

Jeffrey Tooker

Class of 2001, Columbia High School

Last, but certainly not least, we honor Mr. Jeffrey Tooker for his professional achievements and his outstanding service to the East Greenbush community. Jeffrey graduated from Columbia High School in 2001 with magna cum laude honors. During his time in both middle and high school, he was an avid runner and participated in three seasons of track, and set course records as a freshman. In addition to sports, Jeff showed versatility by his participation in Concert Band, the Audio Visual club, Math League and the National Honor Society. He spent early mornings before school interning at WNYT news. He was the recipient of the U.S. Marine Corps Scholastic Excellence Award.

Jeffrey continued his education at the State University of New York at Albany. In only 3 ½ years, he received his Bachelors Degree in History with a concentration in United States History. During this time, he volunteered as an Emergency Medical Technician for the college's ambulance service, Five Quad. He also started to substitute for the East Greenbush Central School District, hoping that he would one day secure an entry level teaching position to begin his career.

Jeffrey moved on to The College of St. Rose where he received a Masters of Science Degree in Adolescent Education. It was during this time that he joined the East Greenbush Fire District, where he has spent many long and tireless hours serving the East Greenbush community.

Jeffrey became a boys track and cross country coach in 2003. In 2006, Jeffrey began his teaching career with the East Greenbush Central School District. He has taught at both Goff Middle School and Columbia High School for the past eight years. In addition, Jeffrey is a member of the School Safety Committee as the K-12 Districtwide Safety Coordinator.

His expertise in this field has proved helpful to the District. In particular, his leadership was instrumental when the roof blew off Goff Middle School in December, 2012. According to Goff ELA teacher, Sean Crall, “teachers and students were rattled, and not sure how to effectively ensure the safety and well-being of all. Into this chaos strides Jeff in his first responder gear, and all of a sudden, everything just fell into place. He immediately assessed the situation and instituted protocols that allowed for a steady and reasonable evacuation of the school. He radiated confidence and surety that day. His leadership allowed the District to show that it can handle the most dire of emergency situations.”

Jeffrey was recognized in the Scholars’ Recognition Program. The students in this program were asked to nominate a teacher who has influenced their lives in a significant way. This student nominated him for being an inspirational teacher and coach.

In 2012, Jeffrey created a Student Learning Objective (SLO) that was accepted by the New York State Education Department as an example for educators throughout New York State.

Jeffrey's passion and selfless nature is evidenced in his service as an Assistant Fire Chief and past President of the East Greenbush Fire Department. He is also a certified Emergency Medical Technician. In addition to this volunteerism, Jeffrey also answers emergency phone calls as a 9-1-1 Dispatcher for the Town of East Greenbush. This combination of service clearly displays Jeffrey's commitment to the community.

One of his past students, Matthew Erby, stated that " Jeff Tooker's influence on my life has greatly benefited me, and I am sure there are many others who feel the same. His character, values, and commitment inspired me to run track, become a volunteer EMT, and pursue a career in medicine in order to be able to benefit the lives of others as much as Jeff has benefited mine. He is a great teacher, coach, and man, and is completely deserving of a place in the Hall of Fame."

The East Greenbush Education Foundation is pleased to induct Mr. Jeffrey Tooker into the Columbia High School Hall of Fame, for his professional accomplishments and outstanding volunteer service.