

MICHELLE MEREDITH SHEARER



Michelle Shearer earned her bachelor's degree in chemistry from Princeton University and a master's degree in deaf education from McDaniel College. Shearer was inspired to teach by her volunteer experience with deaf and hard-of-hearing students at the Marie H. Katzenbach School for the Deaf in Trenton, New Jersey during her college years. At Princeton, Shearer was one of 30 students in her graduating class of 1,070 to earn teaching certification through the Teacher Preparation Program. She graduated *magna cum laude* in chemistry and was awarded the Malcolm H. Chisholm Thesis Award in inorganic chemistry as well as the New Jersey Commissioner's Distinguished Teacher Candidate Award in 1995. Shearer then studied American Sign Language at Gallaudet University and completed her

master's degree in deaf education in 1996. She holds dual certification in chemistry and special education, with an emphasis on teaching deaf and hard-of-hearing students.

Mrs. Shearer has taught in Maryland's public schools since she began her career in education fourteen years ago. From 1997-2002, she taught all levels of chemistry and started the Advanced Placement Chemistry and American Sign Language programs at Urbana High School in Frederick County. She coached varsity swimming and lacrosse and also served on the School Improvement Team and National Honor Society committee. Shearer was nominated for the Sallie Mae New Teacher Award in 1997 and the Agnes Meyer Outstanding Teacher Award in 2002.

Mrs. Shearer is fluent in American Sign Language and taught all levels of chemistry and mathematics at the Maryland School for the Deaf (MSD) in Frederick from 2002-2006. At MSD, Shearer served as Content Area Leader and coach of the 2005 National Champion Academic Bowl team. She also served as an interpreter for MSD students attending Space Camp. Since her return to Urbana High School in 2006, enrollment in AP chemistry has increased eight-fold, and this semester Mrs. Shearer currently teaches 92 students AP chemistry. Shearer is also a dedicated mentor for new teachers and serves on the Superintendent's Task Force for Career and College Readiness.

Mrs. Shearer is the 2009 Maryland recipient of the Siemens Award for AP Teaching, the 2010 Frederick County Teacher of the Year, the 2011 Maryland Teacher of the Year, and a finalist for the 2011 National Teacher of the Year. She believes that "chemistry is everywhere, and thus chemistry is for everyone." It has always been her professional mission to create a high-energy classroom environment in which students of all abilities, including those with special needs, can succeed in learning advanced science and mathematics. Shearer is passionate about promoting science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education for all K-12 students and effectively includes those who have traditionally been under-represented in scientific fields.

Mrs. Shearer grew up in Wilmington, Delaware and is the daughter of retired chemist Dr. Philip Meredith and retired elementary school music teacher Beverly Meredith. She lives with her husband George, AP physics teacher at Urbana High School, and daughter, Carly, in Wolfsville, Maryland.

The Maryland Teacher of the Year Program is administered by the Maryland State Department of Education. For more information, go to www.marylandpublicschools.org, or contact Dr. Darla Strouse, at: 410-767-0370.