“Two of my most influential teachers taught seventh grade math and language arts,” Amy Lee says. “And the middle grades really seem to be a good fit for me.”

She says she’s not daunted by working with young adolescents. “They’re at that age when they want to be in school. They want to learn. And they’re so crazy! These kids think they’re cool and they’re so not. They’re just awkward, which is charming and entertaining, and that keeps the work interesting.”

Time spent in local schools helped Amy Lee confirm that interest. “My first semester we spent three weeks observing early childhood classrooms, three weeks in elementary schools, and three weeks in middle schools. That helped me verify what level I wanted to work with.”

Now, she’s gaining a strong foundation in teaching methodologies. “Everything we cover in class begins to make sense when we go out in the field and put it into action. I got to work with the Charleston County Teacher of the Year. I watched her teach and then got feedback from her on my lessons, which was awesome. I was also getting feedback from professors.”

For Amy Lee, her best student-teaching moment was using song lyrics to teach figurative language. “We looked for similes and metaphors and the students loved it. I used lyrics from a variety of artists like Rascal Flatts and Kanye West. The students had to identify the creative language in the lyrics, what it meant and why it was more effective than just saying it directly. That was teaching.”

PICTURE YOURSELF AS AN EDUCATOR, PLAYING a pivotal role in the lives of young adolescents. That’s exactly what Amy Lee Jones does. She’s taking advantage of every opportunity she can in order to become the kind of middle school teacher who makes a lasting, positive impact – just like the teachers she had in school.