

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Juliette Heddad-Miller Is St. Croix District Teacher Of The Year

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Each year, the Virgin Islands Department of Education goes through the painstaking process of selecting the most outstanding teachers from the St. Croix and St. Thomas-St. John districts, honoring them with the prestigious Teacher of the Year award.

This year, the St. Thomas-St. John and St. Croix superintendents selected Mrs. Juliette Heddad-Miller from St. Croix's Lew Muckle Elementary and Mrs. Jeune Provost from St. Thomas' Julius Sprauve School. In this article, Heddad-Miller is highlighted.

Heddad-Miller, a second grade and intervention teacher at Lew Muckle for the past six years is, "committed to empowering students by helping them get to the root cause of

any issues they are having in the classroom."



is to find out what gets a child going and working

St. Croix's Teacher of the Year, Mrs. Juliette

Heddad-Miller

"I try to reach the children by understanding where they are in the beginning and figuring out what they need to learn to get them to move forward," Heddad-Miller said. "The job of a teacher is to know what makes a child tick, and to determine — because children learn at all different levels and speeds — how best to help them succeed."

In her quest for diversity in teaching, Heddad-Miller uses sports as an engagement tool, an idea that was birthed from her many years teaching reading recovery.

"We've studied books about basketball, using, in part, the Common Core strategies for close reading," she explained, adding that school coaches were also brought in at the end of the lesson for training sessions that would further spark the students' interest.

Heddad-Miller continued: "Observing the students' development afterward, it's evident the growth in their self-esteem, especially in the way that they walked and talked. It is a joy and pleasure to witness the impact that these short sessions have on students, and I am confident and committed that by continuing this work, the students' proficiency will not only increase, but so will their confidence."

St. Croix Superintendent Gary Molloy said this week that being in Heddad-Miller's classroom was "truly exciting."

"Determining the Teacher of the Year is always very difficult," Molloy said. "Our candidates are all strong, competent, and they exhibit and showcase that real teaching and love of children. However, our District team went out and made some actual observations and based on that, it was very clear that this year's winner, Mrs. Juliette Heddad-Miller, was truly deserving of the honor. Mrs. Heddad-Miller is very exciting — she gets her students ready to learn, she demonstrates a true passion and has truly mastered both the art and science of teaching. Every parent would want their child in her

classroom."

In her sixth year of teaching, Heddad-Miller said she was grateful she was being exposed to a small, but excellent group of elementary teachers, all of whom, she says, are just as passionate about helping their students learn.

"To be chosen for this, among all of the greatest and best that we have, I am truly honored," she added.

The *Virgin Islands Consortium* congratulates Mrs. Juliette Heddad-Miller on winning this most prestigious honor.