

LINDSEY JENSEN

Biography



Lindsey Jensen is the 2018 Illinois Teacher of the Year. She insists, “I did not choose teaching; teaching chose me.” Her unconventional path to a career in education began twelve years ago when she was hired for a job as a teacher’s aide in a junior high behavioral disorder classroom. She states, “This was the experience that would change not only the course of my career path, but my very existence. I fell in love with teaching in an environment that would send most adults running for the hills. Despite the challenging days and difficult experiences, it was in this special classroom where my journey to a fruitful career in education began. For this, I will be forever grateful.”

In December of 2005, Lindsey graduated from Southern Illinois University with a Bachelor’s Degree in Speech Communication. Immediately following graduation, she enrolled in a Master’s program at Oakland City University, where she earned a Master of Arts in Teaching. In that time, she researched the effects of both cooperative and active learning strategies, as well as interpersonal relationships within classrooms.

When asked about the potential for ever leaving her classroom, Lindsey responds: “It saddens me that to experience a sense of career advancement as a teacher, one often exits the classroom to become an administrator or a curriculum director. While both are highly respected professions, the thought of pursuing a degree only to leave my classroom—not to mention my students—is something that I simply cannot fathom.” Consequently, when she decided to pursue a Doctorate through The School of Teaching and Learning at Illinois State University—a longtime personal goal—she made a commitment to do so to become a better teacher, and not to step into some higher-paying role within education. She is currently completing her dissertation by researching the lack of females in STEM through the lens of an English educator’s favorite tool-- literature. “I am proud that I have managed to remain true to my love of teaching, all while combining my passion for literacy.”

Lindsey Jensen is an 11th and 12th grade English teacher at Dwight Township High School, which is a very special place that she has called “home” for the past ten years. Currently, she teaches Advanced Placement English, *English IV*, and *English III*.