



Gayle Klinker Youth Ally Award

Gayle Klinker has been awarded the 2018 Youth Ally Award. The Brookings Human Rights Commission Youth Ally Award recognizes an adult who has inspired local youth to become involved in human rights activities and initiatives, either locally or abroad.

Mrs. Klinker is an English teacher at Brookings High School and taught freshman English and junior English (American literature). She perceived the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Essay Contest integrated with her courses, and the theme gave her students an opportunity to research and write for an audience other than her. She also saw this essay as a form of public service. If the community of Brookings gave the students an opportunity to write, research, and share ideas; they should take it.

Public service is important to Mrs. Klinker and to Brookings High School as well. All juniors are required to perform at least eight hours of volunteer time to a nonprofit in the area. She informs her students that communities cannot survive without the volunteers, and it is a lifelong skill.

Although she retired this year, Mrs. Klinker has been teaching for 42 years. She began her teaching career in Iowa and after four years moved to Nebraska and taught for 14 years. At that time, she moved to Brookings, South Dakota and was the coordinator at SElect High, an alternative school for at-risk youth, for 13 years. She has taught at Brookings High School for the past 11 years. In each state and school, she also directed plays and musicals and performed other forms of coaching or directing.

She is married to Jim Klinker for almost 42 years, has two grown children, Diana and Eric, and has three grandchildren. She enjoys many things including outdoor activities (gardening, golfing, fishing, bicycling, hunting) as well as reading, canning her garden items, and seeing her grandchildren. She and Jim are both avid followers of SDSU sports and theater – Go, Jacks!