

An Ode to Our NELA Fellows: The Essential 55

Many days as an administrator, we will find ourselves trucking along when something will happen causing us to back up to start over again before we can move forward.

Before things spin out of control, take every precaution to get on top of things. Most days we will know exactly what to do since NELA has equipped us with awesome tools to handle most situations. However, there may be days when we have to roll the dice and hope for the best. If a roll of the dice doesn't work, reach for the Essential 55.

Keith, if history repeats itself, you will embrace Rule #4. You have many opinions you are willing to share, but you are always respectful in your sharing.

Jennie, it is evident that community is important to you. Your random acts of kindness demonstrate that Rule #11 is the rule for you.

Organization is the name of the game for the newlywed who is not only a teacher by day, but also a teacher and student by night. Lyndsay, Rule #18 is critical in your life.

Julie Simpson, you embrace Rule #26. You create a welcoming environment by not saving seats. You include everyone recognizing that we are family.

Always the gentleman, Rule #36 was written with you in mind, Billy. Though you say little, your actions speak volumes.

For the activist in you, stand tall for Rule #49 Donnell. You are passionate for righting wrongs and fighting for the disenfranchised. Continue on your path for social justice.

Life is full of many great adventures. Julie T, you approach the adventures in life with a positive attitude. That's why Rule # 50 is for you.

Caroline Linker, Mema was right, all you need is love. Live life to its fullest with no regrets. Your zeal for life and your laughter is why we chose Rule # 51 for you.

Cliff your tell-it-like it is attitude is why we chose Rule #53 for you. There is never any doubt where others stand or what is on your mind. We find your honesty refreshing.

Rule #54 is for you Crystal. You seize each day as though it is a gift. You understand that life is filled with special moments. You do not focus on the bad, but the blessings that come from the challenges.

Caroline Joyce, Rule #55 encourages us to be the best person we can be. This is something you model everyday. You stay focused on being your best. You should be proud of the person you are.

Drs. Smith and Ellerbe, you are runners leading the pack. You have set the bar high for other instructors to reach. You are definitely on the right seat on the bus.

Each of you is unique in your own way and for that we would like to thank you for being you and choosing to do what you were meant to do. We present these gifts to you because we know you would never break Rule #10 by insulting the gift or the giver.

Although Ron Clark emphasized everyone doesn't get a cookie, in NELA Cohort IV, everyone gets a cookie.