

I first met Nancy Hayward at the 2011 George Washington Teacher Institute where she was the Director of the Institute Program. Nancy was the first to speak at our orientation and in addition to the usual informational directives, Nancy spoke of the Estate and specifically George Washington in such a personal way that I was quite taken aback. Nancy spoke with such eloquence of Mount Vernon and its famous inhabitants. The Washington's were not just a famous couple from the eighteenth century that I had read and learned about in many stages of my life. This was to be personal, sobering, joyous, enlightening and as real as if they were going to walk right through the door. I had come to Mount Vernon with lots of trivial pieces of information about the lives of George and Martha Washington but I was going to walk away with so much more than that. Nancy Hayward was about to change my life with each carefully selected speaker, topic, tour and the precious time she would allot us to spend afterhours exploring this home and property of a gentlemen farmer. I can tell you that I left a week later a changed person and never again have I viewed this couple and their contribution to history as just an historic footnote in time.

I had the privilege of returning to Mount Vernon in the summer of 2012 as the Lesson Plan Winner and again was so impressed and humbled with Nancy's knowledge, dedication and creative talents in crafting another experience for the 2012 Teacher Institutes. She nurtured me along that spring about the session I would be presenting and told me I would be presenting with one of their archaeologists, Dr. Esther White. This had not been done before but Nancy continued to instill the confidence in me that I could rise to this occasion. It was without a doubt the highlight of my teaching career.

The creation of the Lifeguard Fellows Program to be awarded in association with the opening of the Fred W. Smith National Library for the Study of George Washington would give me one more opportunity to submit a project to be judged for the opportunity to return once more. Needless to say I was overwhelmed when my project was selected by a blind panel of judges. Nancy again extended support and confidence in my work and in the fall of 2013 as I began the Fellowship she offered constructive ideas to help guide me and always holding me to the highest standards. I am grateful for the level of expectations and fine example Nancy has set for all teachers attending Mount Vernon Educational Programming. Her dedication to the preservation of the lives and accurate teachings of the Washington family is exemplary.

I can say that Nancy Hayward is a "life-changing" individual with the expertise, dedication and drive to be at the helm of any program. Her creation of the educational programming at Mount Vernon is superb. Any organization would be blessed to have her on their staff.

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