



## Freedom Grads ---> Future Stars

Ruthanne Gudzan was a 2001 graduate of Freedom Area High School and participated in the Spanish Club, Chorus, and Jazz Band. She traveled to Spain and France during her senior year with the Spanish Club. Ruthanne was also a member of the National Honor Society. She, along with a few other students, started the Student-to-Student Science Program (SSSP) with support from Dr. Wargo in which high school students taught elementary and middle school students about science. Ruthanne also ran a tutoring program for Physics and tutored fellow high school students who needed extra help. She took piano lessons outside of school and played at several school events.

Ruthanne was recognized with awards from the Spanish and History Departments and with Special Recognition from the English and Science Departments. She was also recognized as Student of the Month twice during her time at Freedom High School and won 4<sup>th</sup> place in Spanish at the SRU's annual High School Foreign Language Competition for schools in the Greater Pittsburgh Area.

Ruthanne earned her Bachelor of Science in Education for Secondary Education Spanish in 2005 and her Masters in Curriculum and Instruction in 2011, both from Slippery Rock University. She received the SRU Physics Scholarship for her freshman and sophomore years, and also received a scholarship from the *AmeriCorps* for volunteer work she did her senior year of high school. She participated in a Spanish Conversation group and volunteered at SRU's annual Hispanic Week Celebration. She worked on campus as a Spanish tutor and participated in the study abroad program in Costa Rica where she lived with a local family and attended classes at the university. She still keeps in touch with this family more than 16 years later and has taken several trips back to Costa Rica to visit them.

Ruthanne taught for three years at Hopewell High School, then one year at Oakland Catholic High School, before being hired at Freedom. This is her 12<sup>th</sup> year teaching at Freedom and has taken Freedom students on successful trips to Spain, France, Peru, Panama and twice to Costa Rica. Ruthanne has also done a good deal of international traveling on her own visiting Mexico and El Salvador. She has received the H.O.P.E. Award twice from nominations by her high school students. This is her 4<sup>th</sup> year as the National Honor Society adviser.

"My favorite part of my education at Freedom was the teachers. I was very fortunate to have some truly amazing teachers who were passionate about their work. They are the ones who inspired me to become a teacher myself. Being a smaller district, I also felt like I had an opportunity to get to build relationships with my teachers; I got to know them, and they got to

know me well. It makes a huge difference to feel like an individual, rather than just another head in the classroom.”

Ruthanne believes that Freedom has teachers who are passionate about their jobs and these teachers care deeply about their students. Parents can send their children to Freedom knowing that their children will be in loving hands.