



Dr. Michelle Stevens

Class of 2022

Michelle graduated from Las Plumas High School (LPHS) in 1972, was graduation speaker, Girls State Representative, and named to Who's Who Among American Seniors. Numerous academic awards came her way, among them were the State of California and California Scholastic Federation (CSF) scholarships to the University of Pacific, two Bank of America Awards, the Voice of Democracy Speech Award, the Order of the Eastern Star Scholarship, the American Youth Foundation Leadership Award and the Fellows Club of Oroville Community Achievement Top Ten Award.

She was also very active in music as a member of the school band receiving the LPHS Music Award, Band and Outstanding Musician, Northern California Honor Band and All State Honor Band.

Michelle was active in the community as Honored Queen of Jobs daughters, DeMolay Sweetheart, and working in the Butte County Summer Youth Program.

Following graduation from LPHS, Michelle attended the University of Pacific (UOP). After taking a class in '*Environments of California*', and an internship writing and editing at the Sierra Club Bulletin in San Francisco, she transferred to Humboldt State in 1974. She received a Special Major Bachelor's degree in environmental journalism, a combined major of journalism and botany in 1979. Michelle conducted her Masters research at the Aldo Leopold Reserve in Baraboo, WI, and was awarded a Leopold Award Fellowship with a summer stipend in 1981 and 1982. She earned her MA degree in Land Resources from the University of Wisconsin in 1983.

Her first job after grad school was to initiate a wetlands/water quality program for the U.S.EPA in Boise, Idaho. She was a pioneer in the wetlands field, and helped field test the wetlands delineation manual, develop scientific protocols for wetland restoration and mitigation, created wetland education programs and is still involved in the Wonder of Wetlands project for middle school children. From 1987 till the end of 1991, she had the satisfying experience of being the Senior Environmental Scientist in the Wetlands Section of the Washington State Department of Ecology in Olympia, WA. After being inspired by her teaching at The Evergreen College in Washington, she began her doctoral program in order to teach. She enrolled in the Ecology Group at UC Davis, was awarded a Switzer Fellowship and went on to earn her PhD in 1999.

Upon graduation with her doctorate in 1999, college teaching positions in her field were very scarce. Michelle found work as a restoration ecologist for the California Department of Water Resources. While taking a one year leave of absence, 2002-03, Michelle worked for *Eden Again*, a nonprofit working in restoration of the Mesopotamian Marshes in Iraq. While in the Middle East, she was a keynote speaker in Iraq and attended conferences in Turkey, Jordan and Kuwait.

Michelle began her current position in the Environmental Studies Department at California State University, Sacramento (CSUS) in 2007 where she is a full Professor, teaching wetlands ecology, restoration ecology, ethnoecology and other environmental classes. Since 2015, she has been engaged in the Bushy Lake Eco-Cultural Restoration Project (www.bushylake.com). Her passion is to create a legacy of this restored area on the lower American River for wildlife, Native California tribes and other community stakeholders.

Throughout her distinguished career, Michelle has been widely published, authoring over 23 publications. She has also received numerous honors and awards starting in 1978 when she received the Western Writers of America Award. In 2016, she received the Award for Outstanding Iraqi Research, Network of Iraqi Scientists Abroad (NSA). In 2017, she received the CSUS, College of SSIS, faculty Award for Outstanding Community Service. The Environmental Council of Sacramento named her Environmentalist of the Year in 2021.

Linda Storm, Wetland Ecologist in Washington, writes in her letter of support, *“Dr. Michelle Stevens has worked in academia teaching hundreds of students. For over 30+ years, Michelle had mentored and supported students, both in her official capacity as an instructor and now tenured professor, as well as to others like me to whom she shares her knowledge and wisdom”*.

Michelle’s mother, Vaida Stevens, was a long time and highly respected teacher in Oroville, who passed away in December of 2021. It was on a college Marine Biology Field Trip with her mother that influenced Michelle to pursue her wetlands career.

Michelle makes her home in Sacramento.