



Issaquah High Teacher Profile

Jaci Belur

Issaquah High Social Studies/AP Government teacher

What is your education background?

I went to the University of Washington (GO DAWGS!) where I majored in political science and history. After UW, I went on to get my Masters in Teaching from Seattle U.

Did you grow up around Issaquah? If not, where did you grow up and did that help shape the person you are today?

I did! I am actually a graduate of Issaquah High School myself. I loved growing up in this community and was drawn back once I started teaching.



What was your job/career before coming to teach at Issaquah? If you had a prior job/career, how did that job/career make you become a better teacher?

Teaching is my first *official* career. I had considered going to law school, but my passion for teaching won out!



How many years have you been teaching at Issaquah?

Eight

What classes at Issaquah do you teach, and why do you love teaching that subject?

I teach AP US Government & Politics. I have also taught world history & US history, but AP Gov is what I am most passionate about! By far the best thing about teaching AP Gov is fostering a sense of civic responsibility in my students. I believe that having informed citizens who want to participate in the system is backbone of a strong democracy. I love when students come into my class with very little interest in government and by the end of the year will tell me how I have help spark that interest in them!

Any favorite teaching memories?

There are too many to count, but a BIG highlight from last year was when (thanks to my students) I was invited to be Congresswoman Kim Schrier's guest to the State of the Union



Address. Not only was it a once in a lifetime experience for me, but I was able to share so much with my classes. The Congresswoman also came to IHS and did a Q&A with all my students which was a great opportunity for them to have their voices heard.

Another thing that comes to mind is our annual Supreme Court Simulation in my AP Gov classes. I am continually impressed by the maturity of arguments that students make, and it is such a great reward to see them apply the skills they have learned to our current politics.

Are you a club mentor or sport coach and if so, what are the best parts of being a mentor/coach for that club/sport? Any memorable experiences you would like to share?

I am an assistant coach for the girls' soccer team. I have been coaching for 5 years and absolutely love getting to see my students outside the classroom. It is so cool to watch the team set goals at the start of the season and consistently work together to achieve those goals. Probably the most memorable experience as a coach was winning the state championship in 2017. In a pretty poetic coincidence, I had won the state championship as a player, exactly ten years to the day that we won it again in 2017. I know how rewarding it is as an athlete to win a state championship so getting to see the girls' do that again was awesome.

Is (was) volunteering part of your life? If so, tell us about your volunteering experiences and what you love about them?

Although I don't get to do it as much as I would like anymore, I have taught self-defense & sexual assault awareness to classes to young people for a number of years. I believe it is so important to give young people, and especially young women, the skills to discover their own power and begin to move the needle on the prevalence of sexual assault.



What do you like to do outside of school?

I enjoy playing golf, soccer, and hiking around the beautiful Pacific Northwest. I am a HUGE sports fan and am especially loyal to my UW Huskies, so you can always find me watching sports. I love spending time with my family, especially my niece and nephew who bring me so much joy! We recently got a new addition to our family, a new puppy. I am also a bit of a "foodie" so I love trying new restaurants or cooking new recipes. Lastly, we were lucky enough to buy a home last year and I have discovered that I love gardening.

