

## A Day With Maine Teacher of the Year Finalist Katie Strait at Baxter Academy for Technology and Science

Adventurous, vibrant, caring, fierce, authentic, inclusive, and passionate.

Those were some of the words Baxter Academy for Technology and Science teacher Katie Strait's students and colleagues used to describe her.

You can feel that passion for science and care for her students the moment you step into her classroom. One a recent visit, Ms. Strait and her students were immersing themselves in the inner workings of the immune system. She and the students discussed what happens when you are sitting in class and the person next to you coughs in your direction and the next day you don't feel well. What are the symptoms? What is the immune system doing to fight illness? What parts of the immune system are triggered?

Following an engaging discussion, students formed groups to begin creating multimedia presentations to demonstrate their knowledge of the innate immune system with the urging to be creative. Students could create an ad, perform a skit, make a video, write an article, or do something else completely outside of the box.

Near the entrance of her classroom hang a row of waders that students wear as they regularly venture beyond the four walls of her classroom for hands-on, real-world learning experiences. Above the waders hangs a mural capturing a vibrant marine environment. It was a gift from one of Ms. Strait's students for the difference she made in her life.



Multiple students highlighted how Ms. Strait connects what she teaches to the real world and makes learning engaging and fun. They also elevated her kindness, how she sees every student as an individual, and how she supports their unique needs.

Her colleagues shared the same sentiments.

"Katie has a vision for science outside the four walls of her classroom. She is constantly looking for opportunities to go out into the community," said a colleague.

Another colleague said, "She believes everyone should be able to bring their entire self to everything they do in her classroom. The way she shares of herself makes students comfortable to share themselves. You're a scientist but you're also a surfer or an artist. Bring your artistic nature to your science. Bring your athletic nature to your science."

Her hands-on, real-world teaching style and her focus on relationship building has also inspired her colleagues.

"She does stuff and I think, wow, I should try that. She's changed how I think about teaching," said a colleague.

Katie Strait is one of [four finalists for Maine Teacher of the Year](#) and was named the 2024 Cumberland County Teacher of the Year last May. She was nominated by parents and community members, with one parent writing in her nomination that "Katie's ability to inspire not only her students but also her colleagues and friends is a testament to her exceptional character and passion. Her relentless pursuit of fostering a generation that cares deeply about our planet sets her apart as an outstanding educator and role model."

Ms. Strait regularly organizes beach clean-ups and students often make art work and installations with what they find. She also hosts regular trips to allow students to explore tide pools and marine ecosystems in their backyard.





---

"Everything she teaches is applicable to stuff we experience in real life," said one student.

Another said, "She inspires her students to want to learn more about what she is teaching."

Some additional words Ms. Strait's students and colleagues used to describe her included persevering, creative, nurturing, incredible, unshakable, experimenter, and invigorating.

This year's Maine Teacher of the Year selection process began with more than 500 nominations. Sixteen County Teachers of the Year were announced in May and there are currently four finalists. Learn more about the Maine Teacher of the Year program [here](#).

**Like this:**

Like Loading...

---

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/745830916/>

Disclaimer: If you have any questions regarding information in this press release please contact the company listed in the press release. Please do not contact EIN Presswire. We will be unable to assist you with your inquiry. EIN Presswire disclaims any content contained in these releases.

© 1995-2024 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.