



For Immediate Release

Kansas Teachers' Hall of Fame

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Davis inducted into Kansas Teachers' Hall of Fame

Maureen Davis believes her primary job as a theatre teacher is to create a learning environment where students gain knowledge while being safe to take risks, explore, question, evaluate, and become better communicators and problems solvers. Davis, who has taught for 41 years, is being inducted into the Kansas Teachers' Hall of Fame June 2 in Dodge City.

"My greatest joy is to see the creative juices flow when a student discovers something they love to do," Davis said. "I feel strongly that my job is not to train theatre professionals, but rather to provide students with opportunities to be involved and learn the vital life skills that come from working as part of a team."

Davis said theatre encompasses a myriad of areas in which students can find a place to excel: acting, directing, writing, analysis, and the multiple facets of technical elements and design.

"I want them to discover that it is fun to work hard toward excellence and to find joy in creative expression," she said. "When students enjoy the experience, they invest themselves in learning; they immerse themselves in the project; and they take ownership of it."

Davis began teaching in Prairie Village in 1978 before taking a position at Shawnee Mission West High School in 1981. From 1984 to 1985, she taught English, Speech, and Drama at Old Mission Junior High School in Roeland Park, Kan. She spent 30 years at Shawnee Mission North High School in Overland Park before becoming the Advanced Repertory Theatre, Stagecraft, Beginning Acting, and Writer's Workshop teacher at Blue Valley High School in 2015.

“My ultimate goal is to instill in each student that hard work, a positive attitude toward scholarship, persistence in solving problems, and disciplines are the keys to a lifetime of success,” she said.”

Davis has spent numerous summers coordinating drama camps and enrichment programs. She earned her Bachelor of Science in Education from Kansas State University in 1974, as well as a Master of Art in Theatre Arts from Colorado University, Boulder, in 1984.

“The public rarely sees teachers in action except for theatre teachers whose production are viewed by a wide range of students. Maureen set the bar for musical productions,” fellow music teacher Margaret McClatchey said. “She is regularly recognized by ‘Starlight Theatre’ for the quality of her work. Her sell-out audiences are testimony of excellence in her students’ acting, singing, dancing, make-up, costuming, set design/construction, lighting, sound, program, and publicity.”

Davis began a program of inclusion with the Development Center for students with disabilities to participate in drama activities in 1986. She also began an outreach program with Repertory Theatre students to teach Creative Drama Workshops for elementary students.

“Maureen has empowered countless youth to be strong leaders through the amazing technical leadership program afforded them in the theatre program of which she has been a part,” Blue Valley High School Assistant Principal and Activities Director Mollie McNally said. “She is in large part responsible for a theatre culture that produces confident and skilled leaders. She guides and mentors students through the process, allowing them to fall along the way but then quickly picking them back up and helping them be stronger than they ever were.”

Davis served on the Shawnee Mission Facilities and Boundaries Committee to represent the arts for all students as the district redrew school boundaries and planned for a bond issue that would fund facility expansion and renovation. She also served on the Windsor Manor Homes Association Board and the Shawnee Mission North Opportunity Fund Board.

“Maureen is a professional and a highly regarded teacher by students, parents, and her fellow educators all across the state,” Retired Orchestra Director Karen McGhee-Hensel Puckett said. “She relates well to all age levels; but what stands out to me is her continuing relationship with her former students. Her dedication to the lives of these former students is truly an amazing thing.”

In 2016, Davis was inducted into the Kansas Thespian Hall of Fame.

“As a teacher, you only spend a few short years with your students; but the influence you have on them lasts a lifetime,” former student and Co-Chapter Director of Kansas Thespians David Tate Hastings said. “She is not just an excellent theatre educator. Maureen is a fabulous teacher.”

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