

# Staff member plans to open art studio

**FACULTY:** Cori Miller, who is retiring this year, leaves Irvine High after 37 years of teaching in the district.

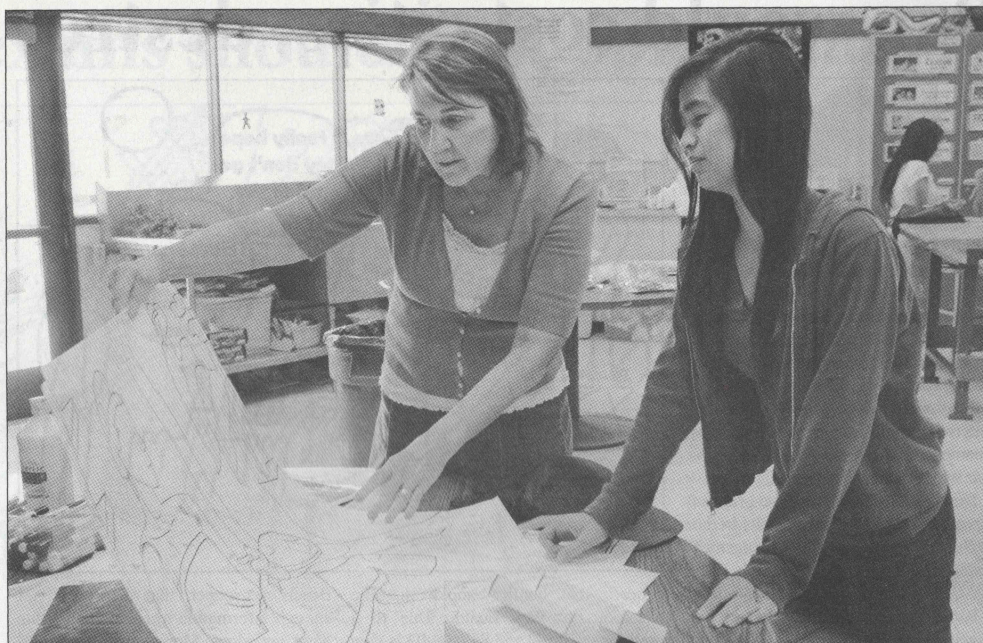


PHOTO BY U-RA LEE

**Art instructor Cori Miller, who will retire this year, discusses drawing and painting with sophomore Kathrina Reyes in her Multicultural Art class May 24. Miller helped found the district's kindergarden to ninth grade arts program in 1979.**

ANGELA LEE

The years go by fast.

But after 37 years of teaching, adorning campuses with student art projects and helping young artists express themselves through paper and paint, visual arts teacher Cori Miller will retire this spring.

"I'm really going to miss Irvine," Miller said with a nostalgic smile. "I have really enjoyed teaching the kids here. I feel it's the relationships you make that are so important in the end."

After helping to found the Irvine Unified School District's kindergarden to ninth grade visual arts program in 1979 and spending years teaching art in elementary schools, Miller decided to join Irvine High in 2010 as the "big finish" to her career. In addition to art, she also teaches social science.

"I really enjoy watching the kids respond to learning," Miller said. "I think my favorite experience is when I push

someone to be really creative and they end up doing so much better than they thought. To me, the process is just as important as the finished product."

Student work can be seen all over campus, the result of the passion and dedication of Miller and her students.

"She filled the hallways and the buildings with student art," ceramics teacher Robin Lux said. "That takes a lot of hard work and time, so I'm going to miss that."

Miller has taught hundreds of classes and is proud to say that she has "touched the hearts and eyes of thousands of children." By emphasizing personal expression and the creative process over technical skill, she aims to provide an opportunity for her students to fall in love with art and the freedom of communication it provides.

"I feel sad to see my first art teacher go away," freshman Courtney Bui said. "She was the first art teacher I had that made me

love art. But I know that even when she retires, she will still inspire others."

Upon her retirement, Miller plans to remodel her house, completing it with a small art studio where she will teach private art lessons. She will also begin painting on silk again - her medium of choice.

"June 21 will come and I'm going to start painting again!" Miller

She looks forward to returning to her own art, but also admires her students' creations.

"These years have been challenging and full," Miller reflected, glancing around at the vibrantly colorful masterpieces decorating her art room, relics of past students and new artists alike. "I feel like [Irvine High] has been a 'finishing school' for me. I've learned a lot and taught a lot and I can't wait to keep moving forward in my life."

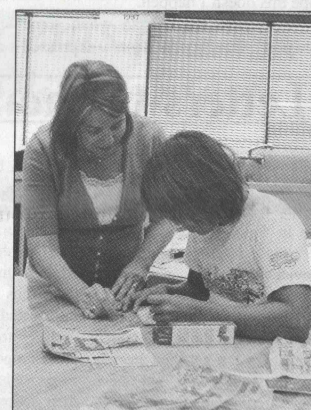


PHOTO BY U-RA LEE

**Miller demonstrates linoleum block printing with sophomore Jocelyn Kiyama in class on May 24.**