



Joanne Emerick – Hoxie, KS

Mrs. Emerick’s goals for teaching were twofold. The first was to “lead my students to share my love of history, to understand it and to learn from it.” The second was “to produce students who exhibited civic awareness and responsibility.” She wanted them to be “cognizant of what was going on in the world around them: at the local level, the state level, national level and on the world scene.” Furthermore, she wanted them to “understand that events on ALL levels could affect them” and to “understand that they have rights, that their voices are important, and to stand up for their beliefs.” She also believed that valuable learning takes place outside of the classroom as was evident by the numerous excursions she led her students on.

Joanne’s educational background began at Sacred Heart Grade School in Ness City. She graduated from Ness City High School in 1969, then studied at Fort Hays State University and earned a BA in History in 1973. She gained much knowledge from her involvement in the Milken Family Foundation/Kansas State Department of Education’s numerous educator workshops as well as from her fellow teachers in the Kansas Exemplary Educators Network (KEEN) who were a valuable source of ideas on how to establish student-community connections. These projects often featured individuals, the impact historical events had on them and, in turn, their impact on history.

A 31-year teaching career included four schools: Golden Plains Jr.-Sr. High School in Rexford, KS, 1973-1978; Lenora Jr.-Sr. High School at Lenora, KS, 1978-1982; Quinter Jr.-Sr. High School in Quinter, KS, 1983-1991; and Hoxie High School in Hoxie, KS 1992-2005. She taught American History, American Government, Geography, World History, Civics, Kansas History, and Current Events. In addition, she sponsored Junior Class, Senior Class, Pep Club, Drill Team, Cheerleaders, History Day Team, Stock Market Team, and We the People Team.

She received various honors including Kansas Council for the Social Studies Exemplary Educator in 1988, National History Day Teacher of the Year (Kansas) 1992, Kansas Daughters of the American Revolution Outstanding Teacher of American History 1994, the Milken Foundation’s National Educator Award 1995, Kansas Veterans of Foreign Wars Civic Educator of the year 2002, and the Kansas American Legion Commander’s Americanism Award 2002.

For four decades she has created historical audio-visual programs on various topics for presentation to schools and civic groups. Her programs cover a wide variety of subjects.

Jeff Handlin writes: “I undeniably owe my research skills and attention to detail to Mrs. Emerick. Far more impactful is how she helped to form my moral compass. I cannot imagine a more deserving inductee to the Kansas Teachers’ Hall of Fame.” We proudly welcome her to the class of 2022.