

I Touched the Future

2020

I would like to recommend **Brad Knecht** for the **I Touched the Future Award**.

Brad Knecht was a teacher in New Jersey and then transferred back to his home School District of Nazareth. While at Nazareth, he taught first at Nazareth Junior High School and then at Nazareth Area High School. I had the privilege of teaching with Brad for the 28 years, which he taught at Nazareth Area High School.

To say that Brad Knecht deserves this award is an understatement; however, due to his humbleness, he would not believe he deserved an award for doing what he loved. He was such a wonderful and professional teacher. The students truly loved "Mr. Knecht" and he never failed to disappoint them with a witty anecdote or funny story. At the same time, the students learned so much about biology and the environment because Brad is an avid outdoorsman. He brought his passion for the outdoors into his classroom and many students will remember him for this. The way Brad taught "tricked" the students into learning because of his animated lectures and lab assignments. He had funny names for many of the biology terms that his students still speak about to this day. Every time I talk about cells, one of his former students mentions the "wee beasties", of which Brad often spoke. While at Nazareth, Brad was involved with the Envirothon Team and the Quoits Club, among other clubs and activities. He was always a favorite for "Shirt Off Your Back Night" or "Coach In My Corner" honors.

On a more individual note, the students responded well to Brad Knecht because he made a personal connection with his students and made sure to know every student in his class. On his last few days at Nazareth Area High School, his students came by to wish him luck. There were so many tearful goodbyes and thank yous. He did not realize how many students and colleagues loved and respected him. Brad Knecht was an educator, who was a teacher for all of the right reasons - love of students, compassion for others, and commitment to learning. He is also one of my friends, who by his example, made me a better teacher and person. Please give him full consideration for this award.

Gina Rakos