

# MEGAN (Niehaus) DURBIN

## Megan Niehaus: English Ambassador

Graduate: Class of 2002    Occupation: English Teacher    By Dara Niehaus, Spring 2010

All children have a dream-only a handful follows them. Megan Durbin worked all her life to become an educator. As a small child, her father would read Cinderella to her nightly before she closed her eyes, and would the same book to her two younger siblings. Now she trains Kentucky students how to understand the concepts and ideas behind stories like Cinderella.

Megan has no intentions of forgetting her trip to Orlando, Florida, and the Bahamas as a reward for winning state with the Forest Park Marching Rangers in 2001; nor will she forget acting as an athletic trainer and manager for the school's baseball, soccer, wrestling, and basketball teams. Her sense of organization made it possible for her to become stage manager for musicals during her time in high school. Megan also won two awards at Beta Conventions during her junior and senior years in the English competitions; she placed third during her junior year, and first in her senior year. "Enjoy high school and make the most of it!" Megan says, "As cheesy as it sounds, these years you will spend at Forest Park are some of the most carefree ones you will have. When you have the opportunity to do something extra curricular, take advantage of it. Join at least one club or sport. Extra curricular activities teach you more than you realize."

Showing her level of independence, Megan journeyed four hours north to attend Ball State University. Inspired by her most influential teacher, Ed Walston, Megan chose English as her major. Suddenly, she realized that she must rely on herself to get her work completed; no one was there to force her to do it. Happily, she committed herself to learning the science of teaching English through many different teaching techniques and courses. After many all-nighters and four years later, Megan acquired a bachelor's degree of science in English education and an honors college diploma on May 6, 2006.

Excited to have graduated, she had one more obstacle between her and her dream: finding a job. She sent applications and resume letters everywhere, but never seriously considered moving to a Kentucky school. Then, the phone rang. On the other end was a representative of Henderson South Middle School who asked to set up an interview. With great difficulty Megan controlled her shaky voice and happily accepted the time and the date of the interview.

For the past four years, Megan has been teaching seventh and eighth grade English classes at Henderson South in Henderson, Kentucky, and cherishes every minute of it. Every staff member at Henderson South “is committed to raising each student to his or her highest level of academic achievement while meeting the obligations, needs, and challenges of our challenging world,” Megan declared. As a teacher, she generates daily lesson plans, corrects papers, researches learning activities, and strives to make learning pleasurable. “I have almost 150 students through my room on any particular day. As crazy as it may sound, I am partly responsible for making their day or breaking it.” Megan stated. Few have ever known Megan to desire any other career than teaching, but she did not decide education as her career until her junior or senior year of high school.

Currently, Megan is living in Henderson, Kentucky, and attending Murray State University to earn her masters degree in guidance and counseling. In her free time (what little she has) she loves scrapbooking, reading, hunting, fishing and watching the University of Kentucky Wildcats with her “fanatic” husband, Patrick Durbin. Megan will never forget her memories of high school and happily looks forward to beginning her life as a teacher and a wife.