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Victor Valley Community College Press Release

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Academy of Academic Excellence this Month's Site of Newest "Teachers R Heroes" Honoree

At the end of the public reading of the secret nomination for the April "Teachers R Heroes" honoree, the audience of eleventh-graders was asked if they knew who the nominee was, and they all shouted in unison, Mrs. Connie Johnson. They were correct.

Cheers and words of encouragement filtered to the stage as Mrs. Johnson made the trek to the front to receive the honor. Mrs. Johnson, a humble and soft spoken leader, was speechless for some time before accepting the award and addressing the assembly. "I am surprised and humbled by this award. I know of many other teachers who have mentored me that deserve this honor much more than I," Mrs. Johnson said. "I am honored and thank the student that nominated me," she added.

According to the nomination submitted on behalf of Mrs. Johnson the author wrote, "Greatness is a term that is hard to define. Indeed, greatness can come in sundry forms.

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But, if there is one trait present in all great teachers, it is intangibility. Great teachers just have that *je ne sais quoi*, that amorphous but ever-present quality that makes them passionate, dedicated, and truly driven. In my lifetime, I haven't come across a teacher that exemplifies greatness more than Mrs. Connie Johnson. In addition to teaching my favorite subject, she is a person who I can come to at any time, anywhere. As it is my senior year, I have inundated her office with requests for recommendations and, without fail, she writes them with beautiful quality and promptness. Her teaching style precludes any sort of bias, something that is tough to do in a history class. No matter how touchy the subject, she sifts through it deftly and fairly. Especially amazing was the fact that she did this during the presidential primary season. But even more amazing is the passion she displays daily for her subject. When we recited the Pledge in the mornings, she would always choke up; her tribute to a county that, according to her, has given her so much. And, though she is a strict disciplinarian, Mrs. Johnson is one of the most empathetic people I've met. Somehow, she creates a comfortable environment for her students and allows them to truly shine in their own ways. Finally, it is her dedication that is, far and away, her most unique quality. In addition to advising a club on campus, Mrs. Johnson provides her home phone number to all students for assistance on homework and essays. Most teachers would quickly regret this decision as kids would prank call and abuse the opportunity. But, Mrs. Johnson is so beloved and commands so much respect, students never abuse the chance. This, by far, tells me that Mrs. Johnson is hero; a hero that, for far too long, hasn't received the recognition she deserves.”

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The Teachers R Heroes Program is sponsored by Victor Valley College, San Bernardino County Schools, Clear Channel Radio, and Desert Community Bank.

Teacher nominations may be submitted in the form of 500 words-or-less essays to www.vvc.edu. Anyone interested in making a nomination can go online to www.KATCOUNTRY1007.com, www.Y102FM.com, www.TheFox106.com, or www.Talk960.com, and find a link to the college's website. Nominations may also be sent by mail to Victor Valley College, Teachers are Heroes, 18422 Bear Valley Road, Victorville, CA 92395, attention Dr. Lori Kildal.

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