

Sharon Smith

CHSSA HALL OF FAME 2004



Sharon has been an English teacher and speech and debate coach for thirty years at Los Gatos High School. During this time she has coached state champions in impromptu, advocacy, and team Debate. In addition, her team has earned first place in the small school sweepstakes category.

As an English teacher, Sharon particularly enjoys teaching American Literature and AP English Language and Composition. With her AP students, she has organized an online exchange with A Level English Language students in England for the purpose of discussing differences between American and English language and culture. She has also taken students to visit their English counterparts. During these visits, her students stay with families and attend classes at their hosts' sixth form college.

Sharon's commitment to the speech community extends past her classroom. Throughout her career Sharon has served the Coast Forensics League as their VP individual events and president. As a representative to the CHSSA council she served a member of the debate committee where she helped organized and was a co-presenter of CHSSA's debate workshops for new programs. An NFL diamond key coach Sharon's program received the NFL Leading Chapter Award.

A member of several WASC visiting teams Sharon has been able to see first hand what schools around the state are doing to improve education. She was awarded the Golden Foundation Award for Excellence in Education and the Rotary Foundation of Rotary International Paul Harris Fellow award. As an advocate of international exchange, Sharon has also hosted exchange students from France and England. In addition, Sharon, in association with fellow teacher Janis Rogers, is currently piloting Los Gatos High School's class within a class program in Enhanced Reading. This program combines special education students and mainstream students into a class which is team taught by a subject area teacher and a special education teacher. Team teaching this class, according to Sharon, has been an exciting educational experience, and she would love to see other teachers have the same opportunity.

Sharon is also an associate instructor at Mission College. Her experience at the community college has made her an advocate of the system. It has also enabled her to establish realistic expectations for her high school students, in order to ensure that they are well prepared for the college experience. She was awarded the Associate Faculty Teaching Excellence award at Mission College for her hard work.

Sharon is a proud mother of Kitri Bui, who graduated from Scripps College and is now attending medical school at Boston University. This year Kitri will be following long established tradition and marrying a graduate of Harvey Mudd College. Sharon was elected to the CHSSA Hall of Fame in 2004.

“Her commitment to speech extends past her classroom”