

Michael Powell

Patuxent Elementary School, Upper Marlboro, MD

Intermediate Elementary Education

6th Grade Math, Science and Health



2005 Honorees



“I believe that Hands-on learning equals minds on learning. In order to achieve this you must utilize an inquiry-based strategy. Inquiry-based learning utilizes the discrepant event.

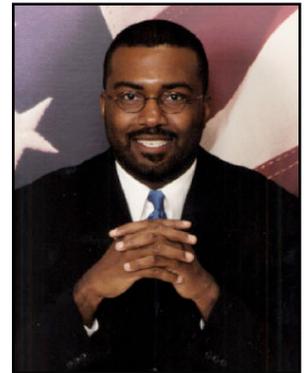
The discrepant event is built on the principle that inquiring minds want to know. For example, in a lesson about the hydrologic cycle, I challenged 4th graders to write a hypothesis to explain a discrepant event. I poured cold water into each of their cans. Then, I told them to put colored dye in to their cans. I told them to observe the inside and outside of the can for 5 minutes. Children observed that the color of the liquid on the outside of the glass was not the same color as the colored liquid within the container. This brought home the point that water is in the air. After that engagement activity, I knew I had their undivided attention. The discrepant event in conjunction with cooperative groups is an effective learning strategy. Cooperative groups allow students that vary in ability to explore concepts together.”

“I teach with the background and experiences of my students in mind. To address this critical area, I incorporate parents and community partners. Having their parents, youth minister, grand parents, local business owners and police officers present lessons helps the students form connections. I feel that these community resources not only have a vested interest in the students’ outcomes but they offer a unique view of each individual child. – *Michael Powell*

“Mr. Powell’s classroom goes well beyond the physical four walls... Students are up, moving, and engaged as they participate in their cooperative learning groups. Students move from center to center as they enhance their skills. Students are solving aerospace physics related problems.

Students go outside to measure the area and perimeter of outdoor classrooms. They go into the woods for lessons on orienteering. He invites scientists into the classroom. As a former Fire Fighter and Emergency Medical Technician he uses his medical experiences and chemistry and physics background knowledge to support his Science, Math, and Health lessons.”

– *Judy B. Dent, principal, Patuxent Elementary School*



Other Highlights:

The Washington Post Agnes Myers Outstanding Teacher (2004)

Finalists for Maryland Teacher of the Year (2004)

Environmental Teacher of the Year (2005)

Harry J. Carman Award (1999)

Member, National Science Teachers Association

Member, Prince George’s County Teachers Association

President and Founder, Middle Passage Foundation

Member, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development

Years Teaching: 9

Average Class Size: 25

Classes Taught Per Day: 4

School’s Percent of ESL Students: 1

School Type: Public, County

Type of Class: Teams