



Enter to learn.  
Go forth to serve.

## O'HARA TEACHER WINS NATIONAL AWARD

Leslie Jones of O'Hara Catholic School will receive the 2017 NCEA **Lead. Learn. Proclaim.** Award from the National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA) for dedication and commitment to excellence.

The annual award honors teachers who have demonstrated a strong Catholic educational philosophy as well as exceptional ability, dedication and results. The teachers, chosen from the more than 150,000 educators who teach in the nation's Catholic elementary and secondary schools, will be recognized during the annual NCEA 2017 Convention & Expo that will take place April 18-20 in St. Louis, Missouri.

"Teachers are the backbone of our Catholic educational system, providing day-to-day instruction in faith and academics for students at over 6,000 Catholic elementary and secondary schools across the nation," said James Pavlacka, director of Leadership Development at NCEA. "The excellence that these teachers display is an inspiration to all of us who work in Catholic education."

Leslie Jones is the Campus Minister at O'Hara Catholic School, where she offers her skills as the Religion Coordinator, instructor, retreat leader, liturgist, middle school youth group minister, and facilitator of a Mass 101 class designed for families interested in learning more about Catholicism. Her outreach has strengthened the bond between the school and the family, ensured the Catholic identity of the school, and enhanced the religion curriculum for every grade. Mrs. Jones has fostered relationships with the community to establish school-wide service learning opportunities that enable students to achieve the motto of O'Hara Catholic School: *Enter to Learn. Go Forth to Serve.*

"I am excited about the opportunities to evangelize. I believe it is my job to proclaim the good news of the Gospel and to expose our students, families and staff to the beauty of our faith. I believe that when we are focused on God and our vocation as teachers, we are then able to provide the best educational environment possible for our students," said Mrs. Jones.

Mrs. Jones was born and raised Catholic and attends St. Mary Catholic Church. She is the Life Teen minister at St. Mary and leads a group of 100+ students on a faith-filled pilgrimage to the Steubenville San Diego Conference each summer. She has worked at O'Hara for 10.5 years and is known for ending most classes and assemblies with the phrase "**God is good, all the time. All the time, God is good.**"

O'Hara principal, Tammy Conway, applauds Mrs. Jones on her well-deserved award, saying: "I am constantly amazed watching Mrs. Jones inspire students and staff! Her genuine and authentic love of our Catholic faith is felt by all. She has a unique ability to minister to all ages, from our 3 and 4 year olds to our middle school students, and strives to bring each and every one of them closer to God. She is a true gift to our O'Hara community. "