

## 2011 Teacher of the Year Amanda Crist



From L to R - Bonita Sweeney, Deputy Director of Programs and Operations, Martha Spohn Asst. Deputy Director, Superintendent Dr. Jerry McGlone, 2011 CEAO Teacher of the Year Amanda Crist, and Department of Youth Services Director Harvey Reed.

"You have got to turn over all the rocks if you think you are going to get a job, Amanda!" This was the advice my mother gave to me day in and day out. It was the summer of 2001, and I had just graduated from Mount Union College with a BA in Accounting and Minor in Secondary Education. With those words of wisdom, and a mother who was all too happy to see me gainfully employed, I applied for a job posting that ran in our local paper for an Administrative Office Technologies teaching position at Indian River School. Initially, I thought "I could never teach at a prison". But soon after I interviewed, I spent an afternoon observing classes. I got a great feeling about working here with the youth and staff, and the rest is history - I have been here for almost 10 years.

My students continue to amaze me with their determination and creativity, and they are what drive me to bring my "A" game each day. We are often called upon to assist with various institutional projects, and my students never let me down with their creative approaches. We have participated with countless Graduations, Volunteer Recognition Banquets, Football Camps, Black History Month Programs, and various institutional requests that arise. In 2005, I was awarded the Department of Youth Services "Teacher of the Year" award.

In addition to teaching, I have been playing the French horn with the Alliance Symphony for the past 12 years. From 2001 - 2009, I served as a youth group leader at my church, and from 2009 - present, I have been volunteering as the Financial Secretary. In 2007, I began volunteering as a mentor to reach "at-risk" youth in my community with the Stark County Quest program, and in 2008, I was awarded the "Mentor of the Year" Award. In 2007, I obtained my Master's in Business Administration (MBA) from Ashland University. Currently, I am enrolled in the online professional development classes offered through CEA and Ashland. I am Microsoft Certified in Word, Excel, Access and PowerPoint.

On a personal note, on the weekends you can find me cutting loose playing poker with my friends, enjoying Sunday dinner with my family, shopping for a deal, and perhaps at my new favorite place - the dog park with my rescued sheepdog, "Dr. Seuss". I have also been busy planning a wedding for later this year with my fiancé Adrien.