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## OHS math teacher named a GoTeachKy Ambassador

By Bobbie Hayse Messenger-Inquirer  
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Samantha Hoops

Owensboro High School mathematics teacher Samantha Hoops wants to be a part of the solution for remedying the teacher shortage across the state.

For that reason she applied to be a GoTeachKY Ambassador, and on Wednesday she was named one of 22 educators across Kentucky to be a part of the group's 2022 cohort.

GoTeachKY was developed by the Kentucky Department of Education in 2019 as a way to recruit and retain educators across the state.

Its mission, through KDE, is also to ensure all students have equitable access to quality education and teachers. Ambassadors are selected from a pool of applicants across Kentucky who apply to be involved. Participants have three goals: communicate with and inspire high school and college students to consider becoming teachers; communicate with potential and current teachers to positively capture rewards opportunities affiliated with the teaching career; and support and promote central focus areas, programs and organizations of GoTeachKY, such as the Educators Rising program and the teaching and learning career pathway, according to KDE.

In a statement on the GoTeachKY website, Kentucky Commissioner of Education Jason Glass explained the Educators Rising program is a career and technical student organization for middle and high school students. The program helps those students build resources and experiences that can benefit them when they have their own classroom.

He also explained that the Kentucky Teaching and Learning Pathway provides valuable experiences and training for high school students. While in high school, and participating in this pathway, students study core courses that will prepare them for their education profession.

Hoops, in her 10th year as an educator, began teaching at OHS in 2020. She fell in love with the profession as a substitute teacher for McLean and Hopkins county schools after she graduated from Western Kentucky University, and she especially enjoyed working with high school students.

“A passion for teaching and learning and a love for kids are the things that drive me most in my career,” she said. “I am a lifetime learner and researcher of educational topics, always seeking to grow in the field of teaching and be a resource for my colleagues. This is one reason I am excited about being a GoTeachKY Ambassador, because this program will allow me to not only continue my own growth journey as a teacher, but also to connect with other educators across the state who share that same passion for teaching and learning.”

Last year, Hoops had the privilege of mentoring a student teacher, who now works full-time as an educator in Elizabethtown, and this year she is mentoring a first-year teacher. Mentoring and networking with other educators in Kentucky who share a similar vision is what excited Hoops about this ambassadorship.

She said current educators should be promoting the field and informing others about the various routes to becoming a certified teacher that now exist.



“I am thankful for the opportunity to be one of the 22 educators across the state in this program,” she said.

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