

## Ingham Impact Episode 38 – Denise Lycos

Carrie Weidner: Honestly, my first impression is, this woman is amazing! She is the principal of five programs, and I don't know how she has time; and a mother, you know, an amazing mother. Someone talked me into going and getting my teaching cert and said I worked well with students, so I went ahead and did that, and that's where Denise came into my life. Once I had my teaching cert., and she realized it was English-based and Secondary, she was of course right next door at the Secondary Learning Center (SLC) and came and asked me to come out here to Highfields and teach summer school. She kind of snagged me out of the Career Center world, and I've been here for almost eleven years and I absolutely love it; she knew, I guess, before I did, that this was my calling and brought me out here and yep, she did; she was the reason I ended up here and this was perfect.

1st Past Ingham Academy (IA) Student: She is the principal of Ingham Academy. When I first met her, she was just silly! She was just letting me know that if you finish this amount of credits on time, we can get you into Peckham. She was always there pushing me like-- you should do this, you should do this so we can do that. Okay, well, you're really on my head, so I'm going to do it. She was the first person to let me know that I could do the amount of things that I could possibly do.

Carrie Weidner: We share programs like Ingham Academy and Highfields, Ingham County students can sometimes end up here from St. Vincent's or vice versa and she knows the background and history of these students before we even see them; For them, it's a comfort zone also because they recognize her face from whatever program, because, believe it or not, the student's actually know who she is even though she's running so many programs.

Current IA Student: Ms. Lycos probably impacted me the most by making me stay here and signing the paperwork for me to come here, to be honest with you. Even though some days I wake up and hate it, and don't want to be here--like today I woke up late, but I'm here and it's not all that bad of a place once you get here and just sit down and do what you gotta do.

2nd Current IA Student: It's Ms. Lycos. She basically told me that you're almost there, because I was telling here that "I'm ready to give up". So, it was her, she said you're almost there and you're on our list of graduates. I was one of those people who needed a kick, because I wouldn't do it by myself.

Denise Lycos: There's that heartfelt of not just wanting to teach and educate but to support them emotionally and help them to see a future, which some of our students sometimes don't see their future very clearly. What a kid looks like when they come in as a 9th grader, and then we see them a few years later; just, the growth and being able to reflect on the growth is really important, and it's uplifting; you see where they started and kind of how they move forward, and what they look like when they graduate.

Carrie Weidner: She hand picks all of the employees for these positions, which then obviously indirectly effects our students and so you think of the thousands of lives that she is affecting all of the time, and she keeps everything so organized and running smoothly. Denise is just the wealth of knowledge, the amount of experience she has;

2nd Ingham Academy Student: You need to feel like you have a backbone, somebody that supports you and who really cares about you, and if you don't feel that, it feels like they don't care, they just want to lock me up, you know?

Past IA Student: She just let me know: You can do it, and you can do it fast, it's just up to you. She just pretty much put the fire under me, you know?

**END OF VIDEO**