

Michael Bennett is currently employed by the East Greenbush Central School District as a Special Education teacher at the Goff Middle School. Mr. Bennett has been a member of the instructional staff since 1998. During this time he served as the varsity coach for girls basketball since 2000. He has also coached football at the modified, junior varsity and varsity levels since 1999. Among Mr. Bennett's other activities and commitments have been as an East Greenbush Teachers' Association building representative and Vice-President from 1999-2003; a member of the attendance policy committee; and as a cooperating teacher for the College of Saint Rose.

Mr. Bennett has also found time in his busy schedule over the years to act as Aquatic Director for the Town of Schodack day camp and serve on the staff of various basketball camps in Rensselaer County. He has volunteered his services on numerous occasions in a variety of community sponsored athletic events and activities.

Mr. Bennett's educational background includes an Associates Degree in Marketing from Hudson Valley Community College and a Bachelor's Degree in United States History from SUNY Albany. He completed his formal education by obtaining a Master's Degree in Special Education from the College of Saint Rose.

It was on February 9, 2004, that the defining moment in Michael Bennett's professional and personal life transpired. His courageous efforts in concert with Assistant Principal John Sawchuk to prevent a distraught gun-wielding student from wreaking havoc upon the student body and staff have earned him the justified title of "Hero". In recognition of his unselfish effort of placing himself in "harm's way" he has been honored by a variety of organizations, government officials and entities, as well as publications. Among the many awards are: EGTA/EGCSD Educator of the Year; NYS Senate Resolution (Senator Joseph Bruno, presenter); NYS Assembly Resolution (Assemblyman Ron Canestrari and Patrick Casale, presenters); NYS Education Department Resolution (Commissioner Mills, presenter); Humanitarian Award (The American Red Cross); the Greater New York: Raoul Wallenberg Committee Award; Town of East Greenbush Resolution/plaque; and the Reader's Digest article "Everyday Heroes", August, 2004.

It is because of his service and devotion to the profession he serves and in his unhesitating willingness to sacrifice life and limb for the students under his care, that the East Greenbush School District proudly inducts Michael Bennett into the Columbia High School Hall of Fame.