



East Cooper Faith Network

I-Beam: Success, by Jean Siewicki

I have to admit that when I first heard about I-Beam I was skeptical thinking it was just another canned program that prescribed rigid reading protocols outside the classroom. But further clarification had me grabbing on with both hands and jumping into the volunteer mentoring program with enthusiasm.



What a joy to enter a school and work with one student one hour a week! Four years ago, my little second grade girl was so very shy and timid. She could hardly lift her head to look at me, much less speak. As we progressed through the years she became more outgoing and would readily speak and look at me. We sometimes worked on multiplication tables that third grade year when she sobbed at her failing test grades. Her friends began to know me and we enjoyed some lively conversations at the lunch table.



Jean Siewicki, former-Beam Chair

I must say that , in the early going, I was discouraged that she acted as though meeting each week was a chore. I even thought she wanted nothing to do with me. But I kept a smile on my face and complimented her on her reading progress. At the end of our 4th year together, she asked me to come to the school field day and walk the mile with her. I was both shocked and thrilled! A month later when I told her it was our last mentoring day together, she said, "Nah un, graduation!"

So, on June 4, I was in the back of the cafeteria, clutching tissues and proudly cheering on my little student knowing that I made a difference.

