom daily.

"If you don't enjoy reading, it's because you're not reading the right thing or genre," she said, encouraging students to read about what they like.

"Reading makes you smarter," Ford said. "Growing

up, reading was a struggle for me and I didn't enjoy it. Now I realize how important it is."

Outside of school, Ford enjoys going to the beach, spending time with her family (all of whom live in the Myrtle Beach and Murrells Inlet area), going to Gamecock football games and working on craft projects for her home.

Ford and her husband are parents to a two-year-old daughter named Collins.

"I hope she'll come to school here one day and learn through Horry County Schools," Ford said.

On the day Ford was told of her Teacher of the Month recognition, she also found

out she was named Teacher of the Year at Seaside.

"I am thrilled to have both," Ford said. "I think being an outstanding teacher is about how you treat your students, how devoted you are to their

learning, and your positive attitude."

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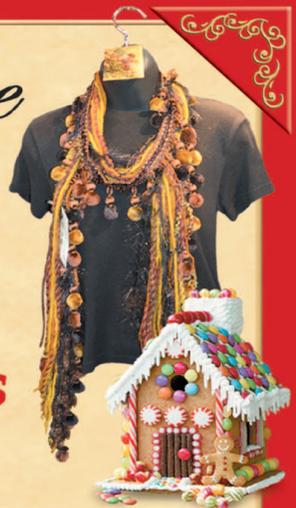
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