



Mary Margaret Cashman – Shawnee Mission, KS

The educational goals and teaching philosophy of Mary M. Cashman include “Be friends with the students. Be a teacher who will listen. Be someone who is quick to praise and slow to criticize.” She goes on to state that one should “Get to know the parents and establish a good rapport through frequent communications.”

These goals and philosophies were what served her for 30 years as a public instructor and 50 years as a parochial instructor. She earned the Peru State Teachers Certificate for rural teaching in 1942. In 1949 through 1950 she worked toward a Bachelor of Arts degree at Greeley State Teachers’ College with correspondence courses at Emporia and K-State in Manhattan. Then, in 1971, she received an MA in Reading at UMKC with Reading seminars in Europe, China, Australia, Missouri, Wyoming, and Spain.

She began her career in 1942, in Patterson Rural School. She served in many places in her 30 years in Public school classrooms and 50 years in parochial classrooms. This biographer was most impressed that she taught French in WWII in 1945. She retired from public schools in 1990 and retired from parochial schools in 2019. A career that has spanned many visions and pathways.

Through her career she has received many awards and honors. She was selected by Dr. McKee and Lucile Harrison, authors of Macmillan readers, to work in their reading lab. She received an Honorable discharge from the military in 1946. She was awarded the Kindest Kansas Citizen in 1980. In 1989 she was awarded Teacher of the Year at Ray Marsh School in Shawnee, Kansas. She holds numerous awards from KARSP and her volunteer work with Meals on Wheels, Home schooling, Scout leader, and church organist. She rang bells for the Salvation Army dressed as Santa Claus. She served for 30 years on the board of the Johnson County retired teachers serving as President for 2 years and on the board of the Nelson Art Study Club for 26 years where she also served as President. Mary also served on the Kansas State Reading Circle, previewing books for the William Alan White Reading award.

Along with all her work, she is also the author of six books. The titles of the books are; Toby the Friendly Turtle, Laffs and Gaffs, My Mother, Speedy, My Story, and Teaching Aids for K-8. The first book, “Toby”, is available on Google, Amazon and Borders Books.

Jayne Hamilton, a former student of Mrs. Cashman, wrote that “It’s been said, ‘Teachers who love teaching teach children to love learning.’ Mrs. Cashman was one of those teachers who made a lasting impression. I grew up with fond memories and gratitude for the things she taught, which I still use today.” Mary Pilcher Cook, Senator of the 10th District of Kansas, wrote, “We need more people like her, who will show consistent sacrifice, dedication and love to our

children.” These are some of the reasons that we are excited to have Mary Margaret as an inductee for the Kansas Teachers’ Hall of Fames Class of 2021.