



UTAH ASSOCIATION OF
PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOLS

Charter School Teacher of the Year



Rebecca Hays,
Utah County
Academy of Science

Rebecca Hay teaches Career and Major Explorations at the Utah County Academy of Sciences. The Careers class at UCAS is unique. ALL seniors take this course and it serves as a base of support since the most seniors are otherwise at UVU for their coursework. Ms. Hay knows all UCAS seniors on an individual level. She takes time to cater her lessons directly to their needs. She sets up check ins with them on a regular basis and she is consistent about referring students to counselors or administration as needed.

All teachers care for their students, but Ms. Hay takes to 5 steps further by providing small gifts, brain breaks, exercise tips, de-stressing exercises, and the list goes on. She literally laughs and cries with her students. In the curriculum she teaches them how to advocate for themselves through elevator speeches, resumes, and cover letters. She helps them apply for scholarships. Ms. Hay has her students text their parents about FAFSA deadlines, graduation information, etc. In this way, she teaches students how to advocate for themselves and how to be self-sufficient. Her enthusiasm and care are evident.

Ms. Hay's insight of herself is her strength. She plays a leadership role among the faculty; not because she has been assigned, but because she is present, committed, and wise. In her own words: "I adore my students. They give me motivation, encouragement, reasons to smile, laughter - they are why I go into work. Yes, I love my subject, I find my area of study fascinating. But that is not why I go into work. My job is not to only teach curriculum. My job is to teach people."