

# I Love My Librarian!

2010 Award

## **Nomination for Doug Valentine**

McKillop Elementary  
Melissa, Texas

## **Nominator**

Karen Rose et al.  
Plano, Texas

### **1. Please tell us in 2-3 sentences why your nominee should win this award. What sets him/her apart?**

Mr. Valentine is the Wizard of Tech on our campus. He is the Bringer of books, the Professor of professional development, The Mage with many hats, the Swami of sources, The Crown Prince of curriculum, and the Laureate of all things library. He shares his knowledge freely with faculty and students not just in our school, but world wide through his online personal learning network. He not only knows his stuff, he knows your stuff too and is always more than happy to make your day a little bit easier and more productive.

### **2. How has the nominee helped you and/or students at school? For example, did the nominee help you with a project, recommend resources or collaborate with you to enhance student learning?**

The list of Mr. Valentine's projects is a long and varied one. Not only has he helped me on numerous projects but he is involved in nearly every special activity that takes place on campus. He views everything through the lens of "what is best for the students and what will make them shine." Because of this everyone feels a part of the wonder that we call our school library. To truly experience some of Mr. Valentine's projects you will need to follow the provided online links to his work.

Collaboration comes in many forms and Mr. Valentine uses them all. Whether assisting a teacher with technology or directing students in a persuasive commercial, Mr. Valentine epitomizes what collaboration can be when trust is established. His 4th grade Texas history collaboration is a shining example. The 4th grade team leader came to Mr. Valentine to collaborate on a project that would summarize what the students were learning about famous Texas battles. In the past they had made posters. Mr. Valentine suggested that they use video and write their own scripts about each battle. He suggested students come and research in the library, create the videos and then share them between classes so each student could watch the historic event the other classes has studied. The students wrote their screenplays and prepared. They came into the

library where Mr. Valentine had set up a makeshift green screen studio large enough to hold them. Under his direction they filmed their screenplays and Mr. Valentine provided backgrounds of actual battle sites and other historic details. The results were amazing. Each class had the benefit of another class's research as they watched their videos. They received invaluable instruction from Mr. Valentine on film production and technology, and they were all shining stars in front of their school and classmates. You can only imagine the parents reaction to seeing their child's final project on the "big screen" and then online for relatives all over the country to enjoy.  
( <http://tinyurl.com/255pabk>)

This experience even inspired a third grader with Asperger's Syndrome to write his own screenplay about Batman that Mr. Valentine filmed for him! His classmates love the video and at least a few weeks afterward he was a hero to his entire grade level. To help foster a collaborative atmosphere between the library and the classroom, Mr. Valentine created an instructional video. He divided it into several sections that can be used as a quick teaching tool. These videos show in a fun and entertaining way the importance of collaboration. The videos have well over 75,000 hits on Teachertube and have received a nationwide wide audience as they have been used in training all over the country. ( <http://tinyurl.com/22rca9g>)

Mr. Valentine has always had a strong interest in science and has collaborated to help increase student state science test scores. He and his wife have achieved a certain cult status with his character of "Dr. Loopy" and his Blinding you with Science video series. He collaborated with science teachers to collect facts and find out areas where the students needed help and then filmed a weekly series of videos designed to help students review. These videos are available on Teachertube, Schooltube, and on schooweb pages worldwide as more and more teachers have discovered them.  
( <http://drloopysstarshipmckillop.wikispaces.com/> )

The knowledge of science came in handy last year when Mr. Valentine organized a school wide science night. The Principal called it "one of the most entertaining and engaging nights I ever had at an elementary school event." The main feature of the evening was a "Scale model found object solar system" created by Mr. Valentine with assistance from the grade levels. Stretching the length of the main hall were hanging objects such as a huge fence grill representing Jupiter, an umbrella outlined with Christmas garland for Saturn and so on. Each found object was in scale to the 40 foot diameter sun that Mr. Valentine put up on the entry wall. Using dramatic lighting, video and a self guided tour, the hallway was transformed into a natural history museum. Grade levels provided science based games for the students to play and there were displays of fossils, X-rays, and natural wonders. Every 30 minutes a "Mentos and Coke" fountain was set off to the delight of the crowd. It was an unforgettable experience for all involved.

Mr. Valentine also helped the 3rd grade publish a book of original Tall Tales in which the students both illustrated and wrote stories as separate pieces and then combined them for the finished product. The ensuing lessons and critiques were priceless. It seems that everything Mr. Valentine touches becomes a priceless lesson in sharing for students and teachers alike.

### **3. How does the nominee make the school a better place? Please be specific.**

Mr. Valentine has made this a better place is by transforming the culture of our school. He opened the library two years ago in our brand new building with one vision: to make the library the heart of the school. He began by filling the library with 12,000 books that he chose to both thrill and inspire the students and support the teachers. His philosophies match well with Ranganathan's laws of the library, especially "to every reader his or her book" and "the library is a growing organism." Mr Valentine has almost single-handedly turned what was an empty box three years ago into a vital component in the school's educational process. He immediately made an impact with the faculty by making each one an individualized custom poster to promote reading in their classrooms. He has done this each year since to kick off the school year to the delight of everyone. His willingness to collaborate with teachers and students has created an atmosphere of trust and a feeling of accomplishment that everyone in the school can share. Mr. Valentine is seldom seen behind his desk. Instead he spends his time in instruction and seeking out those one-on-one learning moments that are so vital to the student's education. You might also find him shooting video projects, working on a classroom project with a teacher, helping his award winning news crew get their stories together, directing the school musical, or planning the next big event. Mr. Valentine instituted a "fixed-flexible" library schedule which allows for every class to visit the library with their classroom teacher each week. To maximize instructional time, Mr. Valentine teaches the entire period one week and has an entire checkout period the next. This schedule allows him to go more in depth with his lessons which are all directly tied to state standards. All of the lessons are done in collaboration with grade level teachers. The teachers remain in the library during the lessons and participate fully. This allows them to take back to their classrooms what they have learned in the library and apply it to the things they are teaching. During checkout week this schedule also allows students more time to make good choices and "match the book to the reader." Students appreciate this extra time and never feel rushed to find a book. There is also flex time in the library schedule in which teachers can send students to return books and checkout, do research, or come for special events.

Mr. Valentine has a knack for taking the ordinary and making it into something extraordinary. For example, when the school wanted to start Student Council Mr. Valentine worked with the sponsor and set up the actual election process. He made sure that each candidate came in and delivered their speeches in his video studio. He worked with each one on presentation style, content, and poise. He filmed them against a green screen, added backgrounds and music, then presented each one in a professional manner through the daily video school news program. Besides the speeches, Mr. Valentine also set up electronic voting for the older students and prepared special picture ballots for the Kindergarteners and 1st graders. The result was a beautiful experience for everyone and an exercise in democracy for all of the students. As we all know the arts are sometimes given short shrift in our schools. Mr. Valentine and his wife decided to start an after school drama club for the 3rd and 4th graders and perform a school musical. Over 70 students have auditioned each year for the past two years. He works unpaid after school hours to put this show together for the entire school to enjoy. This year he will direct a second musical at the intermediate campus to continue giving his students an opportunity to perform after they leave McKillop Elementary.

Last year our Principal was interested in starting video announcements each morning. Of course she turned to Mr. Valentine to make this happen and of course it became

something wonderful that changed the culture of the school. Mr. Valentine's "News Crew" of 4th graders came in early each morning to film announcements "from the bridge of the Starship McKillop." Although the school does not have a way to simultaneously broadcast the announcements, Mr. Valentine put them on the share drive each day so teachers had access "on demand." They were an instant hit with everyone. Mr. Valentine also posted the announcements on the "Starship McKillop" Glog page so parents could see them the same day. (<http://tinyurl.com/2g5vryz>) They were so successful with the news broadcast that they won the International Shortie Video Awards for 7-10 year old broadcast news in their first year!  
( <http://tinyurl.com/293czzrh> )

#### **4. How has the library, and the nominee in particular, had an impact on students and the learning process?**

Mr. Valentine is a teacher whose classroom is the library. He believes the library is not only a place to develop a lifelong love of reading and learning, but also a place for students to experience things they might not have in the regular classroom setting. From day one he hooks his students on the library by making them curious. During his library orientation he incorporates magic tricks and technology to keep all levels of students interested. One of his favorite tricks is to show students "The Hot Book." He will be reading a book when out of nowhere it suddenly appears to burst into flames! The students are alarmed and amazed as Mr. Valentine tells them this book will be on the shelf for checkout...if only they can locate it. "Was it fiction or non-fiction?" he asks. "What do you need to know to look it up on the computer?" Students spend a lot of time in the library trying to locate the "secret" of the hot book and learn about the library at the same time.

Mr. Valentine loves using old technology as a part of his lessons. He restored an old "Predicta" television from 1958 and uses it as a "time machine" to do "teleconferencing" with characters from "long ago and far away." He has been known to talk to Thomas Jefferson and Meriwether Lewis through his magical machine. The kids have seen news from the year 1816 and have been transported to Martin Luther King's I Have a Dream speech. It's a simple thing but it has so much impact on young minds.

Our Principal once told him that "you are sowing the seeds from which you may never see the fruit." Planting the seeds of learning is one of the things Mr. Valentine does best. Last year our Reading Specialist wanted to start an after school book club. Despite already directing the school's musical he quickly took this opportunity to work with her and the students. The club met after school on the days he was not directing and utilized different methods of book discussion every meeting. They role played, wrote ads, debated and played games. For the final project the group wrote their own television news magazine featuring different aspects of the book. It can be seen here:  
( <http://vimeo.com/14891980> ).

Mr. Valentine has been recognized by many technology savvy educators such as Joyce Valenza for his work with the "Starship McKillop" Glog site ( <http://tinyurl.com/vfgpta6> ) and his "Hot Dog" animated book reviews among other projects.  
( <http://tinyurl.com/265n7zh>, <http://tinyurl.com/2fyaczk> )

The Starship McKillop Glog is an example of the cutting edge technology Mr. Valentine uses. It is media rich and contains a wealth of information and videos for student and

teacher use. The site has been recognized as one of the top Glog pages and is used as a model of best practices in the Glogster world. The animated Hot Dog reviews are extremely popular not only with our school but with schools all over the country. Mr. Valentine receives numerous e-mails asking advice on how to create them. The animated reviews are made with the 3rd and 4th grade students who achieve "Hot Dog" status in the library for the day by doing the right things. They get to write a book review and animate it for morning announcements and the Glog page. There are always many more applications than time slots to produce them. The book reviews have encouraged both the reviewers and the readers to seek out new and interesting material to read. The lucky students also get to work with video and animation technology.

Mr. Valentine has embraced the AASL Standards for the 21st Century Learner and was actually implementing many points as a natural part of his teaching style. Every student feels important and valued in his library. No request by students is too trivial for Mr. Valentine. Whether it is finding the elusive Princess book for a first grader or ordering that special Ripley's Believe it or not for an interested 4th grade reader, Mr. Valentine treats each request with importance. He does not need a formal space to teach his lessons. I have seen him teaching in the cafeteria, gym, and playground. I've heard firsthand from teachers who say their students have an idea and "need to go talk to Mr. Valentine" about it. I have watched his videos over and over with my classes and have seen the smiles on their faces as they watch themselves and their schoolmates flit across the screen singing about safety or talking about a favorite book. Mr. Valentine is a teacher to his very core and should be strongly considered for this honor.

#### **5. How has the individual demonstrated leadership in the school community?**

Mr. Valentine has demonstrated leadership in numerous ways at McKillop Elementary. He has served wherever he was needed within the school's system. Mr. Valentine has been on the Safety and Security Professional Learning Community and was instrumental in setting up the policies that keep our campus safe. He also produced short video compilations for this committee as well as the other PLC's to share at our annual district meetings. These entertaining pieces have been the highlights of the meeting the last couple of years. ( <http://vimeo.com/13258152> ) ( <http://vimeo.com/10643631> ) ( <http://vimeo.com/2328806>, <http://tinyurl.com/26lp46e> ).

The Design Team is composed of campus leaders from various areas and Mr. Valentine has played a vital role in this group since the school opened. He has helped to set policies that affect every teacher and student on campus. This group also does the planning for all the campus wide events which explains why Mr. Valentine has so many wonderful activities that begin in the library. He has established a "can-do" attitude amongst his peers on this committee.

Mr. Valentine was also selected by our former Principal to be a part of the district wide initiative in a cognitive coaching program. This program was designed to improve communication and encourage "critical conversations" among staff. Mr. Valentine attended many workshops and then assisted in training other staff in the methods and procedures to implement coaching on all grade levels.

At his previous school he served as science committee chair, district library executive committee, and the graphic novel PLC. No matter where he has taught Mr. Valentine has made an impact on student learning and professional development. He is a member of many professional organizations including the National Education Association, The

Texas Library Association, the International Society for Technology in Education, the Association for Texas Professional Educators, and the Texas Computer Education Association.

Not limiting his expertise to the campus level, Mr. Valentine has also done a number of local, state and national level conference presentations. He says that he learns as much at these conferences as he presents and brings that knowledge back to the campus where he immediately puts it into practice. Among the conferences that Mr. Valentine has presented are the Texas Computer Education Association, the Plano-Richardson Library Expo, the Texas Education Reform Foundation, and the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. Mr. Valentine has also been honored by the Texas Computer Education Association as the 2009 Librarian of the Year. In 2010 he was also awarded the Special Services Educator of the Year by the largest teacher's association in Texas, the Association of Texas Professional Educators. You can see part of his presentation here:

(<http://vimeo.com/10317326>) Mr. Valentine has also been honored as the 2007 Skyview Elementary Teacher of the Year, the 2007 Richardson area Wal Mart Teacher of the Year, 2007-08 Richardson ISD STAR teacher, and was a finalist for the Richardson ISD Teacher of the Year award. He was the first librarian to reach that level. Much of his award winning work can be seen here:

(<http://drloopysstarshipmckillop.wikispaces.com/>)

Any time Mr. Valentine wins an award he gives all the credit to his students, teachers and the staff that he says "he could not do without." Mr. Valentine truly believes an honor won by an individual is an honor to be shared by all. He has won numerous award both for his own videos and in collaboration with students and teachers. Some highlights include the Gale Corporation LIBRAREO contest

(<http://tinyurl.com/2f2su7q>), The DEMCO Express Yourself contest

(<http://vimeo.com/3089011>), and the International Student Media Festival

(<http://vimeo.com/14707302>, <http://vimeo.com/14707758>) Mr. Valentine has also won several awards in collaboration with classroom teachers including the Avermedia Challenge in 2007 (<http://vimeo.com/1940710>) and the \$30,000 eInstruction video makeover video contest in 2009 (<http://vimeo.com/7735830>) Any prize money has gone right back into the school and has been used to purchase library equipment, video equipment, and instructional software along with the purchase of equipment to start a drama program at the school. Mr. Valentine estimates that the school has received at least \$55,000 in cash and equipment as a result of winning these contests. Truly a remarkable accomplishment.

Mr. Valentine continues to be a campus leader. During the two week summer leaning academy for all staff this year he gave up his lunch to hold several technology related mini workshops to assist our teachers in how to integrate technology and web 2.0 tools into their lessons. This was one of the favorite sessions of the entire academy with teachers from all grade levels attending and using what they had learned to improve student learning and performance. Mr. Valentine's leadership is truly appreciated on many levels.