

Meet the MSTA Executive Director: Robby Cramer



Robby Cramer,
MSTA Executive Director

Q: Well, Robby, can you tell us a little about your professional background?

A: I graduated from Michigan State University with a degree in elementary education (Language Arts was my major and my minors were science and math). I was a participant in a federal program called Teacher Corps that was designed to train quality inner city teachers. We taught half days for two

years in inner city classrooms in Lansing. During the other part of the day we took our method classes. I have a master's degree in Curriculum and Teaching from Michigan State University as well. My master's had an emphasis in gifted education with a focus on higher level thinking skills. I taught fourth, and sixth grades for 14 years in the Pottersville Public Schools. Then I taught fifth through eighth grade for the Grand Haven Area Public Schools. I also served as a Curriculum Specialist for Grand Haven as well as an assistant principal. This spring, I retired after 36 years in public education.

After five weeks of retirement I took a position as a Science Education Specialist for the Van Andel Science Academy in Grand Rapids. I am enjoying the opportunity to spend time teaching students after the school day in an informal science program that has a focus of teaching students to think and act like scientists. Our students reflect the demographics of the city of Grand Rapids.

Q: What have been the high spots of your role as executive director? What do you still hope to accomplish?

A: The highlight of my role as executive director has been developing a capital campaign action plan for the MSTA. There are so many things that our science teachers need. We are looking for ways to support our members in their classrooms. I appreciate the input from board members as we search for funding opportunities that will enable us to carry forth the Mission of MSTA.

What do I still hope to accomplish? I really want to see our website be a teacher resource for curriculum, assessment and instructional strategies for the new state curriculum both K-7 grade level and the high school content expectations.

Q: What would you like to see MSTA get involved with in the years to come?

A: I agree with Betty Crowder that the conference is our strength. MSTA has a handle on how to deliver professional development. I believe that it will be important that MSTA is ready to move forward in a variety of ways to provide professional development in our technologically changing world.

Q: How do you spend your leisure time, away from your MSTA duties?

A: I create art dolls from scratch that are highly unusual. They have clay sculpted faces and I make fabric bodies from created from fibers, feathers, and unusual fabrics. I also enjoy my flower gardens and coaching Science Olympiad Meteorology in Grand Haven.

Q: Is there anything else you'd like the membership to know about you?

A: Helping students make sense of their world is what science education is all about. There is always new techniques and instructional strategies to share. MSTA gives us an opportunity to learn from each other. Please encourage your science colleagues to take an active role.

From the President's Desk - *continued from front page*

numerous extended programs on Thursday, as well. Also, our vendor exhibits are open FREE to you and your family on Thursday night. Earn your SB-CEUs while doing something you love! Support your professional growth and your professional organization by joining us in Lansing! And bring a friend!

Third, do you know an outstanding K-6 science teacher? Are you an outstanding K-6 science teacher?

Please consider nominating a colleague or yourself for the Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science teaching. Nominations are simple and the applications are available at www.paemst.org! It is important to recognize our exemplary teachers! Awardees are invited to Washington DC for a tour and reception with the President. Plus, an award of \$10,000 is given to each award winner. Please see the article in this month's newsletter.

Finally, I would like to thank you for your membership in MSTA! I encourage you to become more actively involved and ask a friend to join you. We need your help. As we are looking toward educational reforms, we know that professional organizations will also be changing in structure and benefits to members. We need your ideas and your energy. Please contact me! www.bettycrowder@msta-mich.org