

Mission Past and Present...

- [The buddha said I am Awake](#) - Personal Website.
- [Building A Better World](#) - OHS scholarship website since 2003.

For the past thirty four years, I've wed travel, teaching and service, into shaping a classroom aimed at inspiring students to, wake up and explore their world.

My goal, September to June, has been to inspire young people to stretch themselves, always with an eye and a foot on the road - be it crossing the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, Alabama, spending a week in D.C. with kids from all over the world, serving refugee children in Chicago, or handing out books to elementary school flood victims in New Orleans. I've marched with students for Climate Change in Kalamazoo and in D.C. to end the war in Iraq. Sometimes the lesson is as simple as sitting down to dinner at an Ethiopian Restaurant in Grand Rapids, Michigan; "Don' worry, it's easy, just eat with your hands." For 27 of those 34 years I've been at Oakridge High School. Located In an impoverished (100% Federally free lunch) community in Muskegon, Michigan. I've been a liaison to the world for a lot of kids who otherwise might not have ever pierced that bubble.

And then in June, July, and August in order to stay up-to-date, I've strapped on my backpack and headed overseas.. For my efforts, in 2009 I was selected for the prestigious James Madison Memorial Fellowship Award, one teacher per state per year, and a \$24,000 Scholarship. In 2011 I took a sabbatical with the Fellowship and earned an MA in Political Science at Western Michigan University

It's been a great run. I've written books, combed the globe, and have been inspired by thousands of young people. I've had an impact. I've developed rich relationships with colleagues and with ex-students who I now laugh and learn and travel with. And always, there's been another batch of kids to embrace. But, my Oakridge cheese is getting moldy. I am ready to search new places, to move onto new challenges, and to find fresh opportunities, wherever they may be.

Teaching Experience

(1991 to present) Social Studies Teacher
Oakridge High School - • 5493 East Hall Road
• Muskegon, MI 49442 • Courses: Global Issues, Government, Economics. High School Juniors and Seniors.

(2013 to 2015) AMUN Collegiate Professor / Coordinator
Muskegon Community College • Muskegon, MI • Taught and traveled for three years with the American Model UN Program.

(2010 to 2011) Graduate Assistantship
Western Michigan University - • Kalamazoo, Michigan • Served as Assistant to professor for three American Government courses. Awarded the *Teaching Excellence Award* and the *Z.D. Shilling Graduate Award for inspired Community Service*, by the Political Science Department.

(1981 to 1986) Social Studies Teacher
John Sedgwick Jr High • Port Orchard, WA.

Education

Western Michigan University - MA
2010 to 2011 / GPA 3.75.
On sabbatical in coordination with James Madison Fellowship. Masters in Political Science.

Michigan State University - BA
Graduated 1980 / GPA 3.4.
BA in History. Michigan Certification in History, Political Science and Group Social Studies.

Publications

- [Regime Failure and Opposition Consolidation in the Overthrow of Egypt's Hosni Mubarak](#). MA Thesis.
- [Dodger Dogs to Fenway Franks](#) - McGraw Hill Inc (1988) 347 pages. A trip to all 26 Major League Ballparks
- [Big Ten Country](#) - William and Morrow and Company (1989) 272 page. The 1988 Big Ten Football Season.

Travel - School, Solo, and Professionally...

Travel with Students

I try to find every way possible to travel with my students. It enlightens them to issues of the world.

Close Up Washington D.C.

(annual since 1994)

Every Spring for a week, I lead a group of 12 to 20 students to D.C. to live and learn and laugh with kids from all over the USA. Close Up is the best education, travel, political experience in the world.

Selma, Alabama Civil Rights Tour

(bi-annual since 2003)

Five days and four nights in March, revolving around Selma's "Bridge Crossing Jubilee" we travel to Birmingham, Montgomery, and Selma - to churches, museums, and the streets of the Civil Rights movement. This is my creation; and I'd love to bring it with me.

Chicago - Refugee One

(2014, 2015, 2016)

My Senior Global Issues class - We drove to Chicago and tutored kids from Refugee One. We learned more from them, then they from us. We roamed the city and threw our sleeping bags on the floor of a local church. For sure a burst the bubble experience. We also held a winter coat drive and fundraised \$1500 for donations.

Help Heal Haiti - Earthquake Relief

(2010)

My Senior Global Issues class fundraised \$3000 for Earthquake relief, then hooked up with Haitian communities on the streets of Port-au-Prince (through a New York Times reporter) to get the money directly into the hands of those who needed it most.

Hurricane Katrina

(2005)

My Senior Global Issues class raised over \$2500 to buy books for Elementary School kids devastated by the hurricane. Three of us flew down to New Orleans, met the kids, and handed out the books.

Christmas in Chicago

(I've organized it since 2000)

Every year, Saturday prior to Christmas, we car pool to Indiana, hop the South shore line and head into the city. Usually about 20 kids join a handful of teachers. Kids with kids, kids with adults, adults with adults - go where you want - do as you wish. Explore!

Professional Trips and Awards

NEH Summer Institute for American Teachers (2013) South Africa

One of 23 teachers, for six weeks we traveled and studied the culture and education systems of South Africa. The seminar was sponsored by Rhodes University of Grahamstown, South Africa in conjunction with the NEH and University of Arkansas.

James Madison Memorial Fellowship

(2009)

The James Madison Foundation annually awards one K-12 teacher per state a \$24,000 fellowship for MA study "to individuals desiring to become outstanding teachers of the American Constitution at the secondary school level." I was selected Michigan's 2009 Fellowship Winner.

Fulbright Hays - Study Abroad

(2006) Morocco and Mali

Sponsored by the US Department of Education, the six week seminar entitled "Promoting Community Development in Morocco and Mali," was funded by the Fulbright Foundation. I was one of fifteen teachers selected to participate.

Backpacking the Globe

I bought my first backpack and Eurail pass in 1995; I was 38 years old. Since, I've traveled to Europe, East and West. I've been to the Middle East three times; Syria, a year before the war, Palestine twice, and Egypt, Lebanon, and Jordan. In the late 90's, I got a first hand look at the fledging democracies of Russia and Ukraine. I was fortunate to study with colleagues in South and North Africa. I could've never learned as much, or traveled as efficiently on my own. And I spent a month in East Africa, Uganda and Rwanda in 2015. One thing that I love, I've had this opportunity to travel abroad with ex-students, kids who are now adults, one of whom is currently a journalist with NPR. I joined her in East Africa, and again in 2018 in Colombia as she researched a project published by [Latino USA](#). In the Spring of 2020, I'll travel with two more students / now friends in Peru. We'll climb Machu Picchu. Cuba. Vietnam, Laos, Istanbul, and Central America, travel has opened my eyes to the world - it keeps me young, wakes me up., and allows me to inspire my students to do the same.