

the legacy project:

John Monroe

by Debra Shapiro, DTE,
John Monroe, DTE, and
Johnny J Moye, DTE

Many industrial arts, technology education, and now technology and engineering education leaders have made their mark on our profession. Their legacy is something that members of the profession enjoy and have the responsibility to continue to build upon.

The Legacy Project focuses on the lives and actions of leaders who have forged our profession into what it is today. Members of the profession owe a debt of gratitude to these leaders. One simple way to demonstrate that gratitude is to recognize them and some of their accomplishments. This issue recognizes Mr. John Monroe.



John Monroe, DTE

ITEEA President 1995-1996

Place of Birth: Farmville, Prince Edward County, Virginia

Married to: Millie Warren (1929-2013) of Ivor, South Hampton County, Virginia, in 1960. John and Millie met while students at St. Paul's Polytechnic Institute in Lawrenceville, VA.

Education/Degrees:

- Robert R. Morton High School, Farmville, VA
- Bachelor of Science – Industrial Education with a Minor in General Science, St. Paul's Polytechnic Institute
- Advanced Studies at Virginia State University, Old Dominion University, University of Wisconsin-Stout
- Master of Arts in Education – Administration and Supervision, Hampton Institute, Hampton, VA, now Hampton University

Occupational History:

- United States Army, drafted at age of 18, Korean War Veteran, two years of service, Staff Sergeant
- General Science Teacher, Gresham Elementary School, Hobson, Nansemond County, VA, 1961-1963
- Assistant Principal – Southwestern High School, Nansemond County, VA, 1963-1967
- Industrial Arts Teacher – Southwestern High School, Nansemond County, VA, 1963-1967
- Industrial Arts/Technology Education Teacher – Forest Glen High School, Nansemond County/Suffolk, VA, 1967-1990
- Technology Education Teacher – Lakeland High School, Suffolk, VA, 1990-1998
- Student Teacher Supervisor, Old Dominion University, Norfolk, VA, 1998-2008

Professional Organization Involvement:

- ITEA Affiliate Representative, 1979-2000
- ITEA Region 1 Director, 1987-1989
- ITEA President, 1995-1996
- ITEA – Served on three committees: Region 1, Distinguished Technology Educators, Community Colleges
- VTEA President, 1986-1987

Awards Named in His Honor:

- Lockette/Monroe Humanitarian Award – ITEA/ITEEA
- John Monroe Outstanding Service Award – VTEEA
- John Monroe Scholarship – Virginia Technology Student Association

Articles and Papers Published:

- 1984 – An interview with Dr. William Dugger, President of AIAA/ITEA
- 1984 – An open letter to the Technology Education Profession
- 1987 – The Professional Image of the Technology Teacher
- 1991 – The Advantages of Being an ITEA Professional Member
- 1992 – The Challenges Ahead for the Technology Education Profession

1992 – The Technology Teacher in a World Class System of Education, A Team Effort

ITEA Awards Received:

- 1990 – Professional Member
- 1991 – Foundation
- 1992 – Distinguished Technology Educator
- 1992 – Technology Excellence
- 1994 – The Rutherford B. Lockette Humanitarian Award
- 1995-96 – President, Phoenix, AZ Annual Conference
- 1998 – The Lockette/Monroe Humanitarian Award
- 1998 – Program Excellence Award, Fort Worth, TX
- 1998 – Past President
- 1998 – Educational Association Citation Award

ITEA Leadership Experiences:

- 1992 – Technology Education Leadership Development Program Technical Foundation of America
- 1993 – Technology Education Leadership Development, James Madison University
- 1994 – Ball State University, Muncie, IN
- 1995 – University of Northern Iowa, Five Sullivan Brothers Convention Center
- 1995 – Technology for All Americans, Langley Research Center
- 1995 – State University of New York at Oswego
- 1995 – Texas A&M University, College Station, TX
- 1996 – Virginia Industrial Development Authorities VPI & SU
- 1997 – Technology Education Leadership Program Technical Foundation of America, Manu, Hawaii

University of Wisconsin-Stout:

At-large member, Epsilon Pi Tau Fraternity
Past member, Iota Lambda Sigma Fraternity
Virginia Technology Education Association
Virginia Technology Student Association
Numerous letters and certificates from VTSA, VTEA, and ITEA
National Advisors Leadership TSA Conference, Scottsdale, AZ

Additional ITEA Conferences:

Kansas City, MO
Tulsa, OK
Nashville, TN
Salt Lake City, UT

Curriculum Revision and Development:

John Monroe, Leader of Suffolk's High School Technology Education programs along with Debra Shapiro, Leader of Suffolk's Middle School Technology Education programs, were chosen to revise and rewrite the curriculum for the secondary schools during the summers. Copies of the completed curriculum were given out following a presentation at the 60th Annual ITEA Conference in Fort Worth, TX in 1998.

An Interview With a Legend

Good afternoon Mr. Monroe. Thank you for meeting with me and for your willingness to answer some questions about your life and career as an educator.

You were highly active with industrial arts and technology student organizations and experienced many successes. Please describe the Suffolk and Virginia Technology Student Association and what those programs did for students.

I was fortunate to teach the first and second presidents of the Virginia Industrial Arts Student Association in the 1971-72 and 72-73 school years. I always had the full support of my principal, school board, parents, and the people of Suffolk. The parents and school board supported the opportunity to take students to state and national conferences. I was honored to receive many awards for Outstanding Service to Industrial Arts and the Technology Student Association. Many of my students also received awards.

As a result of being involved in the American Industrial Arts Student Association (AIASA) and later the Technology Student Association (TSA), students gained leadership skills that led to employment at local shipyards, industry, corporations, retail stores, and apprentice schools. Many have said that Forest Glen High School and Lakeland High School graduates had a foot in the door for employment. I dreamed TSA night and day. My Lakeland High School principal, William N. Hill, always said that I was certainly dedicated to the Technology Student Association and Technology Education.

Who were some of the people that you credit for supporting you in your success?

William N. Hill, principal at Lakeland High School, and Dr. John Ritz, professor at Old Dominion University, wrote recommendations for me to receive the Distinguished Technology Educator recognition. Mills A. March, Principal at Forest Glen High School, set my schedule to have 7th period free so I could complete my master's in education. He gave me the time to work on my coursework. Dedicated English teachers volunteered to edit my papers. Mrs. Ella Daughtry typed letters for me when I held positions in ITEA and VTEA. My wife, Millie, always stood by me and supported my endeavors.

You were involved in writing curriculum and materials for the Virginia/American Industrial Arts Student Association. What challenges did you and the profession face while transitioning from Industrial Arts to Technology Education during the 80s?

I did not personally face challenges. It took about three years for the transition to happen. After learning about the new curriculum, I created technology education projects from what I learned from Dr. William E. Dugger at Virginia Polytechnic Institute. Our school had courses in Manufacturing, Construction, Transportation, and Communications. Suffolk Public Schools gave me 100% support. My supervisor, Calvin Davis, and my principal at Forest Glen, Mr. Wheeler, accepted my recommended program. Forest Glen High School became the model technology education program. If a course at Forest Glen was successful, it would be added to the curriculum at John Yeates High School, John F. Kennedy High School, and Suffolk High School.



Mr. Monroe advises Jeffery Ralston on his project at Lakeland High School.

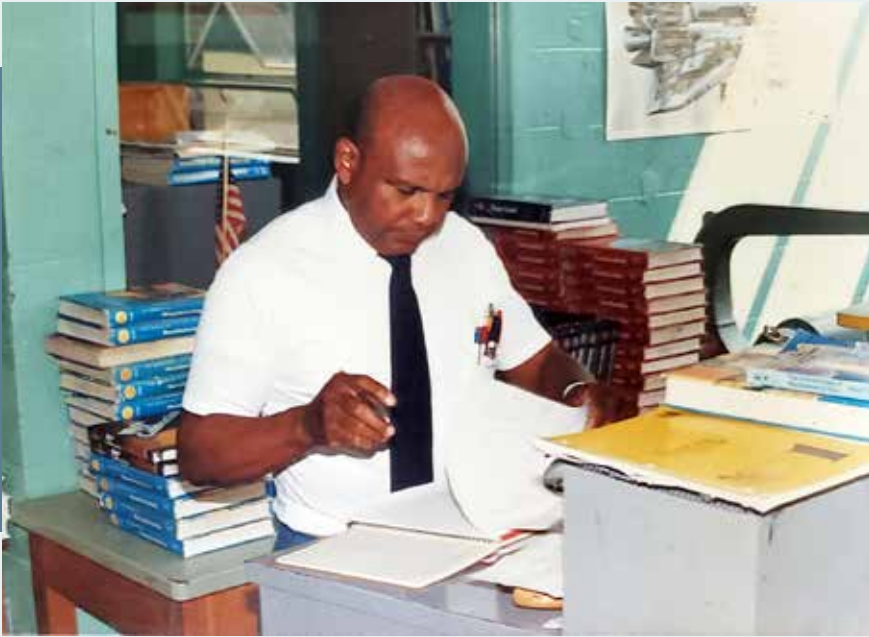
Every student had their own textbook and workbook. I had an unlimited budget. If I asked for something, I got it.

Virginia eventually bought into the change after getting past the philosophy of "if it's not broke, don't fix it."

Tell me about teaching Technology Education courses.

Females were always allowed to take my courses. I had female students in classes at Forest Glen High School. Sometimes there were classes with more females than males. The young ladies set the tone for the quietest, best classes.

My dean at St. Paul's taught me to address my students as young ladies and young men. Students do not care about how many degrees you have. They want to know; do you care about me? I taught them, "if you make a mistake, you learn from it."



proud of the educators who receive those awards. They have done great work.

Looking back over your career and life, how do you feel about the changes that you have witnessed? What do we, as a profession, still need to do?

As a profession, we need to continue to encourage and promote the philosophy of technology and engineering education to all individuals, whether they are in our class or not. All individuals, from cradle to grave, are solving everyday problems. They may not realize they are using technology and engineering education in their daily lives. We are living in the information age, supported by technology and engineering and now, Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM).

You were on the board of directors for both the Virginia Technology Education Association and the International Technology Education Association and served as president of both organizations. What do you feel were your greatest contributions during these times?

Dr. Kendall Starkweather asked me if we should adjust the standards to gain more female technology educators. I responded "do not change the qualifications. We need to hold everyone to the same standard."

Some saw me as a role model for diversity and for showing leadership to other leaders of our great organization. The future of such leadership rests upon those leaders to uphold outstanding professionalism and integrity. It is up to future generations to carry out the continued beliefs and understandings while upholding the dynamic leadership in the field in each state, territory, national, and international association. Work should be based on the organization's constitution and bylaws and include diversity.

There are awards through the Virginia Technology and Engineering Education Association and the International Technology and Engineering Educators Association that carry your name. VTEEA's is the John Monroe Outstanding Service Award, and ITEEA's is the Lockette/Monroe Humanitarian Award. What do those awards mean to you?

I am humbled to be recognized for my service and humanity to our profession. I am most

This certainly has been an enjoyable interview. In closing, are there any bits of wisdom that you would like to convey to students, teachers, and administrators?

For teachers and administrators: you can only lead by meeting the positive desires of all individuals, helping them to live successfully in a technological information age.

I remember a statement from a book on the wisdom of learning, author unknown: There are three kinds of people in the world. Some people learn by the mistakes of others; these are the wise.



Forest Glen High School students on their way to a Virginia AIASA conference. Top row: Jerome Hunter, Mike Davenport, Ricky Joe, Butch Taroli. Middle row: Wayne Luter, Lamont Johnson, David West. Bottom row: Debra Scott, Barbara Boone, Mr Monroe.

Some learn by their own mistakes; these are the happy. Some do not learn by mistakes of others or their own; these are the fools.

Deb Shapiro's Note: Mr. John Monroe, DTE, is probably the kindest and most humble person I know. He has been a mentor to many, a father figure to more, and will always give more than he will ever ask of anyone. I was fortunate to meet him as a college student at my first ITEA conference in Kansas City in 1986. We had another chance encounter at the conference in Tulsa, Oklahoma in 1987. I moved to Virginia from Iowa for my first teaching job later that year and worked with John through the Tidewater Region of the Virginia Technology Student Association during my first three years as a Technology Education Teacher.



Gary Myrick, Forest Glen High School TSA Historian.

During my fourth year I taught in Mr. Monroe's old classroom at what was then Forest Glen High School the year it became a middle school. He has been a mentor, friend, guidance counselor, father figure, grandfather to my son, a shoulder to cry on, and one of my biggest supporters! It is my honor to interview him for the Legacy Project. When I was recently elected as President-Elect of ITEEA, John was the first person I called after talking to my husband. It was great to be able to share this news with my long-time mentor.

Johnny Moyer's Note: I echo Ms. Shapiro's observation concerning Mr. Monroe's disposition. He is one of the most pleasant and humble people I have ever met. He would never admit that he is one of our profession's greatest leaders. As my student teaching supervisor, he identified flaws in my teaching and approach in a positive manner, helping build me into the confident educator I was to become. Mr. Monroe always has a smile on his face. He has put smiles on many others' too.

Thank you, Mr. Monroe, for sharing some of the highlights of your service to our profession. You are certainly an inspiration to all teachers, and our profession. The Legacy Project continues to focus on those who have influenced our profession. It is beneficial for current (and future) leaders to read about the issues that existed and how they were addressed "back in the day." In a few months the next interview will appear in this journal. If you have a suggestion of a leader to recognize, contact Johnny Moyer with that person's name and contact information.



Debra Shapiro, DTE, is a middle school technology and engineering educator at Forest Glen Middle School in Suffolk, VA, and President-Elect of ITEEA. She is a Past President of the Virginia Technology Education Association and a past Region 1 Director of ITEEA. She can be reached at debrashapiro@spsk12.net.



John Monroe, DTE, is an Army veteran, retired technology educator from Suffolk Public Schools, and retired student teacher supervisor for Old Dominion University. He is a past president of both the Virginia Technology and Engineering Education Association and the International Technology and Engineering Educators Association.



Johnny J Moyer, Ph.D., DTE, serves as ITEEA Senior Fellow. He is a retired U.S. Navy Master Chief Petty Officer, a former high school technology teacher, and a retired school division CTE Supervisor. Johnny can be reached at johnny-jmoyer@gmail.com.