

## Thank an Adjunct

By Michelle Holt

Okay, so you're sitting in class the first day of the semester. The instructor walks in and says, "Hi. I'm So and So. I'm an adjunct here at UMHelena." Immediately your eyes glaze over or that fiendish streak in you surfaces as you think: "Oh no, I have a substitute all semester. It will be just like the time a PE teacher subbed for my chemistry teacher. I won't learn a thing. I won't get my money's worth!" Or the fiend takes over, you rub your hands together, get that sparkle in your eye and set out to make this the semester from hell for this substitute. Well, I'm here to tell you: adjuncts are not substitutes, and they deserve your respect and thanks.

Adjuncts hold a masters degree or certification in the subject they are teaching. Adjuncts take time from their busy lives to come on campus and teach a class after working eight hours, during their lunch, during their summer breaks, during their weekends. Many adjuncts teach the "odd" hours that full-time faculty likes to avoid.

Many adjuncts have an expertise that full-time faculty don't. The result is the wide variety of classes available at the college. Without the 70 or so adjuncts who share their expertise with UMHelena students, the college would struggle to offer enough courses to stay accredited.

Adjuncts don't make much money. They don't receive UMHelena benefits. Adjuncts teach because they love teaching, and they are good at it.

Adjuncts make so many good things happen for UMHelena's students, please take time to say thanks.