

Mr. Jones goes to Washington

Hazelwood West teacher to attend Supreme Court summer program

By Brian Flinchpaugh

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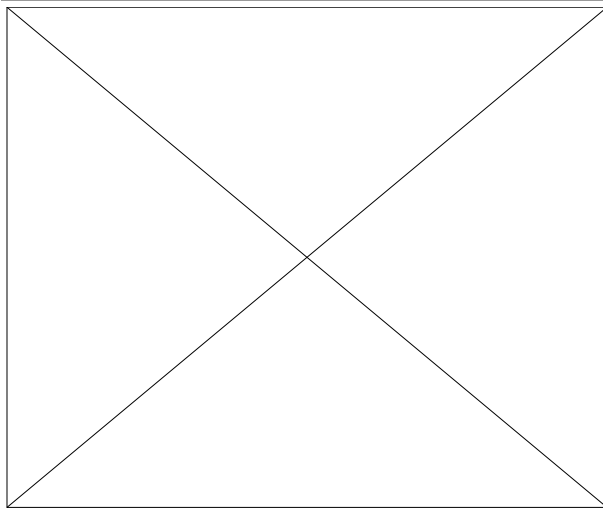
Scott Jones will be one of the chosen few this year to help lift the veil of mystery from the U.S. Supreme Court.

Jones, a social studies teacher at Hazelwood West High School, is one of 60 teachers selected nationwide to attend the prestigious Supreme Court Summer Institute this month.

The institute offers teachers a chance to study the court and recent court cases at the Georgetown University Law Center and at the U.S. Supreme Court in Washington, D.C.

The institute is co-sponsored by Street Law Inc. and the Supreme Court Historical Society. Street Law Inc. is a nonprofit organization that provides practical education in law, democracy and human rights.

One goal of the trip, from June 21-26, is to apply what he learns to his teaching, Jones said.



"Another goal is to make the Supreme Court less mysterious and more understandable," said Jones, 35, a St. Charles resident.

He has taught American government and world history for eight years at Hazelwood West. He was studying for his doctorate in citizenship character education when he found out about this program.

Jones hopes to convey what he knows to teachers in his department and to students in class.

Colleagues and students know the Supreme Court is the nation's leading court but understand little else about its role and how it functions.

"Most people understand what the Congress and president does, but the Supreme Court seems mysterious to many," he said.

Well-known Supreme Court lawyers, reporters, scholars and educators will be among the class speakers at Georgetown.

Jones said former Clinton administration officials and several former senators are expected to discuss case law and the process for making court nominations.

But what Jones is looking forward to most is visiting the court.

It's possible Jones will be able to watch the court hand down a decision on a case it has been deliberating in recent weeks.

"They've been handing down opinions on plenty of cases recently," he said.

The teachers also are expected to attend a reception at the court, Jones said.

Trips by teachers during the summer to improve their skills and bring back information for colleagues and students are relatively common, say district officials.

Diana Gulotta, assistant to the superintendent for communications, said the trips offer an excellent means of widening knowledge for teachers.

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