



# Teaching assistant and student make positive impact

BY KARIE ANGELL LUC | Contributor

## NORTHBROOK

Angie Pappas, who has a Northbrook postal address but lives in Glenview, is grateful for her 20 minute work commute to Highland Park.

There at 760 Red Oak Lane is North Shore Academy, where she gets to change lives as a teaching assistant.

One life she has impacted is that of Josh Andre, 18, of Deerfield, her former NSA student who is now a college student.

Every Friday, Andre volunteers, mentoring students, often offering examples from his own growth at NSA.

At the Jan. 9 NSSED (Northern Suburban Special Education District) Governing Board meeting, both Andre and Pappas were recognized for their outstanding contributions to the NSSED community.

NSA Principal Doug Bolton, an Evanston resident, said this is the first time a teaching assistant has been recognized with this level of an award.

"Given how essential teaching assistants (TA) are to the fabric of NSA, this is long overdue," said Bolton, whose words of gratitude reached family members present for both Pappas and Andre.

Pappas and her husband Alex are 10-year residents of Northbrook. They have three children, Nicholas, 16, Christina, 13, and Andrew, 11.

Andre has a brother Noah,



Left, Angie Pappas, a Glenview resident with a Northbrook address, mentored Josh Andre of Deerfield, a former Highland Park North Shore Academy student and now NSA volunteer. | **KARIE ANGELL LUC**-for Sun-Times Media

20, and a sister Sarah, 14, a Caruso Middle School eighth grader. Their parents are Ken and Pam Andre, 15-year Deerfield residents.

View the webisode interview with Pappas and Andre at [www.northbrook.suntimes.com](http://www.northbrook.suntimes.com).

Visit <http://www.northshoreacademy.us>.

### **Josh, what was it like at that Jan. 9 meeting when you received this award?**

It was different for me. I have never experienced anything like that. Before, I would have hated hearing everyone

saying nice things about me, like, talking about my progress. But I was grateful and it was nice to hear and spend it with people who helped me the most.

### **Angie, your thoughts about Josh?**

I had the real pleasure of getting to know him last year. (The NSSED Governing Board) could not have made a better choice. It's really remarkable to see how much he has overcome and the hope that everyone can get from seeing such hard work and dedication.

### **And Josh, what do you think of your former teaching assistant?**

She's a good person. We have a good relationship. She helped me a lot, the whole staff. So I'm grateful for it.

### **Josh, here's your chance to thank your mentor, Angie Pappas.**

Oh, there is a lot to say but one thing, I thought about it, really, before I came here was (Josh collects his thoughts here, gears up, Pappas is ready to cry), I never really even got to say the thanks

and the gratitude I have towards you (and other staff members) and how much you guys have changed my life and affected me in a positive way, (to) just show love and care towards us students. (Love) was something I had at home but I never had learned to accept. And you guys helped me accept it. So thank you. (Josh gets quiet, does not look at his mentor. A clearly-moved Pappas pauses, collects composure, smiles then bumps Josh affectionately on his right shoulder, saying, "You're welcome." Josh smiles, then laughs.) ■