

Mellessa Denny

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Education

West Texas A&M University, Canyon, TX
Bachelor of Arts in Speech - May 1997

Teaching Experience

Amarillo High School, Amarillo, TX

Speech, debate & dual credit public speaking teacher—Fall 2005 - present

- Coached the speech, debate, mock trial and model UN teams
- Serve as Fine Arts Department Chair in charge of budgets, schedules and professional development initiatives
- Serve as UIL Academic Coordinator in charge of recruiting sponsors for team & logistics/planning
- Wrote Amarillo ISD Professional Communication Curriculum and Scope and Sequence for Debate and Oral Interpretation
- Cooperating teacher for WTAMU student teachers

Lubbock High School, Lubbock, TX

Speech & debate teacher—Fall 1998 - Spring 2005

- Coached the speech, debate, and mock trial teams
- Served as UIL Academic Coordinator in charge of recruiting sponsors for teams & logistics/planning
- Cooperating teacher for Texas Tech student teachers

Honors and Awards

- Recipient of the 2017 UIL Sponsor Excellence Award
- Amarillo High School Teacher of the Year 2018
- Inducted into the West Texas A&M University Communication Hall of Fame—2018
- Educator of the Year—Texas Speech Communication Association—2018
- National Federation of High School Associations Outstanding Educator Award—2019

Professional Activities

Texas Speech Communication Association

- President-2014-2015—testified before SBOE
- Instructional Development K-12 Interest Group Chair, Educator Training Committee Chair, UIL Advisory Committee, Governmental Affairs Committee
- Frequent panel presenter

National Speech & Debate Association

- Tall Cotton District Committee—2007-2011, chair 2011-present
- Triple Diamond Level Coach, Distinguished Service Award Recipient—2017, 2018, 2021

University Interscholastic League

- Regional Advisory Committee—2013-present
- Tab Staff for UIL State Student Congress tournament—2013-present
- Student Activities Conference and Capital Conference presenter

Texas Forensic Association

- Hosted Texas Forensic Association State Tournament in 2002 & 2012
- Constitution Committee & Safe Restart Committee

West Texas Speech Association

- President—2003-2004 & frequent presenter

Service

- Contest director for Amarillo ISD district Elementary and Middle School UIL contests
- Serve on the West Texas A&M University Communication Alumni Network (CAN) Board.
- Life Skills Class teacher for Martha's Home in Amarillo since 2007, teaching listening skills, conflict resolution and professional communication skills to homeless women in the program.
- Texas Education Association Speech and Debate TEKS Review Committee—2008-2009 and PACT (Pre-Admission Content Test) Standard Setting Committee—2019
- Paramount Baptist Church Children's Ministry volunteer—2007-present—teacher, VBS volunteer, Drama Director for Children's Musical

Publications

Texas Speech Communication Association

- Published in *Texas Speech Communication Journal*—Summer 2004, Spring 2005

National Federation of High School Associations

- Published in the national magazine *High School Today*, February 2017, October 2017, December 2018, February 2019, September 2019, October 2019, September 2020, September 2021, October 2021

Dear TSCA Colleagues,

In 1998, I was a brand new speech teacher at Lubbock High School and I was simply told by my colleagues that I WOULD be going to Corpus Christi with them in October, so plan accordingly. I had no clue what those pushy ladies had gotten me involved in.

I came back from my first TSCA experience a changed person. I no longer felt like an island and I was no longer afraid to ask for help. I met people who inspired me and taught me (and still do today), and I came back with a renewed spirit and a suitcase full of ideas, contacts, and, most importantly for a first year teacher, lesson plans. Those sessions I attended and the people I met made me a better speech teacher and debate coach.

My experience has not changed in the 23 years I have attended. I STILL come home with new ideas on how to improve what I do every day. The panels and sessions give me new perspective and some even stretch my comfort level. I am inspired to learn and try something new because of the little conversations in the hallways or at meals. And seeing friends who live all over the state of Texas renews my spirit and regenerates me. That is truly the value of TSCA and our annual convention.

Therefore, I am honored to be nominated to run for Executive Secretary of our great organization. As cliché as it sounds, I have gained so much so I will gladly do what is needed to give back.

In serving you, I will focus on growing our membership, increasing our involvement throughout the state, continuing education, and strengthening speech programs in Texas in ways that we never even thought of before now. I look forward to working with other officers and our membership to keep the connections and camaraderie while embracing the changing world.

I would appreciate your support and look forward to serving you.
Mellessa Denny