



Energetic Jennifer Tinnell is the TOTY

by Carrie Moore



photo by Laura Hofer

Following in the footsteps of outstanding teachers such as Leisa Scoggins, Nora Floersheim, and Stephen Rubino, Jennifer Tinnell was selected as the 2011 Teacher of the Year.

Though Tinnell was nominated by her fellow teachers and has earned popularity among her students by dressing up as Batman for Halloween and providing an appealing learning environment, Tinnell was not expecting to win Teacher of the Year.

"I was absolutely blown away when Mrs. Lowery announced my name last week," said Tinnell. "Since it's voted on by the faculty, my peers, it is just an extreme honor. I really do feel that it's just the biggest support that the faculty can give another teacher."

In 1995, Tinnell began her teaching career in Cobb County at Pope High School. In addition to teaching a variety of social studies classes, she coached tennis, track, basketball, and cross country. After taking two years off from teaching, in 2001 Tinnell came to Chamblee high school, where she was the varsity cross country coach for six years.

Tinnell attended Peace Junior College and the College of Charleston where she majored in sociology and minored in secondary education. (However, Tinnell is a huge Duke University fan. Her father went there and played on the 1961 cotton bowl team.) Since her graduation, Tinnell has taught world geography, American government, economics, psychology, sociology, and United States history.

"Clearly I've been teaching United States history the longest," said Tinnell. "Now if you're taking magnet and advanced, I'm the one that you get. U.S. history is definitely my favorite, and where I feel the most comfortable."

Tinnell knew that she wanted to teach at an early age. When she was younger, Tinnell had a strong admiration for her coaches and wanted to coach sports as a career.

"Of course, you can't be a coach without being a teacher," said Tinnell. "So I thought 'I'm going to be a teacher. Those things go hand in hand.' And that's what I made my

major in college."

When she was 25, Tinnell got her first teaching job at Pope High School through her former tennis coach. The position allowed her to teach social studies as well as coach a variety of sports.

"I was fresh out of school and my coach, Janet Callahan, said 'I think you should come back here and teach and coach at Pope. You'd be a perfect fit,'" said Tinnell.

After teaching at Pope for four years, Tinnell took two years off from teaching, during which time she moved back to Charleston and worked at a country club and sporting goods store, asking herself "Is this really what I want to do?" The answer was yes. Tinnell missed her teaching environment and being with her high school students.

"I missed having that influence with them," said Tinnell. "I just felt like I could make a difference and that was what my life was supposed to be."

Tinnell hopes that her new Teacher of the Year award will motivate her to be an even better teacher and that her fellow teachers at the high school will continue to be proud of her.

Kevon Thompson, a junior who has Tinnell for United States history, is glad to be in Tinnell's classroom, where he feels the environment is very engaging.

"I think Ms. Tinnell is actually the best teacher in the school," said Thompson. "I actually learn in her class. She just helps me succeed."

Though she feels a little pressure from being chosen as Chamblee's Teacher of the Year, Tinnell realizes that the award will help to keep that teaching spark alive in her life.

"I've been teaching for 14 years and a lot of teachers get tired and worn out and stuck in ruts," said Tinnell. "I don't think that I have been that way and I don't want to be that way. So I really hope this will keep me highly motivated to do my job."

Is Pink the New Black?, Cancer's Commercial Nature

by Carrie Moore

According to the National Cancer Institute, over one million cases of cancer are expected to be diagnosed before 2010 is over with. Perhaps because cancer has become a common disease, pop culture has romanticized the disease, causing a misrepresentation of Cancer's reality.

Cancer, perhaps with the assistance of the media on shows like *Grey's Anatomy* and movies like *A Walk to Remember*, is viewed as a pitiable state that is almost over glamorized. Cancer victims on television almost bear no resemblance to real-life cancer victims.

"I think that cancer affects a lot of people in different ways," said Robyn Jacobson, who has had two grandparents diagnosed with cancer. "I mean the cancer's that you see on *Grey's Anatomy* or on different medical shows, they have truth to them, but you don't realize how much it's going to affect you until you're in that position."

Instead of complaining about the agonizing amputations, the sores that never heal, and the chemotherapy that leaves victims recoiling from even the slightest brush of skin, cancer victims on television complain about hair loss, weight loss, or anything that

makes them slightly less attractive before miraculously recovering from diseases that have low survival rates. Inside of the television screen, cancer appears to be easily defeated. However, in real life, this is not always the case.

"I have had two grandparents that died of cancer this year," said Jacobson. "My grandfather, who died of bone cancer, was diagnosed in April and died in May. It was very fast and unexpected. It was under glamorized in that case. I didn't really know what to expect, at least based on TV."

Too often are audiences bombarded with unrealistic images of cancer. In the recently released season five of *Grey's Anatomy*, beloved character Isobel "Izzie" Stevens was diagnosed with metastatic melanoma, a type of cancer with a five percent survival rate.

Throughout the season, Izzie was given a last-minute wedding to boyfriend Alex Karev as well as several "resurrections" which kept audiences glued to their television sets as Izzie straddled the line between life and death appearing fine in some episodes and on her deathbed in others. The show earned rave reviews and several Emmy nominations. Izzie is currently still alive, though

she rarely appears on the show.

On ABC's *FlashForward*, character Bryce Varley was diagnosed with stage IV renal cell carcinoma. In one episode, after undergoing hours of chemotherapy, Varley lies on his hospital bed looking fairly healthy and discussing post-chemo dinner plans with a beautiful actress. The two then enjoy a wonderful meal at a fancy restaurant.

Other television shows to include cancer storylines include *Brothers and Sisters*, *Desperate Housewives*, and *Sex and the City*.

The cancer craze does not end on television. The overabundance of breast cancer ribbons, shirts, and just general "pinkness" may represent society's ignorance of the severity of cancer. At the homecoming game on October 16th, the opposing team, the Lakeside Vikings, even wore pink to symbolize their respect for the disease. But how much does wearing pink actually donate to the cause? Wearing pink in itself simply doesn't find a cure.

One would think that at least all of the fundraising for breast cancer would at least generate some funding. However, the money raised from all of this fascination

may be going to the wrong cause. According to a cancer funding article in the New York Times, breast cancer receives the most funding per each death, about \$13,452. Most other cancers only receive an average of about \$5,000.

Ironically, though breast cancer is among the most common cancers, it is not the deadliest, with about 41,430 deaths per year and an average five-year survival rate of 84 percent according to Imagenis Women's Health Resources. Lung cancer, one of the most underfunded diseases, causes almost 162,460 deaths per year yet only receives about \$1,630 per death. The \$6 billion annually collected by the National Cancer Institute is so unevenly divided that it is impossible to find serious cures for the more deadly cancers.

A survey was conducted among a random sampling of Chamblee students to measure attitudes towards the "positive" cancer disease versus AIDS, a disease with a negative stigma. Out of 47 students surveyed, 68 percent would rather donate money to cancer than AIDS, which rakes in \$3 billion dollars annually, half of cancer's budget.