

Preschool teacher finds her niche

Written by By Molly Ann Howell Managing Editor
Friday, 06 October 2023 06:10



Meet Camille's Teacher of the Month: Sefina Garcia

Each month, Camille's Sidewalk Café recognizes one local teacher within the Gallup area for his or her determination to help students go above and beyond. Prospective teachers are nominated by students who feel they deserve to be recognized.

This month's award went to Sefina Garcia, an educational assistant for the preschool at Catherine A. Miller Elementary School in the Gallup-McKinley County Schools district. She teaches the three-and four-year-olds.

Garcia moved from the Pinedale/Church Rock area to Gallup when she was five years old. She grew up in the GMCS school system, and then went on to the University of New Mexico's Gallup campus to get her education degree.

Before she began working at GMCS, she worked for the kid center at the UNM-Gallup campus. Now, she's been at Catherine A. Miller Elementary for 10 years.

Preschool teacher finds her niche

Written by By Molly Ann Howell Managing Editor
Friday, 06 October 2023 06:10

In an interview with the *Sun*, she called teaching preschool-age students her specialty.

“Preschool is my niche. When I use to work at the UNM-Gallup kid center I used to be a teacher there for the infant/toddler room, but I think preschool is still in my heart,” Garcia said.

Both a former coworker and a current coworker couldn’t agree with Garcia more.

Monique Martinez, Garcia’s current coworker, called Garcia her “right-hand,” saying that she couldn’t do what she does without her.

“She is a natural teacher. She is kind, she’s committed, she’s very creative and talented. The students really do love her,” Martinez said.

Lenore Diaz, who is now retired from teaching, worked with Garcia for almost six years. She said that Garcia was always great with the young kids.

“She was very motivated. She brought great ideas to the classroom. She was very patient, caring, and loving with the children,” Diaz said. “She was like a mother to them.”

When it comes to wrangling a room of very young children together, Garcia admitted it can be difficult. But she said her favorite part is when one of her students begins to understand a concept, or rather, has an “A-ha!” moment.

“When we’re working on the lesson and it’s quick for them. Like ‘oooh, I finally got it, I made a circle, or I made a square!’ Those moments are what capture my heart,” she explained.

Besides teaching the students their shapes and colors, Garcia noted that helping the kids build their language skills is also an important part of her job.

Preschool teacher finds her niche

Written by By Molly Ann Howell Managing Editor
Friday, 06 October 2023 06:10

“You’ve got to have a lot of patience. You’ve also got to kind of pick up their language and translate them. Like ‘oh, this is what they meant to say,’” Garcia said.

For example, a child may want to go outside, and once she’s realized what they want Garcia tries to help them verbalize it.

Garcia is very passionate about what she does, and said that is a very important aspect of being a preschool teacher.

“You’ve got to have the passion for it. You’ve got to make sure this is what you really want to do,” she said.

By Molly Ann Howell
Managing Editor