

# Meet the teacher: Christina McNealy

Don't tell Christina McNealy that you're not good at art.

Miss McNealy is a firm believer that art is a learned skill. "Kids will tell me they aren't going to take an art class because they aren't good at art," Miss McNealy said. "But if a student is willing to put in the effort, they can develop those skills."

At MELHS, Miss McNealy teaches classes such as Introduction to Art, 2D Art and 3D Art. In these classes, students learn everything from the fundamentals of drawing to how to embed deeper meaning into conceptual artwork to how to use coil construction to craft ceramics. Students can also take a portfolio development class, in which Miss McNealy guides them in creating a portfolio of artwork in their preferred medium, which can range from textile arts to painting to jewelry making to mosaic art.

Each art class also includes art analysis projects, exploring historical art as well as contemporary works.

"Art teaches students to use a different part of their brain, which is important and is relevant to so many other classes and disciplines," Miss McNealy said.

## Miss McNealy at a Glance:

- Bachelor's in metalsmithing from SIUE, minor in art history
- Master's in ceramics from SIUE
- Has exhibited her own artwork everywhere from St. Louis to New Orleans to Moscow to Barcelona
- Her Venetian glass artwork was named "Best in Show" for the Art St. Louis XXXV Exhibition
- Teaches a ceramic jewelry course at the Craft Alliance in St. Louis

**The best part about being a MELHS teacher:** I taught at high school and college levels before coming to MELHS, and while I was teaching students what they needed to know, in those bigger schools you didn't get as close to your students as we do at MELHS. Teachers here get to know the individual students, so we can cater each student's education more specifically to them.

"Art gives you a broader scope for thinking about the world. When you look at a billboard, you think about the color theory of what they are trying to convey. When you see graphic design, you understand the nods to art history that are there."

CHRISTINA MCNEALY

