

Higher Learning

Last week, one of my professors jumped over the table, grabbed me by the shoulders, spat all over me, then shook me violently and yelled in my face, “THANK YOU!!! THANK YOU!!!”

Man, he was so pumped he almost kissed me.

You should see this man teach; jumping all over the place, yelling, making some really funny sound effects, and doing somersaults (ok not the somersaults). And every week, he realizes there is no white-board marker in the room, so he air-draws his diagrams.

But you know what, that’s what I want to see. This guy is so passionate about what he teaches and gets on such a high in his classes you would think he’s performing at the Apollo. I must admit, it’s not always easy to pay attention to the entire lecture. Sometimes I drift off thinking about everything else I have to do, wondering about the future or lunch. However, I really respect the energy my professor brings, so I feel he deserves my attention. And maybe, just maybe, he really does have something important to say?

I came away with a deep respect for teachers this week. My friend Michael and I read to 1st and 2nd grade students at Carver Elementary as a part of our residence life service project. We walked into class on Monday morning and the guidance counselor asks the kids where they thought we were from.

I hate to keep bringing it up, but I didn’t see it coming...the kids start yelling, “China! He’s from China! And him, he’s from...New Jersey!”

New Jersey? Didn’t see that one coming.

So before I started reading the story of Harry B. Wigglebottom, a rabbit that wouldn’t listen in class, I explained that I was indeed Chinese, but from Australia.

So they ask, “How’d you end up in Mount Olive?”

I said, “Pick up a copy of the *Mount Olive Messenger* from last week.”

Just kidding.

I actually told them that it was a long story, and that I would tell them another time.

I really enjoyed reading to the kids. They were so ready to learn and so curious about everything. I saw their little eyes all fixated on the story and the pictures, inching up from their seats to get a better view. I thought to myself, man, these teachers here really have such an important job. They are essentially teaching these young human beings the basics

of life in our complex world. They are shaping the values and lives of these kids. I wouldn't even know where to begin.

I can't even remember what I was like in 2nd grade, but I still remember a lot about my teacher. Mrs. Breville-Jean was her name and she threw me a surprise party in class on my last day before I moved away.

So go ahead teachers - yell, scream, and jump over the table. You may not know it, and we might not realize it, but you are inspiring our lives.