

Mary Pinkston, Delaware Teacher of the Year 2010.

Mary Pinkston teaches mathematics at Brandywine High School. She started out majoring in electrical engineering at Michigan State University in 1984 however she realized that this wasn't what she was called to do and transferred to the University of Delaware to earn her Bachelor of Arts in Secondary Mathematics education. She continued on to earn her masters degree and has even earned graduate credits towards her administrative certification. In addition she is a National Board Certified Teacher. Our teacher of the year comes from a family that values public education as her mother, her role model, was a teacher. One piece of advice from her mother was to try to do at least one thing better this school year than you did the last and Mary certainly strives to improve not only herself but her students, as she believes that every student may not be the fastest learner, the most disciplined, the most conscientious, the most capable, the most independent, the most inquisitive or the most willing, but they can all learn something.

Education is not a one size fits all plan and we as teachers must find that interest that each of our students have and expand on it.

Many of you here tonight remember fondly Laura Shepard, who lost a long battle with breast cancer in 2002. She was a science teacher at Brandywine High School, long-time Association Rep for BEA, very involved in DSEA statewide activities, honored with the Susan B. Roushey Advocacy Award in 2000. Both she and Marge Windolph, another Brandywine legend, recipient of the 2001 Helen Wise Award, mentored Mary. I'm sure she will mention their special place in her life as a teacher and advocate for the profession.

In reading her information Mary states that the best teachers are those who are committed to excellence, not only for themselves, but for their students, colleagues, parents and community leaders. Each day we have to remember that our presence is making a difference in the life of at least one child. Although we may not know who is watching us, we can be sure that at least one child is observing what we do, what we say and how we say it. These students form opinions about teachers, education and even themselves. She urges us all to remember that when times get tough, we are here because this is what we are called to do.

These are words to think about for those of us in education from our teacher of the year.

Not only is Mary committed to education, but also to her community. She is involved in her local church, treasurer of the Delaware Council of Teachers of Mathematics, and member of the Veteran of Foreign Wars and the American Cancer Society. Mary has a long list of accolades, but none can compare with the latest honor bestowed upon her. It is with great pleasure that I present to you Delaware's 2009 Teacher of the Year Mary E. Pinkston from Brandywine High School.