



DISTINGUISHED EDUCATOR - 2023

KAROL HANSEN

1988-2022

They Lit the Way



DISTINGUISHED
EDUCATOR

I grew up on a small farm outside of Glenville, MN. Being part of a large family, three sisters and five brothers, I learned at a very early age the value of being part of a team. The first day I walked into my seventh grade PE class, I knew I wanted to be a teacher and I never looked back or thought of a different career. I was fortunate to have many role models who inspired and motivated me to become an educator, including my family and my teachers and coaches at Glenville High School. I graduated from Glenville High in 1978. After high school, I decided to attend Austin Community College so that I could continue to participate in athletics. During the two years at ACC, I was a member of the volleyball, basketball, and softball teams. I graduated with an associate of arts degree in the spring of 1980. I earned my bachelor's degree with a major in health and physical education and a minor in coaching at St. Cloud State. While at SCSU, I was involved in both the women's basketball and softball programs.

My first teaching job after graduation from SCSU was in Hinckley, MN in 1984. I taught there for four years at the high school teaching both health and physical education. I also coached volleyball, basketball, and track and field.

I left Hinkley in 1988 so that I could be closer to my family and started subbing and coaching in the Albert Lea school district. My first contract in District 241 was elementary physical education at Lakeview Elementary. The next year I taught a combined elementary physical education position at the Hawthorne and Halverson elementary schools. I then taught 7th grade physical education at Brookside for one year. In 1991, I found my true home at Southwest Middle school teaching both health and physical education to seventh graders. I honestly loved going to school due to my amazing colleagues, administrators, and students at Southwest. I received the Teacher of the Year award in 2000, an honor that is priceless working in a district with so many deserving colleagues.

During my career in Albert Lea, I was able to teach past the classroom through coaching. I coached volleyball, basketball, softball, and tennis for 33 years of my 34 years in the district. I cherish all the memories and relationships that I built in my years in Albert Lea. I knew that a career in education would allow me to make a difference in the day of a student or athlete as I remember experiencing during my school days.

I retired in the spring of 2022 after 38 years in education. I continue to work part time at Brookside teaching DAPE to the transition class and early childhood special education classes. I enjoy occasionally subbing at Southwest so that I can visit with the teachers. In my spare time I enjoy working on my lawn, taking care of my two dogs, and reading. I am truly blessed and grateful for the rewarding career I experienced working in the Albert Lea school district.

