



# THE SCHOOLS *of* Guntersville

## GUNTERSVILLE HIGH SCHOOL

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Guntersville, AL 35976  
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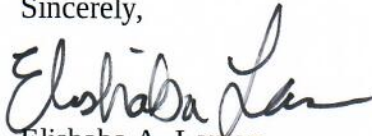
March 17, 2022

To whom it may concern:

It is a great honor to recommend Mrs. Val Jones for Outstanding Arts Educator Award consideration. You run into teachers everyday. It is rare to run into a magical teacher like Mrs. Jones. An arts advocate her entire life, she has helped develop young people into thinking artists and people who inspire others. She manages to build a meaningful relationship with each and every student. She has taken her National Art Honor Society and to nursing homes and hospice facilities to create works of art that heal the soul. Her classes have garnished the halls of every school building in the Guntersville School System, the Guntersville Museum, and city, state, and national offices. She has student work hanging in Washington, D.C. nearly every year! She is President of our local Community ARTS organization. ARTS (Artists Responding to Students) helps to give every child in our county an engaging experience with the arts. Every year she leads this group starting with a county wide art competition (ARTS Works) that hangs in the Guntersville Museum. She coordinates a summer camp for all disciplines of the ARTS called ARTS Spark STEAM Camp. At this camp students from all over can participate in a week-long engagement in visual arts, music, engineering, and dance. She then coordinates the fall Cultural Outreach event where students from around the county are bussed in to explore culture and art in our area. Businesses in our community know Mrs. Jones for her giving nature of time and talent. She has designed programs and posters for our community theater group, The Whole Backstage. If there is an event in the community, she does not hesitate to bring her students along for face painting or just volunteering as she knows that the presence of her students gives a face to the artists in our community. She participates in the annual Art On the Lake show where students face paint and have their art on display. She is a Nationally Board Certified teacher. Senior student Lydia Raulerson stated, "Mrs. Jones has always brought out my critical side of thinking when it comes to new art projects: how to construct, what to do, and how to effectively and creatively execute." Scholastic Art & Writing Silver Key Award winner sponsored by Mrs. Jones, Cade Johnson said, "She does whatever it takes, regardless of any obstacles, to ensure the

art students are represented and celebrated for all that we do". Mrs. Jones ignites other teachers to join her efforts to include Art in the classroom, she is very passionate about arts integration. She often works with the Media Specialist, Engineering, and Band instructors on projects that create a STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math) environment that is recognized around our school and community. What you can not see from all of the artwork on display or the work she does in the community is the tireless efforts she has given when dealing with very difficult and stressful times at home. During the first year of COVID, Mrs. Jones nursed the love of her life as he lost a battle to cancer without any local family support. Through this process she was by his side, but also continued to teach her "children" through the camera lens. Her drive to make the world a better place with artistic minds in the community is in one word "relentless". She is simply put, amazing! Again, I recommend Ms. Val Jones with great consideration for Outstanding Arts Educator.

Sincerely,



Elishaba A. Larson

Media Specialist

Guntersville High School

To whom it may concern,

Mrs. Jones is the lifeblood of the Guntersville High School Arts program. She dedicates so much of her time and energy into her classes and strives to improve her students' creative career. She is always offering constructive criticism about our artwork, not to hurt our feelings or make us less confident in our abilities, but to help us grow as artists. She does whatever it takes, regardless of any obstacles, to ensure the art students are represented and celebrated for all that we do. I was lucky enough to have Mrs. Jones for a total of 5 years and throughout these years she has done nothing but push me to be the best I can be. Coming to her class everyday has and will always be the best part of my high school experience. When I began in art I was not the best by any means, and many times thought about giving up. Mrs. Jones is the reason I kept going. She saw something in me, and kept pushing me to continue with art and not give up. While this is my own personal experience with Mrs. Jones, I know many other students would say the exact same. I can't say it enough, everything she does is for her students. Even through the Covid-19 pandemic she sent us all projects and ideas to keep us creative during the trying times. I can express my gratitude to Mrs. Jones and I couldn't think of a better recipient for this honor.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cade Johnson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.

Cade Johnson  
Guntersville High School  
Class of 2022



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March 17, 2022

Dear Members of the Alabama Arts Alliance,

I enthusiastically support the nomination of Valerie Jones for an *Alabama Arts Alliance Educator Award*.

Ms. Jones has been an unwavering devotee of our community and its children since the day she moved to Guntersville as the new city school art teacher.

As the current director of the Guntersville Museum, I am grateful for Ms. Jones' commitment to the Arts in our town. A highlight of our organization's exhibition calendar is the annual student art exhibit. Very often our visitors, most of whom are not from this area, make a point to praise the exceptional talents and the educator who, undoubtedly, cultivated them. In addition, as the chairman of the annual Art-on-the-Lake art festival, I am always proud that we display local student artwork as a way to engage our patrons and to promote the school art program. Time and time again, many of our event's professional artists are astounded at the young talent, and are well aware that those talents have been guided by a local art teacher. The refined skills demonstrated by Val's students do not happen by chance. The quality of her student's artwork is proven not only by the numerous comments and praise given, but by the abundance of awards granted...regionally and nationally.

Valerie Jones is a gifted teacher who makes lasting impressions on the lives of her students. She has a sincere understanding of the various learning styles of her pupils and uses innovative methods of coaching to make connections by tapping into the best of individual abilities. Val is most deserving of this award.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Julie Patton".

Director



14227 US Highway 431 South  
Guntersville, AL 35976  
(256)582-2046

To whom it may concern,

It is my privilege to recommend my colleague, Val Jones, to receive the Alabama Art Education Outstanding Award for Intermediate and Secondary Schools. Mrs. Jones has been the Visual Arts Teacher at Guntersville High and Guntersville Middle School since 1998. I have been fortunate to get to know her since becoming the assistant principal at GHS in 2020.

In that time, I have witnessed Mrs. Jones create engaging lessons for our students. Mrs. Jones serves as our Visual Arts Teacher and is a member of our Leadership Team with vital input from the side of Visual Arts, Performing Arts and interactive lessons. Mrs. Jones also takes on the responsibility of planning many events to promote the arts in Guntersville and the state of Alabama. I know Mrs. Jones' work and her love for education, I am convinced that she deserves this honor.

Mrs. Jones is one of the teachers and leaders you come across once in a great while. The students love to work with her and show their creativity. She is great in communication with families and working side-by-side with her colleagues. Mrs. Jones has a love for her profession and is always positive and excited about a new day to learn. Mrs. Jones gets to know the students and always lends them a kind ear to help them through challenges (both in the building and outside of the building). Mrs. Jones sees what every student brings to the community and to our school. She helps the students identify their unique strengths and helps them overcome their struggles (especially with our students when they may have self-doubt). At the same time, Mrs. Jones holds a high expectation for all students and believes they can all succeed with the right tools and motivation.

Mrs. Jones goes above and beyond to meet the needs of our students and our community. Her ability to create interactive lessons that engage students is incredible. Mrs. Jones also helps students to create many different types of art and items. Mrs. Jones is a superior leader for our students and among her colleagues, she is well respected for her tireless work and dedication. She is always available to discuss ideas, observe lessons, and share ideas about some creative ways to engage students. I feel blessed to have Mrs. Jones as our Visual Arts Teacher at GHS, I wish there were many more like her! Please recognize her skills and devotion to teaching and leading by honoring her with this award.

Sincerely,

Darren James  
GHS Assistant Principal/Athletic Director

# GUNTERSVILLE HIGH SCHOOL

14227 U.S. Highway 431  
Guntersville, Alabama 35976

Office of the Principal

256-582-2046 Ext. 5001

To: Alabama Arts Alliance  
From: Chris Andrews  
RE: Recommendation letter for Val Jones

As a new administrator at Guntersville High School, one of my first tasks was to get to know my faculty and staff. As I was visiting classrooms, I had the pleasure of meeting Val Jones, who teaches visual art classes here at GHS and at Guntersville Middle School.

Mrs. Jones teaches introductory art classes along with 2D and 3D dimensional design, and her 20 plus years of experience at Guntersville has led to numerous awards for our art students. Just this year a current student had a piece of art purchased by Alabama State Treasurer Young Boozer, who plans to display the piece in the state capitol building in Montgomery.

In my short time here, I have heard Val tell me on numerous occasions, "I have the best job in the world." She has a wonderful rapport with the students, and she gives her classes a wide variety of art projects where they can use their artistic talents in an array of mediums.

One of the most wonderful projects Ms. Jones and her students have completed here at Guntersville was a mural that was painted in our lunchroom. It was a two year endeavor that encompasses a wall over 120 feet long. It is a treasure both to the school and the Guntersville community.

With over a dozen awards from the 4th Congressional District art competition, many being best of show, Val Jones has proven that she is one of the best art educators in the state of Alabama. But awards do not solely speak to the success of an educator. Val's most important attribute is how she shares the love of art with each one of her students, and a senior this year is planning on studying art education. The legacy of art education at Guntersville High School is built on the skill and dedication of Val Jones, and she would be a worthy recipient of the Outstanding Secondary Arts Educator award from your organization. It has been a pleasure to write this letter on her behalf.

Respectfully,



Chris Andrews  
Principal, Guntersville High School

# Valerie Jones Resume

## **Education**

BS Art Education, 1981, Kutztown University, Kutztown, PA

Master of Arts, Elementary Education, 2001, University of Alabama, AL

## **Certifications**

Elementary Education Certification, 1991, University of Alabama Huntsville, AL

National Board Certified Teacher – Early Adolescence through Young Adulthood Art, 2004 -  
Renewed 2014

## **Experience**

Department of Defense Dependent Schools, Teacher, Mainz, Germany, 1982

City Colleges of Chicago, Drawing Instructor, Mainz, Germany, 1982

Hampton Cove Academy, Hampton Cove, AL, Second Grade Teacher, 1997-1998

Guntersville City Schools, Guntersville, AL, Visual Arts Teacher, 1998 - present

## **Leadership**

Alabama Course of Study for Arts Education Task Force, 2005-2006

ARTS –Artists Responding To Students, Founding Member, Executive Board, 2006 - present

Alabama Art Education Association Executive Board Member, 2006-2010 – Middle Level Chair

Advisory Board for the Alabama Arts Initiative – Visual Arts Pilot, ALSDE, 2006

Alabama State Department of Education Arts Leadership Team, 2013-2014

Alabama Art Education Association State Conference Presenter, 2013, 2014, 2022

Team Presenter for Artistic Literacy Consortium, 2014

Guntersville Museum and Cultural Center Board Member, 2015 - present

Guntersville High School, Educator Effectiveness Planning Committee, 2016

Arts and World Languages Courses of Study, ALSDE, 2016- 2017

ALSDE, Arts, Unpacking the Standards, Summer 2017

Bicentennial Planning Committee, 2018-2019

Guntersville Middle School Leadership Team, 2017 – 2020

Guntersville High School Leadership Team, 2020 - Present

Guntersville High School Arts Education Dept. Chair, 2007 - Present

### **Awards and Other Recognitions**

Chamber of Commerce Educator of the Year, 2001

Guntersville City Schools, Secondary Teacher of the Year, 2001

Guntersville City Schools, Secondary Teacher of the Year, 2005

Guntersville City Schools, Secondary Teacher of the Year, 2008

Guntersville City Schools, Secondary Teacher of the Year, 2018

International Student Media Festival Judges Favorite Award - 2004

International Student Media Festival 3 video and animations 1st place awards - 2005

Alabama State Superintendent Student Art Competition, Student Best in Show, Recognition Award, 2013, 2014, 2020, 2021

National Scholastic Art and Writing Awards, Gold Key Award, 2014, Silver Key Award, 2022

United States Congressional District Student Art Competition, 11 Student Best in Show; winning artwork displayed in the United States Capitol for one year.