

Student: Anish Aradhey (8th grade)

School: Skyline Middle School

Teacher: Angela McClure

Opportunity is a strange thing. Is it something that finds you, or something that you find? Does it demand to be acknowledged, or is it quiet enough to pass by completely unnoticed? Truthfully, I didn't understand opportunity until I met my school's advanced learning specialist, Ms. McNett. During middle school, Ms. McNett has encouraged me to improve and do my best. If my community had a Wall of Honor, I would absolutely nominate her.

Ms. McNett makes a difference in my school and community every day. To expand the extracurricular opportunities students were offered, she introduced a variety of after-school activities and programs, including coding and ballet clubs. She also organizes events, such as spelling bees, and extra activities, like a summer journalism camp. These encourage students to explore challenges and interests.

Apart from impacting the whole school, Ms. McNett has taken the time to help me personally. She is always available to consult with me about extracurricular activities, classes, and my high school future. She helped me enroll in an advanced Spanish class that few middle schoolers take and informed me of poetry and essay competitions, STEM, and art programs. Ultimately, she helped me fully utilize opportunities I didn't previously know existed.

Ms. McNett inspires me to make a difference through her attitude toward learning. I greatly respect her mindset of constantly seeking new challenges and experiences. She inspires me to grab and pursue every opportunity I have. Ms. McNett is a role model for me because of her passion for helping others. Often, she sacrifices her own time and goes out of her way to help a student take an assessment or work on an application or project. Through Ms. McNett, I learned to communicate with teachers, find opportunities, and manage my time and grades. Through her, I learned that it is never too late to seek adventure, knowledge, or opportunities.

Because of Ms. McNett, I now understand what an opportunity truly is: a chance to make a difference—a chance to grow, improve, and make the community, or maybe even the whole world, a better place. Although opportunities are everywhere, many people don't utilize them; people miss hundreds of opportunities, simply because they don't know that those opportunities exist. I am aware of the opportunities around me because of Ms. McNett; she inspires me to learn, explore, and excel as both a student and as a person.