

Faculty News

REMEMBERING DORINDA HOWARD, BELOVED ST. MARK'S TEACHER FROM 1984-2018



Pictured in the Fall of 1984, Dorinda Howard with her first class, including her son, Chris, grasping her elbow; and a more recent portrait

When considering the history and life of St. Mark's, it is nearly impossible to separate our story from the story of Mrs. Dorinda Howard, who walked our halls and taught our students for thirty-four years. This spring, on the eve of our last day of school, Mrs. Howard passed away.

Before coming to Houston, Mrs. Howard managed a preschool in Illinois. Moving to Houston to further herself as an educator, in 1984, she earned her master's degree from the Creative Writing Program at the University of Houston and was hired as a 4th grade teacher at St. Mark's Episcopal School. Mrs. Howard's first classroom at St. Mark's was a small room off the back of the original Hauser Hall. In her room, Mrs. Howard created a place where students could imagine and create. Each year, Mrs. Howard's 4th grade room was transformed into a South American rainforest, with floor to ceiling trees, vines, and student-made animals. Thirty years before we had developed our Characteristics of Professional Excellence, Mrs. Howard was demonstrating an innate ability to create a positive, playful

environment for learning.

As the school expanded, adding middle school grades during the mid-to-late 80s, Mrs. Howard was at the center of that growth, creating curriculum, supporting students, and delivering quality language arts lessons. In 1989, we graduated our first class of 8th grade students, and Mrs. Howard began teaching 7th and 8th grade language arts. Over the next 30 years, Mrs. Howard instructed hundreds of our St. Mark's students as they completed their St. Mark's education. Our alumni often share how prepared they felt for language arts in high school and beyond, thanks in large part to the writing instruction they received from Mrs. Howard.

Without the legacy of Mrs. Howard, we would not be the school we are today. Her knowledge of institutional history, her understanding of the needs of learners, and her willingness to engage children and inspire learning are just some of the qualities we will seek to emulate. As a school, we are who we are today because of the life and legacy of Dorinda Howard.

