



James Russell Torgerson

February 12, 1954 - February 16, 2009

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Tribute Wall



“ *James Russell Torgerson*

January 28, 2023 at 02:51 PM

JH

“ Dear Torgerson Family,

None of you know me, and I was only blessed to know Mr. Torgerson for a very short time. He was my junior high principal when I was in 8th grade, back in 2006-2007. I moved to McMinnville in the 8th grade, and I remember one day, early in the school year while I was still the new kid and hadn't made any friends yet, I was sitting alone at lunch in the Patton Middle School commons area and Mr. Torgerson noticed me and came over to eat his lunch with me. He asked all about me and seemed to be genuinely interested. He took the time to notice the individual, and helped a scared little kid feel safe and important that day.

I will also never forget how much fun he created for the loyal crew of kids that would go up to play dodgeball with him every day after lunch. I'll never forget him shouting, "LA CAJA!" when someone would foul another player; now every time I hear the Spanish word "caja," I think of him. I also remember being so excited to get a dodgeball pass from him every day, which guaranteed a starting ball next recess, in return for putting away the dodgeballs after the game. He had such a fun loving spirit, and I know he loved us kids because he spent so much time with us, and especially took the time to notice the needing one. He was a Christ-like example of love and care.

I hope this message finds you well. Mr. Torgerson crossed my mind today at work, and I thought I'd reach out to you and let you know of the legacy he left with me.

Much love,

Jackson Hughes, a student blessed by Mr. Torgerson

Jackson Hughes - March 16, 2015 at 12:00 AM

BB

“ *I still miss my friend*

Bryce Behnke - October 10, 2013 at 12:00 AM

JA

“ *Jim Togerson was one my most memorable teachers. He was my middle school teacher, and my Basket Ball coach at Ogden Middle School. To us he was simply known as T. We loved being around him, he had a great personality and loved playing in his lunch time sporting events. To this day I can still remember him teaching me about my deffensive skills and yelling out BALL, BALL ,BALL and DEAD, DEAD , DEAD meaning the player has picked up his dribble. I can remeber he came up to me and said Apa when I went home that night my son was said to me I'm like Apa ball, ball, ball. I am very sad to hear of his passing, even tho I am 32, I will always hold a special place in my heart for Jim and his family.*

RIP T

Justin Apa - December 15, 2009 at 12:00 AM

MP

“ *I first met Jim in the capacity of a parent, he was principal to my kids. I remember that he would call my daughter Aimee to his office to pick music for the choir; she was so honored and felt special. I also remember him encouraging me to apply for his job when he announced his retirement. He would tell me "you're my pick, Marty. You're what my building needs." I will be forever thankful for his generous support and ability to make me feel honored. Thank you, Jim.*

Marty Palacios - June 14, 2009 at 12:00 AM

LY

“ Making plans to come to Oregon for the June Golf Tournament at Stone Creek and the opportunity to share stories about my "favorite" brother, my only sibling, Jim. I found this website while looking for old friends from Parkrose High School that might have a story or two to tell on my brother. I just wanted to say thank you to those of you who took the time to share. Your stories really touched me, as I am sure they did his boys Grant and Davis. Hope to see you soon at Stone Creek. Lynn "Madi" McPherson, sister of Jim Torgerson

Lynn - June 06, 2009 at 12:00 AM

MT

“ The thing I admired about Jim the first time I met him was his love for the kids. He would go out and eat lunch with each lunch group. He had a table of kids that would later go up to C gym and play dodge ball.

I remember one of the teachers that was on the board that hired him said that he came in to the job interview a little late and ruffled because he was out playing with the kids at his old school.

Jim was a great Dad, his son's always came to school on take your child to work day. His office was full of their pictures. He talked about them and he spent time with them.

As a boss Jim always made me feel like I did a good job. When we passed in the halls he would greet me with just two words, "Miracle Worker" a nod of the head. I brought him a list one day of the 10 things I learned while serving detention. He kept it on his wall right above his desk the whole time he was at Patton. As the years went on he would send kids to me with yellow post-it notes that said "Fix Him". Jim always made me feel like I made a difference with kids.

Jim will be greatly missed.

Melissa Terrill - February 25, 2009 at 12:00 AM

EW

“ I am a teacher at Patton Middle School. I was fortunate enough to work with Jim for a year before his retirement. I'll never forget the day when Jim called to tell me I was hired. He said, "Hey, this is Jim at Patton. Did you think your interview went well?" I of course said yes. He said, "Are you sure?" I said..."Um. Yes?" He then said that he had picked me for his team.

That is exactly what he meant too. I always felt supported in my classroom and in my after school productions. Jim was an amazing role model to me, and I will always remember how much he cared for each student and every teacher.

Thank you, Jim: For all the compliments, the stories, the guidance and the laughter.

Emily Ward - February 24, 2009 at 12:00 AM

CS

“ I worked with Jim at Patton, his door was always opened. Whenever I asked he had time for me. But you could always count on him being gone during lunch, playing dodgeball with the kids. Jim would always beam when you would ask him about his boys and you knew he loved them.

Cindy Schroeder - February 24, 2009 at 12:00 AM

MF

“ Jim hired me to teach for him when I was 19 years old. He was a mentor and like a father to me. We worked together, golfed together, and put our heads together to impact students' lives on a regular basis. He has been the most influential person in my adult life. It is tough to measure the legacy and lasting impact he has made on so many people. Only over the coming years and decades, as we witness how Jim's students and staff change the world, we will recognize the magnitude of the mark that he has made. I am forever grateful to have known Jim and to have been so blessed by him. I will certainly never forget all that he has done for me.

Michael Fisher - February 24, 2009 at 12:00 AM

WG

“ Jim was a lot of fun to be around and you always felt supported, when it came to Jim. His kids were really important to him. I can remember how proud he was of Davis as he entered college. It seemed like the kid couldn't catch a break, but Jim was really proud of how he battled through challenges at school and the way he kept himself involved in golf and helping kids with the first tee program(i think that is what it is). It seemed like Jim always had a soft spot for the kid or teacher who was a little rough around the edges and because of that he gave a lot of people chances that they may not have gotten somewhere else.... He will be missed but never forgotten.... the Jim stories will go on forever..

Willie Graham

Teacher: Patton Middle School

Willie Graham - February 23, 2009 at 12:00 AM

ML

“ *What stands out to me about Jim was how much he loved his boys. When you walked into his office, you couldn't help but notice the notes and photos of Grant and Davis on his bulletin board. You might not be able to find his desk under the piles of papers, but you definitely could tell how proud he was of his sons!*

Mary Lukehart - February 23, 2009 at 12:00 AM

SP

“ *I am a teacher at Patton Middle School (McMinnville) who knew Jim for nine years in one capacity - that of a teacher to principal - but also for a couple more years as a parent to one of his students at Chehalem Valley, where jim was vice princpal. My older boy remembers a person who was willing to duct tape himeself to the wall in honor of a pledge for a fund raiswer. At my school, Jim offered himself up for continuous lunch duty (3x) in honor of a reward that kids had earned. He did these sorts of things from heart.*

He was an honorable man. As honorable men do, they sometimes irritate, something he knew and something he was willing to risk.

I count myself a fortunate person to have known and worked for him.

*Scott Phoenix
Newberg, Oregon*

Scott Phoenix - February 23, 2009 at 12:00 AM