High school experience shaped Ford's future

BY JOHN HAUER

For the Daily Call
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PIQUA — Piqua High School English teacher Angie Ford believes every teacher can bring value to a student's life. "My goal is to educate students and help them understand what is possible," she said. "Every student has something positive to bring to the classroom."

Ford was born and raised in Piqua and graduated from Lehman Catholic High School in 1999. She was in student government, a cheerleader and ran cross country for the Cavaliers. She was a member of the Kairos Team, which led the senior religious retreat. "I loved every minute of high school," she said. "It shaped who I am today."

During her sophomore year, Ford was influenced by her English teacher Mr. Bernot who inspired her to become an English teacher. "He was the first teacher to allow and accept our opinions," Ford said. "He pushed the envelope of rules and regulations and kept us challenged and interested."

Ford pursued education by enrolling at Bowling Green State University where she earned a bachelor's degree in education, Integrated Language Arts grades 7-12. Later, she received a master's degree in education administration

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MIKE ULLERY/STAFF PHOTO

Angie Ford keeps an eye on her computer screen during a SmartBoard video in English class last week.

Ford

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from the University of Dayton.

After graduated from BGSU in 2003, Ford began her teaching career at Dublin Scioto High School outside of Columbus. She directed Right to Read Week at Scioto. The district built a new building, and Ford's position was no longer available. She then spent two years at Northwestern High School outside of Springfield where she taught language arts to grades 10, 11, and 12 and helped realign the English curriculum.

"I wanted to be closer to home," she said. "Piqua City Schools had an opening and, I was fortunate to teach four years of seventh-grade language arts at the junior high." This year, she was moved to the high school and is teaching junior and senior English. "There's a big difference between the junior high students and the high school students," she said. "The seventh-graders are impressionable and willing to learn while the high school students are willing to step outside their comfort zone and willing to laugh at themselves."

She credits her Spanish teacher from Lehman for remaining a close friend and adviser. "Donna Wilberding helped me when she was my teacher," Ford said. "She taught me that high school students are not younger adults; they are people who deserve to have a voice."

Ford attempts to make class assignments connect to the students' lives. "Students are creating their own children's books about witches using a photo book creation website called Mixbook," Ford said. "My seniors are planning their future by writing short speeches about themselves through video or audio voice overs. These speeches would be what they tell their classmates at their 10-, 30-, and 50-year reunions."

She is part of the TTL Team which wrote a grant to bring new technology to the district."We are working on integrating Web 2.0 tools, 21st Century Skills, and iPad and network technology into the classroom," she said. "Technology is advancing at an amazing pace, and we need to keep up in order to prepare our students for college and life outside of school."

At home, Ford loves to cook. "My husband's favorite meal is my manicotti," she said. She and her husband Sean, who is an administrator at Edison Community College have been married six years. They have three children. Son Spencer is four years old, daughter Addyson is three, and daughter Makenzie is one.