My name is Julie Counts, and this is my 31st year as a high school English teacher with Henrico County Public Schools in Richmond, Virginia. I have a BS degree in secondary English education from Virginia Commonwealth University, and I am proud to call Virginia my home.

During my years in the classroom, I have had the opportunity to teach all grades (9-12) and all levels of English. My career has been divided between two schools: Hermitage High School and Deep Run High School. After graduating from college, I spent 17 years at Hermitage, and while there, I had the unique opportunity to teach collaboratively in the Humanities Specialty Center as well as work with exceptional education teachers. Teaching with others for so many years and learning from master teachers tremendously shaped my next unique opportunity—opening a new high school.

For the past 13 years, I have served as English department chair at Deep Run. I currently teach two English 12AP classes and three Introduction to Humanities (an honors elective) classes. As department chair, I enjoy developing curriculum, working closely with English teachers and the entire faculty, and most importantly teaching in my “home away from home”—the classroom. I am passionate about helping students become better readers, writers, and most importantly human beings.

On a personal note, I am married to a wonderful husband and have two adult daughters. Both of my daughters graduated from the University of South Carolina. Go Gamecocks! My oldest daughter got married in September 2013, and she and her husband welcomed their son into the world in May of 2015. My youngest daughter is a teacher as well in Henrico County, and she teaches 2nd grade. Having my own children has certainly influenced my role in the classroom because it made me see the educational world via the eyes of a parent. In my free time, I enjoy shopping, reading, and spending time with my immediate and extended family.

Professionally, the Japanese proverb, “To teach is to learn” encapsulates my educational career, and l love teaching and learning.