



Responsibility, Accountability, Respect

AL GREENE
Charter School Teacher,
MHS Class of 1978

Before going to MHS, Al lived with his uncle after his mom passed away. Looking back on his experience, it is a small irony that when he first found out that he was to be enrolled at MHS he was so reluctant to go, he ran away from home. It was this same uncle that told him that “no one can take an education away from him.” Now, some 35 years later, he can say the same to his children and the students in his classroom who are striving for their own education and futures.

Al Greene's students endearingly call him “The Enforcer.” In Mr. Greene's class, students know that they have to do their work, not disrupt the classroom. They have to be responsible and accountable. “When they enter my classroom, they know it's business. I got that from MHS. Tough love is what the kids respect.” Students respect Mr. Greene and because of that, they request his classes, eager to learn.

Al also teaches his students to be tolerant of differences, and to treat others with respect. “Kids sometimes think it is okay to use derogatory terms when talking about others. I nip that right in the bud.”

Al Greene has not always been a teacher. He spent 20 years as an FBI agent working in Omaha, NE and New York City. He has worked cases involving violent crime and drug trafficking and spent 15 years on counter-intelligence and terrorism cases. He was in New York on 9/11 and saw first-hand the devastation of those attacks.

While working at the FBI, Al volunteered with schools in the inner city, and witnessed the toll that violence and drugs took on young people. He served as a mentor and role model for at-risk teens.

That's why when it came time for him to make a career change, Al's first thought was to find a way to improve the lives of children. It was his teachers at MHS who served as role models for his new career.

Al is still in touch with some of his MHS teachers after 30 years, and he knows that they are in touch with other former students too. Like his MHS teachers, he makes an effort to be accessible to children outside the classroom, telling them that they can call him anytime even after they have graduated. Because he had teachers who reached out to him, he wants to do the same for his students. “I treat them like my own kids.”

Al serves as the school athletic director and varsity basketball coach. He also coaches his son's recreational basketball team. Believing that voting is both a right and a responsibility, he conducts voter registration drives at the school. One collateral benefit of his teaching economics and government classes is that he has interested a number of his students in government and the political process ... to the point where several have volunteered on different political campaigns.

At home, his son is learning the importance of self-reliance, responsibility and discipline. As his dad learned at MHS, he is learning to manage his time, to set up a schedule, allocate time for studying, make his bed, and cook. “One thing we learned to do at MHS is cook. Not to become Emeril, just making eggs and pancakes and having the responsibility for breakfast at home.” Al wants to prepare his son and his students to be independent when they graduate from high school, just as MHS had prepared Al.